



**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**WEDNESDAY, 9TH JANUARY, 2008 AT 6.00 PM**

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

**AGENDA**

MEMBERS: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Leader), Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths (Deputy Leader), Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP, G. N. Denaro, Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., R. D. Smith, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP, M. J. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5th December 2007 (Pages 1 - 6)
4. To receive the minutes of the meetings of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 4th December and 20th December 2007 (Special Meeting - to follow) (Pages 7 - 10)
5. To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Board held on 10th December 2007 (Pages 11 - 12)
6. To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Local Development Framework Working Party held on 13th December 2007 (Pages 13 - 16)
7. To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 18th December 2007 (to follow)
8. Report of the Air Quality Scrutiny Task Group (Pages 17 - 54)
9. Medium Term Financial Plan 2008/09 to 2010/11 (Pages 55 - 128)
10. Committee Programme 2008/09 (Pages 129 - 134)
11. Concessions Policy For Users of Council Services (Pages 135 - 140)

12. Improvement Plan Exception Report (October 2007) (Pages 141 - 154)
13. Dolphin Centre and Haybridge Sports Centre (Pages 155 - 172)
14. Market Hall Redevelopment (Pages 173 - 182)
15. Longbridge Area Action Plan - Submission (Pages 183 - 286)
16. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting

K. DICKS  
Chief Executive

The Council House  
Burcot Lane  
BROMSGROVE  
Worcestershire  
B60 1AA

20th December 2007

# Agenda Item 3

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 5TH DECEMBER 2007 AT 6.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Leader), Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths (Deputy Leader), G. N. Denaro, Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., R. D. Smith, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP, M. J. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mr. H. Bennett, Mr. M. Bell, Mrs. C. Felton, Mr. J. Godwin, Mr. D. Hammond, Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. J. Pitman, Mr. A. Coel and Ms. D. Parker-Jones

#### 100/07 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP.

#### 101/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E. declared a personal interest in agenda item 15 (Medium Term Financial Plan 2008-2009 to 2010-2011), as a member of the Amphlett Hall Management Committee.

Councillor Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths declared a personal interest in agenda items 13 and 15 (September (Quarter 2) Performance Monitoring and Medium Term Financial Plan 2008-2009 to 2010-2011 respectively), as a member of the Operating Trust of Bromsgrove Arts Centre and member of the Amphlett Hall Management Committee.

Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP declared a personal interest in agenda item 13 (September (Quarter 2) Performance Monitoring), as a member of the Operating Trust of Bromsgrove Arts Centre.

Councillor R. D. Smith declared a personal interest in agenda items 8, 9, 10 and 13 (Hamilton House, North Worcestershire Housing Related Support Scheme for Younger People, Homelessness Strategy for Worcestershire 2007-2011 and September (Quarter 2) Performance Monitoring respectively), as an employee of a housing association and a member of the Operating Trust of Bromsgrove Arts Centre.

#### 102/07 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 7th November 2007 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

103/07 **SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

The minutes of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 6th November 2007 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be noted.

104/07 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The minutes of the Performance Management Board held on 20th November 2007 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting be noted and the recommendation approved.

105/07 **DEED OF GRANT - ASTON ROAD, BROMSGROVE**

The Cabinet considered the issue of a Deed of Grant for Aston Road, Bromsgrove, to secure formal right of access to Bromsgrove Technology Park.

Officers advised of the necessity to make an alteration to the wording of the Deed of Grant Particulars PxP Site definition to assist the units which might be purchased and removed from the Land Registry titles prior to completion of the Deed of Grant.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that, subject to the amendment of the Deed of Grant Particulars PxP Site definition to read "*The freehold property comprised **or formerly comprised** in title number(s) WR80623 and WR106076*", the signing of the Deed of Grant with Advantage West Midlands with respect to Aston Road, Bromsgrove, be approved;
- (b) that the Council's responsibility to maintain the Road in reasonable condition be accepted; and
- (c) that Members instruct officers to work with the County Council to secure the adoption of the Road at the earliest possible date.

106/07 **FLOODING MATTERS**

Consideration was given to a letter received from Tewkesbury Borough Council seeking support for motions agreed by that authority with regard to flood defence funding and its call for the Government to create a single organisation with overarching responsibility for flooding.

Officers advised that at the meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board the previous evening it had been suggested that the Cabinet might wish to defer consideration of the motions until the outcomes of the joint countywide scrutiny exercise on flooding, for which agreement in principle had been reached at the informal meeting of Scrutiny Members from each authority on 26th November 2007, were known.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the Cabinet defer consideration of the motions agreed by Tewkesbury Borough Council until the outcomes of the joint countywide scrutiny exercise on flooding were known; and
- (b) that officers write to Tewkesbury Borough Council to advise them as to the position.

107/07 **HAMILTON HOUSE - SIDEMOOR, BROMSGROVE**

Further to the meeting of the Cabinet on 1st August 2007, consideration was given to an update report on progress made towards the closure of the supported housing scheme and rehousing of the residents at Hamilton House, Sidemoor, together with the response from Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to the proposal to cross subsidise a 'flats over shops' scheme. The report also sought Member agreement to a different course of action in meeting the aims and objectives of the August report by the sale of the property to an RSL.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the Council owned premises known as 15, 15a, 17 and 17a York Road be sold to Bromsgrove District Housing Trust for the purposes of providing affordable housing for rent on the basis of the financial appraisal referred to in section 5 of the report;
- (b) that the Head of Planning and Environment and the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and the Corporate Property Officer, be granted delegated authority to sell and convey the dwellings for a capital receipt that represents market, below market or zero value; and
- (c) that the capital receipt from the sale of the Council owned premises known as 15, 15a, 17 and 17a York Road be ring fenced for the provision of affordable housing.

108/07 **NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT SCHEME FOR YOUNGER PEOPLE**

The Cabinet considered a report which introduced proposals for a Housing Support Scheme for younger people across North Worcestershire. The proposed Scheme provided three levels of support for younger homeless people and was to be funded through the Housing Corporation and Supporting People Grant. Also outlined in the report was the 'in principle' potential for the Council owned Burcot Lodge Hostel to be converted into self contained supported flats to assist with meeting the needs of clients under the third level of the Scheme.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the proposals to develop a North Worcestershire Housing Related Support Scheme for Younger People be supported;
- (b) that the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing be nominated as a representative on the proposed Officer/Member Steering Group for the project; and

- (c) that the longer term more detailed consideration being given to the conversion of Burcot Hostel into self contained flats with support for younger homeless people with chaotic lifestyles be agreed in principle.

109/07 **HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY FOR WORCESTERSHIRE 2007-2011**

Consideration was given to the Worcestershire Homelessness Strategy for 2007-2011.

**RESOLVED** that the objectives within the Worcestershire Homelessness Strategy 2007-2011 and the targets set out within the county and local action be approved.

110/07 **EXTERNAL CUSTOMER STANDARDS AND CUSTOMER FIRST UPDATE**

The Cabinet considered a report on proposed corporate and departmental external customer standards and which also provided an update on Customer First.

It was agreed that a customer standard be included for voicemail messages, with one working day discussed for this, the exact standard for which would be agreed between the Assistant Chief Executive and Portfolio Holder for Customer Care and Customer Service, and Revenue Generation.

**RESOLVED** that, subject to the addition of a corporate standard in relation to voicemail messages, the corporate and departmental external customer standards be approved.

111/07 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT (SEPTEMBER 2007)**

The Cabinet considered the updated Improvement Plan Exception Report for September 2007, together with the corrective action being taken.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception Report, together with the corrective action being taken, be noted and approved;
- (b) that it be noted that, for the 167 actions highlighted within the Plan for September, 89.2% of the Plan was on target (green), 6.6% was one month behind (amber) and 2.4% was over one month behind (red). 1.8% of actions had been re-scheduled or suspended, with approval; and
- (c) that it be noted that the original action relating to Ref 8.1.2, the presentation of a Cultural Offer report to Corporate Management Team, had been suspended due to this activity being covered elsewhere as part of the business planning and budget round process.

112/07 **SEPTEMBER (QUARTER 2) PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

Consideration was given to a report setting out the Council's performance as at 30th September 2007 (period 6, Quarter 2).

The Cabinet noted the various achievements detailed in the report and expressed its thanks to officers for the hard work involved in raising performance, with officers managing financial and operational performance to deliver the Council objectives.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that it be noted that 83% of Performance Indicators (PIs) were Improving or Stable, compared to 67% at Quarter 1;
- (b) that it be noted that 72% of PI's were achieving their Year To Date target, compared to 65% at Quarter 1;
- (c) that it be noted that 79% of PI's were predicted to meet their target at year end, compared to 90% at Quarter 1; and
- (d) that the financial position for both revenue and capital funding for the first quarter of £244k underspend and £342 respectively be noted.

113/07 **COUNCIL TAX BASE CALCULATION 2008-2009**

The Cabinet considered the Council's Tax Base Calculation for the financial year 2008-2009.

**RESOLVED** that in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the Council's Tax Base for 2008-2009, assuming a collection rate of 99%, be calculated at 36,214.70 for the area as a whole, with individual parishes as shown at Appendix 1 of the report.

114/07 **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2008-2009 TO 2010-2011**

Consideration was given to a report on the current position on the Medium Term Financial Plan (revenue budgets) for 2008-2009 to 2010-2011, including proposed pressures and savings.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the unavoidable and high pressures identified in Appendix A of the report, together with those categorised as medium and low as shown at Appendix B of the report, be noted;
- (b) that officers continue to review the pressures and savings with the aim of balancing the budget for 2008-2009 and 2010-2011; and
- (c) that officers investigate all options to mitigate the potential impact of redundancies across the Council.

The meeting closed at 7.28 pm

Chairman

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## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

**TUESDAY, 4TH DECEMBER 2007 AT 6.00PM**

PRESENT: Councillors P. M. McDonald (Chairman), J. T. Duddy (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. M. Bunker, R. J. Deeming, B. Lewis F.CMI, D. L. Pardoe and C. B. Taylor (during Minute Nos. 59/07 to 63/07)

Observers: Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E.

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mr. P. Street, Mrs. C. Felton, Mrs. S. Sellers and Ms. D. McCarthy

#### 55/07 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

#### 56/07 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest or whipping arrangements were made.

#### 57/07 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 6th November 2007 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

#### 58/07 **AIR QUALITY SCRUTINY REPORT**

The Board considered the Scrutiny Report compiled by the Air Quality Task Group and Councillor McDonald, as Chairman of the Task Group, answered all questions raised.

One query related to whether or not a buyer of a property within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) would be alerted to the fact that the property was within an AQMA. It was believed by officers that this would not be highlighted through a standard Local Land Charges Search, however, it was possible for additional questions to be asked as part of the local search.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services be requested to confirm whether the Local Land Charges Search Con 29 form included any questions relating to AQMAs; and
- (b) that the Air Quality Scrutiny Report containing recommendations be approved.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Air Quality Scrutiny Report be placed on the next available Agenda for Cabinet's consideration and all recommendations contained within the report be approved.

59/07 **TRACKING APPROVED SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members considered a report relating to how the Scrutiny Steering Board could track approved scrutiny recommendations. It was explained that any scrutiny recommendations which were not approved would not be included in the tracker report as there would be nothing to update upon. However, with regard to recommendations coming out of scrutiny task group investigations, the Board would receive a response from Cabinet which would include reasons why recommendations may not have been approved.

It was confirmed that although it was expected that the tracking of the recommendations would be primarily for the recommendations which came out of scrutiny task group investigations, the tracker report would include all scrutiny recommendations put forward to Cabinet.

There was a discussion on how often the tracker report should be submitted to the Board.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that a tracker report, based on the format attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be used on a trial basis for twelve months to monitor all scrutiny recommendations approved by Cabinet; and
- (b) that the tracker report be submitted to the Scrutiny Steering Board on a bi-monthly basis during the twelve month trial.

60/07 **UPDATES ON SCRUTINY TASK GROUPS**

(i) Public Transport – Buses Task Group

The Chairman of the Public Transport – Buses Task Group, Councillor Lewis, provided Members of the Board with an update on the work of the Task Group. He stated that 91 responses had been received to the bus survey published in the Together Bromsgrove Magazine and with the 107 interviews which had taken place previously at the Bus Station, a total of 198 responses had been gathered. A second survey at the Bus Station was planned during the late afternoon/early evening of 18th December 2007.

Councillor Lewis informed the Board that he had attended two workshops held by Worcestershire County Council in November which related to transport issues. He also stated that he had arranged for Mr. Harrison from Worcestershire County Council to give a presentation on the Worcestershire Bus Strategy for Members before the start of the next Task Group Meeting scheduled to be held on 21st December 2007. An invitation would be sent out in due course.

Other items mentioned were: dial-a-ride in Redditch; the Disabled User Group; the recent report relating to Disability Equality in the District; and discussions on low platform vehicles between the Task Group Chairman and the Network Performance Manager of First Buses.

Due to more information coming to light, the Chairman requested an extension for the Task Group to enable it to properly complete its investigation.

(ii) Refuse and Recycling Task Group

A brief update from the Task Group Chairman, Councillor Scurrall, was read out to the Board. Members were informed that the Task Group had received a very positive report from Ms. Parkinson, Learning and Organisational Development Manager, relating to NVQ Training for Refuse and Recycling Operatives. It was reported that Members were pleased with the outcome of meetings between Ms. Parkinson, senior officers from Street Scene and Waste Management and NEW College representatives .

The Board was informed that responses from two other local authorities with high recycling rates had been received and that local supermarkets had been contacted relating to reusing, recycling and reducing waste.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) that the updates given on the progress of each of the Scrutiny Task Groups be noted; and
- (ii) that the Public Transport – Buses Task Group be granted an extension to complete its work and that 21st January 2008 be the revised deadline.

61/07 **CABINET'S FORWARD PLAN**

Consideration was given to the Cabinet's Forward Plan which contained the key decisions scheduled to be made over the next few months.

Item number 8 related to flooding matters and the Cabinet was due to consider a response to representations received from Tewkesbury Borough Council on this matter on 5th December 2007. It was stated that within the Cabinet report it referred to the Worcestershire Scrutiny Chairmen Network Meeting on the 26th November 2007 when Scrutiny Members from Worcestershire County Council and District Councils within Worcestershire were due to consider the suggestion of a countywide joint scrutiny on flooding. At this point the Chairman of the Board offered to provide Members with an update on the outcome of that meeting.

The Chairman gave a brief summary of the meeting where a presentation had been given by officers. The Board was informed that it had been decided that each District would provide County Council officers information on work that they had already carried out on flooding and for any Scrutiny Member who was interested in leading the investigation to be encouraged to put themselves forward. It was confirmed that the joint scrutiny on flooding would be an item on the agenda for the next Scrutiny Steering Board meeting for Members to discuss further.

It was suggested that it be recommended to Cabinet that the representations received from Tewkesbury Borough Council be discussed by the Worcestershire Scrutiny Chairmen Network. It was pointed out that the letter from Tewkesbury had been sent to all local authorities within Worcestershire County Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the Cabinet's Forward Plan be noted; and
- (b) that the update from the Chairman on the Worcestershire Scrutiny Chairmen Network Meeting held on 26th November 2007 be noted.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Chief Executive be requested to inform the Cabinet that the Scrutiny Steering Board would like to recommend that the letter from Tewkesbury Borough Council be discussed by the Worcestershire Scrutiny Chairmen Network.

62/07 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The work programme for the Scrutiny Steering Board was considered.

Members were informed that since the work programme had been compiled the BDHT Task Group Review Meeting had been scheduled to take place on 11th December 2007.

(The update from the Chairman on the meeting of the Worcestershire Scrutiny Chairmen Network was provided under the previous item, Minute Number 61/07.)

**RESOLVED** that the report, including the verbal update, be noted.

63/07 **ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED AT CABINET**

Members considered the items on the Cabinet agenda for the meeting scheduled to be held on 5th December 2007.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) that the items on the Cabinet agenda be noted; and
- (b) that the Cabinet agenda papers no longer be included as an item on the agenda for future Scrutiny Steering Board meetings.

(NOTE: Before the close of the meeting, Members were reminded of the Budget Presentation scheduled to be held on Wednesday 19th December 2007 at 6.00pm.)

The meeting closed at 6.40 pm

Chairman

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE AUDIT BOARD

MONDAY, 10TH DECEMBER 2007 AT 6.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillors C. J. K. Wilson (Chairman), S. R. Colella (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. H. J. Jones, D. McGrath, C. R. Scurrall and E. C. Tibby

Observers: Councillor G. N. Denaro (Portfolio Holder for Finance)

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Mr. N. Shovell and Ms. D. Parker-Jones

#### 27/07 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs. C. J. Spencer.

#### 28/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

#### 29/07 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Board held on 15th October 2007 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

#### 30/07 INTERNAL AUDIT PERFORMANCE AND WORKLOAD

Members considered a report which provided a summary of current performance and workload of the Internal Audit Section.

The Audit Services Manager advised Members of adjustments which were required to the 2007/08 Audit Plan in the light of staff shortages. It was predicted that by 31st March 2008 the Section would have had access to only 86% of its planned staff resources and it was therefore proposed that four audit reviews (14%) be removed from the Plan.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the current status and work completed on the 2007/08 Audit Plan be noted and approved;
- (b) that the four audit reviews highlighted for removal from the 2007/08 Audit Plan be removed;
- (c) that the work completed by the Internal Audit Section between September and November 2007 be noted;
- (d) that the summary of investigations completed by the Internal Audit Section be noted;

- (e) that the current Internal Audit Performance Indicator statistics be noted; and
- (f) that the amendments to the Internal Audit Section's standard documentation be noted.

31/07 **RECOMMENDATION TRACKER**

Consideration was given to a report which provided a summary of previously selected audit report "priority one" recommendations.

Members noted the reasons detailed in the report in relation to the recommendations which were still ongoing and outside of their target dates, and commented that they would not wish to see any further slippages beyond the new due dates established for these. The Audit Services Manager stated that it was important that managers set realistic completion dates in the first instance. With regard to recommendations 9 and 10 (National Non Domestic Rates - Billing Procedures and Bill Suppressions), Members requested that a report detailing the Council's billing procedures, including write-offs, arrears and voids, be brought to the next meeting of the Board.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the "priority one" recommendations detailed in Appendix A to the report be noted;
- (b) that the recommendations that had been implemented be removed from the report and replaced by new recommendations; and
- (c) that a report explaining the Council's billing procedures be brought to the next meeting of the Audit Board.

32/07 **RISK MANAGEMENT TRACKER**

Members considered a report which presented a summary of progress to date against all of the improvement actions detailed on individual Service risk registers for the period 1st April to 31st October 2007.

Members noted the year end prediction in the report in relation to the number of actions and improvements likely to be completed by the financial year end, together with the factors outlined which had impacted on progress.

**RESOLVED** that the progress to date against all Service risk register actions for 2007/08 be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.38 pm

Chairman

# Agenda Item 6

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY

THURSDAY, 13TH DECEMBER, 2007 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E. (Chairman), Councillor S. R. Colella, Councillor G. N. Denaro, Councillor Mrs. R. L. Dent, Councillor R. Hollingworth, Councillor E. J. Murray, Councillor E. C. Tibby and Councillor L. J. Turner

**Officers:** Mr. P. Street, Mr. M. Dunphy, Mr. A. Fulford, Ms. R. Williams, Ms. H. Pankhurst, and Ms. R. Cole.

#### 12/07 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. J. D. Luck, S. R. Peters, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey J.P. and C. J. K. Wilson.

#### 13/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were received.

#### 14/07 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Local Development Framework Working Party held on 10th October 2007 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

#### 15/07 ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2006-2007

The Working Party considered the Annual Monitoring Report covering the period 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2007. The report reviewed the actual plan progress compared with the targets and milestones for Local Development Document preparation set out in the Local Development Scheme. Members asked a number of questions arising from the report in particular in relation to flooding issues. The 2001 Census figures quoted in the report in relation to housing issues were also queried and Officers were requested to report back to the next meeting regarding the basis on which these figures were calculated.

**RESOLVED** that the Annual Monitoring Report be submitted to the Government Office of the West Midlands.

16/07 **CORE STRATEGY ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report summarising the responses to the Issues and Options consultations on the Core Strategy. The summary document comprised the consultation responses which had been received which addressed the key issues within the Bromsgrove District.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report “Executive Summary: Issues and Options” be noted and that the responses from the consultation process be used to develop preferred options for the Core Strategy.

17/07 **INTRODUCTION TO THE HABITAT INVENTORY**

The Working Party considered a report and received a brief presentation which introduced a new Geographic Information System tool entitled Habitat Inventory. The Inventory would assist in the creation of the Local Development Framework and also with the determination of planning applications which had implications in relation to the protection and enhancement of wildlife.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

18/07 **LONGBRIDGE AREA ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

The Working Party considered a report on the latest position regarding the Longbridge Area Action Plan and on progress made since the previous report. It was now anticipated that the final Area Action Plan would be presented for approval early in 2008. Following discussion it was

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

19/07 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2008-2011**

Consideration was given to a report on the revision of the Local Development Scheme including new timetables for the Development Plan Documents currently in preparation. The revision of the timetable for production of the Core Strategy was of particular significance in view of the indications arising from the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy. It was reported that the issue of the Council’s response to the Regional Spatial Strategy requirement to meet the growth needs of Redditch within the district was addressed in a separate report. Following discussion it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the revised Local Development Scheme be submitted to the Government Office West Midlands for approval.

20/07 **REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY PHASE 2 PREFERRED OPTION SUBMISSION**

The Working Party considered a report on the latest position regarding the revised Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The report also detailed the



consultation exercise being undertaken and the process by which representations to the submitted version of the RSS could be made.

There was detailed discussion regarding the level of housing allocated to Bromsgrove within the RSS, particularly with regard to the need for affordable housing in the district, together with the amount and location of Redditch related housing and employment growth proposed within Bromsgrove and/or Stratford District. Whilst this growth could be partially met by the use of brownfield sites within the district, the RSS was indicating it should be located adjacent to Redditch town which would require the release of green belt land. The possible implications for the Council should an objection be submitted were also considered.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (a) that objections to the RSS be submitted in respect of the level of housing allocated to Bromsgrove and to the level of Redditch related housing and employment growth to be provided within Bromsgrove and/or Stratford in locations adjacent to Redditch town, when alternative more strategically viable sites within the district are available.
- (b) that the Portfolio Holder for Planning be requested to write to the appropriate Officers at the Government Office for the West Midlands and the West Midlands Regional Assembly together with the local MP, expressing concern over the decision making process at the Regional Planning Partnership on 22nd October 2007.

The meeting closed at 4.05 pm

Chairman

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## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### CABINET

9TH JANUARY 2008

#### AIR QUALITY SCRUTINY REPORT

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E.
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Planning and Environment Services
Chairman of Scrutiny Task Group	Councillor P. M. McDonald

#### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To consider the findings and recommendations made by the Air Quality Task Group which are contained within the attached scrutiny report.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are requested to consider and approve the attached report and recommendations contained within it.

#### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At the Meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board on 12th June 2007, it was decided a Task Group would be established to scrutinise issues relating to air quality and that Councillor McDonald would be appointed as Chairman.
- 3.2 The full terms of reference were approved by the Scrutiny Steering Board at its meeting held on 3rd July 2007 when membership of the Task Group was also agreed.
- 3.3 Further details can be found in the "Terms of Reference" and "Background and Methodology" sections on page 6 of the attached report.
- 3.4 The Scrutiny Steering Board considered and approved the attached report at its meeting held on 4th December 2007 and it was requested that it be submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 For the majority of recommendations there are either no financial implications or minimal financial implications as outlined in the attached report. All of these costs can be met within the existing budget.

- 4.2 The cost of implementing recommendation 10(b) is approximately £1000 which is an extremely small amount which could be reduced even further to approximately £335 if the Highways Agency and Worcestershire County Council's Highways were prepared to contribute. (The exact amount would depend on the size and wording of the sign.)

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Recommendation 17 (reminding taxi drivers that it is an offence to leave the engine of their vehicle running whilst unattended (i.e. not sat in the vehicle)) relates to the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 Section 107. As stated in the report, the Council would not necessarily have the authority to issue fixed notices, however, the Task Group would still like to make taxi drivers aware of the offence and that they could be fined.
- 5.2 Other legislation is referred to in the report such as Clean Air Acts of 1956 and 1968 which were repealed and consolidated by the Clean Air Act 1993. However, there are no other legal implications directly related to this report or the attached as many of the recommendations request the Council to carry out further investigation. As part of those investigations, for example recommendation 1 relates to investigating Low Emission Zones (LEZ), all legal implications would need to be identified and considered before any action is taken.

## **6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

- 6.1 This report does link to Council Objectives Environment and Improvement.

## **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 The risk of not implementing the recommendations contained within the attached scrutiny report is that NO<sub>2</sub> levels may continue to increase and as a consequence people's health will suffer. It is possible that it will be necessary to declare other areas as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) if this Council, in partnership with other agencies such as the Highways Agency and Worcestershire County Council, do not ensure air quality issues are being addressed promptly and the Air Quality Task Group wish to assist the Council in making sure this happens.

## **8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Residents living in Bromsgrove District will benefit if the recommendations contained within the attached scrutiny report are implemented, particularly in relation to their health.

## 9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no implications directly relating to this report for the Council's Equalities and Diversity Policies.

## 10. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues – There are potential procurement issues in relation to the Council purchasing vehicles and/or fuel in the future for Street Scene and Waste Management Services. However, the Task Group is not asking for a decision to be made, only that thorough investigations be carried out.
Personnel Implications – Various personnel implications including: car allowance pay scales (recommendation 20); and home working policy (recommendation 21)
Governance/Performance Management – None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – None
Policy – None
Environmental – the topic “air quality” is environmental so there are environmental implications in relation to the whole of the report.

## 10. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	No – However, has been sent a copy of the attached report for information.
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects	Yes
Assistant Chief Executive	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	Yes

Please Note: Worcestershire County Council, Highways Agency and Worcestershire PCT were also consulted on specific recommendations which related to them.

**11. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Air Quality Scrutiny Report including its five appendices.

**12. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Minutes of the Task Group Meetings.

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**Bromsgrove**  
District Council

[www.bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk)

# SCRUTINY REPORT

## AIR QUALITY — SCRUTINY REPORT

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Task Group Report –  
Scrutiny Steering Board  
December 2007

Committee Services Officer: Della McCarthy

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**REPORT OF THE AIR QUALITY TASK GROUP**

NOVEMBER 2007

**MEMBERS**

Councillors P. M. McDonald (Chairman), E. J. Murray, D. L. Pardoe, C. R. Scurrall and S. P. Shannon.

**SUMMARY**

The role of the Air Quality Task Group was to carry out a scrutiny exercise to examine air quality issues in Bromsgrove District and identify actions which could be taken to address the issues.

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Low Emission Zones

This Council considers applying to Worcestershire County Council for certain roads to be made low emission zone roads therefore limiting access to certain types of vehicles which reduce air quality. Specifically, the Task Group believe the following roads/areas should be low emission due to high NO<sub>2</sub> levels:

- Approximately a 2 mile radius around Bromsgrove town centre
- A38 Bypass in Rubery
- All roads in Rubery with a weight restriction
- A456 in Hagley
- A491 in Hagley

Please refer to page 10 for more detail

*(Cost: There are no financial implications relating to carrying out a detailed investigation around the idea of introducing a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) and it is possible that if such a scheme was implemented, it could be self-funding as registration and penalty charges might cover any costs including the cost of carrying out spot checks for enforcement purposes.)*

2. Bromsgrove Railway Station Improvements

The Council remain committed to improving Bromsgrove Railway Station including the Park and Ride facility as this will encourage the public to use public transport and therefore reduce the numbers of cars on the roads which are having a negative impact on air quality.

*(Cost: Nil)*

3. Public Transport – Buses Scrutiny Task Group  
Support be given to any recommendations relating to the work of the Public Transport – Buses Scrutiny Task Group which relate to improving local bus services as this will (similar to improving Bromsgrove Railway Station) encourage the public to use public transport, therefore reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality.  
*(Cost: Dependent on the recommendations from the Public Transport - Buses Task Group which is due to complete its work by the end of the 2007. Financial implications will be detailed in their Scrutiny Report.)*
4. Traffic Signals near the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)
  - (a) Request that Worcestershire County Council's Highways alter the traffic signals on the A38 North into Bromsgrove so to reduce exit blocking and improve traffic flow near the AQMA; and
  - (b) Request that both Worcestershire County Council's Highways and this Council's Environmental Health Team monitor the area before and after the alterations in order to obtain evidence to prove whether or not the alteration have been successful.*(Cost: Nil)*
5. Yellow Box Markings at Junction 1 M42  
Request that Environmental Health monitor the AQMA before and after the Highways Agency have added and amended yellow box markings on the roundabout at M42 Junction 1 at gridlock (which is hoped will improve the flow of traffic) to investigate whether or not there has been a reduction in air pollution.  
*(Cost: Nil)*
6. M42 Westbound to M5 Scheme  
Request that the Highways Agency monitor the area of the M42 Westbound to M5 to find out if this scheme has been successful in reducing the number of incidents (which has often led to traffic congestion and therefore impacted on the AQMA) and communicate their findings to the Environmental Health Team.  
*(Cost: Nil)*
7. Town Centre Redevelopment  
The Town Centre Redevelopment Steering Group (LSP Theme Group) be requested to consider air pollution caused by traffic congestion when looking at redeveloping the town. This would include the Group looking at the possibilities of having vehicle access to The Strand from Birmingham Road (by Davenal House) and investigate, in partnership with Worcestershire County Council Highway's, whether or not it might help decrease traffic congestion and therefore lower the air pollution at this location which has high NO<sub>2</sub> levels.  
*(Cost: Nil)*

8. High Street and The Strand
- (a) Request that Worcestershire County Council review the timing of the traffic signals located at the top end of the High Street by The Strand with a view to reducing the build up of standing traffic;
  - (b) If (a) is agreed and County Council decide to amend the timing of the traffic signals, request that they monitor the traffic congestion before and after making the alteration to measure whether the action has had a positive impact; and
  - (c) If (a) is agreed, request Environmental Health monitor air quality around Davenal House, Birmingham Road before and after the alteration to measure whether it has helped improve air quality (which is known to be poor at this location).
- (Cost: Nil)*
9. Property Development
- (a) The Head of Planning and Environmental Health Services be requested to consider the best ways to discourage development within an AQMA; and
  - (b) An air quality guidance note for developers be drafted by the Planning and Environmental Health Officers to try and control and mitigate the impact property development has on air quality.
- (Cost: There are no financial implications in relation to (a). There are minimal financial implications to (b) such as printing and copying leaflets as required. This could be met within the existing budget.)*
10. Communication with local residents
- (a) There is ongoing communication with local residents who own and/or reside in a property located in the AQMA to ensure they are fully aware of the situation. (The Task Group will be ensuring the households affected receive a copy of this report for their information.); and
  - (b) A sign be erected (by the County Council) in the AQMA to inform the public that it is an AQMA and that the District Council is working with other agencies to reduce air pollution in the vicinity. The sign should also pose the question “Is your journey necessary?” to encourage the public to think about their travel habits and the impact it has on air pollution.
- (Cost: There are minimal financial implications in relation to (a). With regard to (b), the total cost of erecting a sign would be approximately £1000 maximum. However, the County Council and the Highways Agency may be prepared to share the total cost therefore reducing the cost for the District Council to approximately £335.)*
11. Web site
- Environmental Health be requested to update information on the Council’s website as soon as possible and ensure it is regularly updated.
- (Cost: Nil)*

12. Health of Local Residents

- (a) The Environmental Health Team be requested to work in partnership with Worcestershire PCT (and local GP surgeries) and ensure they are kept up to date in regards to which areas are known poor air quality areas to help investigate further the correlations between poor air quality areas and respiratory illnesses such as asthma; and
- (b) Request that Worcestershire PCT work closely with GPs to ensure the criteria used for diagnosing and recording data relating to asthma is standardised wherever possible to enable the analysis of data to be more meaningful.

*(Cost: Nil)*

13. Bonfires

- (a) The Environmental Health Team be requested to actively discourage bonfires (with the exception of social events on and around 5th November) through promotion, similar to Birmingham City Council; and
- (b) Ensure that members of the public are aware how to report bonfires if they are a nuisance.

*(Cost: There are minimal financial implications as the Environmental Health Team is already doing similar work. The Task Group wish to strengthen this and ask that there is more frequent promotion through press releases, articles in Together Bromsgrove Magazine, letters to Parish Councils and information on the Council's website on this particular issue.)*

14. Street Scene and Waste Management Vehicles

The Head of Street Scene and Waste Management be requested to further investigate and assess options available (such as using bio fuel in refuse and recycling vehicles) which could assist the Council in contributing to improving air quality.

*(Cost: Nil - However, there are potentially significant savings in vehicle running costs which is another reason why this recommendation should be approved.)*

15. Staff Travel Plan

It is requested that the newly established Energy Efficiency Project Group progress the Council's Staff Travel Plan as a matter of urgency and work together with the LSP Better Environment Theme Group.

*(Cost: Nil)*

16. Training/Briefing

- (a) To help the Council lead by example to other agencies, training be offered to all Members and staff (including those based at the Depot) on air quality (and other green issues) to improve their awareness of the impact their behaviour at home and at work can have on air quality;
- (b) As part of that training, it is suggested that the film “An Inconvenient Truth” relating to the work of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize winner Al Gore be shown at the Council House; and
- (c) The Head of Street Scene and Waste Management ensure specific training is provided to refuse and recycling crews relating to where refuse vehicles should be parked (to avoid causing traffic congestion) with engines turned off during breaks.

*(Cost: Minimal financial implications for (a) and (c) which could be met within the existing budget. There is no cost in relation to (b).)*

17. Taxi Drivers

The Licensing Section be requested to remind taxi drivers not to leave their engines running whilst waiting for the next fare at a taxi rank. As an incentive to change their behaviour, it should be pointed out that (a) it will save fuel; and (b) it is an offence to leave a vehicle running when not in the vehicle and any person doing so is at risk of receiving a fixed penalty notice. This information could be included in a newsletter for example.

*(Cost: Minimal financial implications which could be met within existing budget)*

18. Car Sharing Scheme

- (a) To ensure car parking spaces are reserved for those who join the car sharing scheme (which could act as an incentive);
- (b) Through various forms of publicity, the Communication Team ensure that staff are frequently reminded and encouraged to join the Car Sharing Scheme and encouraged to use other alternatives to travel to work such as walking, cycling or public transport; and
- (c) The numbers of staff from Bromsgrove District Council joining the car sharing scheme be monitored.

*(Cost: Minimal financial implications which could be met within existing budget)*

19. Essential and Casual Car Users

Further investigations be carried out by the Human Resources Section into the possibility of having: (a) a pool of Council owned environmentally friendly cars for essential and casual car users; or (b) a loan/lease scheme to assist and encourage staff to convert their own car to alternative fuel.

*(Cost: Nil – only further investigation into the possibilities of having a pool of cars or loan/lease scheme is being requested.)*

20. Car Allowance Pay Scales

The Council consider revising the current car allowance pay scales and not pay more to those who are potentially the worst polluters. Instead, base the car allowance pay scales on the Vehicle Exercise Duty (VED) Rates (attached as Appendix 5) to ensure payment is based on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. (Alternatively, the Council could as a minimum follow the example of other local authorities who have introduced a flat rate for all users (regardless of engine size) as this method would indirectly benefit those employees with smaller engine sized cars as these use less fuel per mile.)

*(Cost: Nil. After further investigations, it could be found that implementing different pay scales could lead to savings, particularly a flat rate for all users.)*

21. Home Working Policy

Support be given to a Home Working Policy as reducing the number of times staff need to travel to and from the office will help reduce the number of cars on the road and this will help towards improving air quality. Therefore, a report from the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development should be submitted to the Corporate Management Team without delay.

*(Cost: Nil)*

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

At the meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 12th June 2007, it was decided a Task Group would be established to scrutinise issues relating to air quality.

The Task Group's terms of reference, which were compiled by the appointed Chairman, Councillor McDonald, were approved by the Board at its meeting held on 3rd July 2007. The full terms of reference are attached as Appendix 1. The Membership of the Task Group was also agreed at the same meeting.

The Task Group was given 4 months (from the date of its first meeting) to complete its work. The first meeting was held on 13th July 2007.

## **BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY**

A press release was issued informing the public the Air Quality Task Group had been set up and members of the public were encouraged to submit any comments and suggestions relating to air quality in the District. Information about the Task Group was also uploaded on to the website where again the public were encouraged to voice their opinions and suggestions for improvement. A handful of responses were received and all members of the public who had submitted their views were invited to attend a meeting to expand on their comments and hear more on what the Task Group were investigating.

There were a total of seven task group meetings and at the first meeting a schedule of work was devised.

The following is a list of some of the areas the Task Group covered (in no particular order):

- The Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) at Lickey End, Junction 1 M42
- Partnership working between this Council, Worcestershire County Council's Highways and the Highways Agency in relation to the AQMA at Lickey End, Junction 1 M42
- Traffic congestion
- Motorway traffic and speeds
- Active Traffic Management (ATM) and Ramp Metering
- Impact on the AQMA and surrounding roads following the improvement of the Bromsgrove Railway Station, including the Park and Ride facility
- The Council's Local Air Quality Management – Updating and Screening Assessment document and Action Plan
- Worst locations within the District known to have poor air quality
- Policies in relation to purchasing new vehicles for Street Scene and Waste Management
- Petrol Stations, LPG (Liquid Petroleum Gas) and Biodiesel

- Air pollution caused by buses, trains using the Lickey incline and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs)
- Worcestershire County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP2)
- Correlations between air quality and respiratory illnesses such as asthma
- Involving the Public in monitoring local nitrogen dioxide levels (NO<sub>2</sub>)
- Planning Policy and Building Regulations
- Staff Car Usage and Mileage Allowances
- Staff Travel Plan and School Travel Plans
- Home Working Policy
- Smoke Control Areas and bonfires
- Low Emission Roads

The Air Quality Task Group decided to invite a number of witnesses including representatives from Worcestershire County Council, Highways Agency, Worcestershire Primary Care Trust, members of the public as well as officers from a variety of departments within Bromsgrove District Council. A representative from Diamond Buses was also invited but unfortunately they declined the invitation. A letter was also sent to the Minister of the West Midlands, Mr. Liam Byrne MP. A full list of all those contacted are set out in Appendix 2.

A wealth of background information was considered by Members in between meetings which included: information on other local authorities who had adopted ways of working which were classed as good practice; information from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders Ltd (SMMT); Department of Health; National Society for Clean Air and Environmental Protection (NSCA); and information from the UK National Air Quality website.

The detailed minutes of Air Quality Task Group meetings gives further information on the Task Group's investigations. If any Member would like a copy of any of the minutes, please contact the relevant committee services officer (see final page of this report for contact details).



## **GENERAL FINDINGS**

### Air Quality Management Area

There is one Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Bromsgrove District which is located at Lickey End, M42 Junction 1 (see Appendix 3). It was necessary to declare an AQMA at this location due to the exceedences of the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and the AQMA came into force in July 2001.

Following the declaration of the AQMA, Bromsgrove District Council was tasked by Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) to liaise with the Highways Agency as the main organisation responsible for this particular area. We therefore felt it vital that we as a Task Group ensured representatives from the Highways Agency in particular were invited to attend.

Initially, we were disappointed with the lack of response from the Highways Agency. However, a representative did attend a meeting and provided the Task Group with very useful information as well as answering all our queries including providing details on Ramp Metering and ATM (Active Traffic Management).

### Other Parts of the District with Poor Air Quality

Other locations which also appear to have air quality issues include: New Road in Rubery; Kidderminster Road and Birmingham Road (A456/A491) in Hagley; Davenal House, Birmingham Road, Bromsgrove; Black Cross Public House, Worcester Road, Bromsgrove; and Redditch Road/Buntsford Hill, Bromsgrove.

With regard to Redditch Road/Buntsford Hill, we were pleased to learn that the Council has been awarded a £12,000 grant to enable officers to continuously monitor the area for 6 months to obtain accurate evidence which could be later used to improve air quality in the area.

### Health Issues

We obtained some useful information from Worcestershire Primary Care Trust (PCT) and although we understand the PCT could not categorically state that poor air quality caused respiratory illnesses such as asthma, it was agreed that poor air quality was a trigger and certainly exacerbated such illnesses. Asthma is increasing throughout the country and there is more evidence coming to light supporting a link between asthma and living in close proximity to traffic.

It is understood that diagnosing skills and recording methods of GPs in relation to asthma do vary in different parts of the District and we have tried to address this issue in our recommendations. However, there is still some concern about the asthma prevalence for the three GP practices in Rubery which appeared higher than other areas of the District.

## **SPECIFIC FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### ➤ Low Emission Zones (LEZ)

Members of the Task Group discussed the plans of the Mayor of London to introduce a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) across London using a phased approach commencing in February 2008. It is the view of the Task Group that this Council should consider introducing a similar scheme by applying to Worcestershire County Council for certain roads to be within a LEZ. This particular measure is also referred to in Volume 1 of the Government's Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as a possible solution.

The Task Group consulted Worcestershire County Council on this suggestion and we were informed that it was possible to introduce such a scheme. There would be certain steps the Council would need to take such as identifying which roads and vehicles would be covered in the scheme as well as carrying out extensive consultation with the public and stakeholders. However, we believe such a scheme would make a huge difference to people's health as it will help deter the most polluting vehicles and encourage businesses to upgrade their vehicles.

Similar to London, a road user charging order would need to be in operation but it would not apply to cars, only to certain vehicles such as lorries, buses, coaches, large vans and mini-buses that do not meet a particular standard i.e. Euro III (see Appendix 4). The purpose of the scheme would be to deter the use of high polluting vehicles and provide an incentive to businesses to upgrade their vehicles to avoid charges. The scheme could be enforced via spot checks.

Consultation in London showed there was support particularly from residents but also (and perhaps surprisingly to some) a large proportion of businesses. It is believed that studies have shown that an LEZ can significantly improve air quality which can only be of benefit to all those who work and live in the District, particularly in relation to our health such as reducing the risk of respiratory illnesses including asthma. It should be pointed out that health issues caused by air pollution were one of the main concerns voiced by local residents who attended one of our meetings.

We understand that implementing such a scheme could not happen overnight and further investigation would be required as well as extensive consultation. However, the Task Group strongly believe that this Council has a duty to at least consider introducing LEZ by agreeing to investigate it fully, particularly as it could be possible that this scheme might be self-funding.

We should take a bold step and move forward and be the first Council in the Midlands to consider and implement such a scheme which links to the Council Objective relating to Environment.

<b>Recommendation 1</b>	<p>This Council considers applying to Worcestershire County Council for certain roads to be made low emission zone roads therefore limiting access to certain types of vehicles which reduce air quality. Specifically, the Task Group believe the following roads/areas should be low emission due to high NO<sub>2</sub> levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Approximately a 2 mile radius around Bromsgrove town centre</li> <li>▪ A38 Bypass in Rubery</li> <li>▪ All roads in Rubery with a weight restriction</li> <li>▪ A456 in Hagley</li> <li>▪ A491 in Hagley</li> </ul>
<b>Financial Implications</b>	<p>There are no financial implications relating to carrying out a detailed investigation around the idea of introducing a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) and it is possible that if such a scheme was implemented, it could be self-funding as registration and penalty charges might cover any costs including the cost of carrying out spot checks for enforcement purposes.</p>

➤ Bromsgrove Railway Station Improvements

We consulted Worcestershire County Council on whether it was possible that the improvements to Bromsgrove Railway Station and the provision of a park and ride service could have adverse effects on the A38 and the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) at Lickey End, M42 Junction 1 due to commuters driving to use the park and ride service. However, officers from County were confident that the total impact would be a reduction in traffic.

To encourage more people to use public transport and therefore reduce traffic on the roads which would lead to improved air quality, the Task Group would like to show its support to the work being carried out to improve Bromsgrove Railway Station. Therefore, the second recommendation is:

<b>Recommendation 2</b>	<p>The Council remain committed to improving Bromsgrove Railway Station including the Park and Ride facility as this will encourage the public to use public transport and therefore reduce the numbers of cars on the roads which are having a negative impact on air quality.</p>
<b>Financial Implications</b>	<p>There are no financial implications relating to this recommendation.</p>

➤ Public Transport – Buses Scrutiny Task Group

Similar to the reasons for recommendation 2, this Task Group would like to show its support to any recommendations which the Buses Task Group put forward which relate to improving bus services and therefore encouraging more people to use public transport, for example, improving the links between Bromsgrove Railway Station and Bromsgrove town centre. This would again, take more cars off the roads and help reduce air pollution.

The Air Quality Task Group have also suggested to the Public Transport – Buses Task Group the possibility of considering the feasibility of a bus service being provided to and from the cluster of Trading Estates located in Stoke Prior which would help reduce traffic congestion and therefore improve air quality in that area.

<b>Recommendation 3</b>	Support be given to any recommendations relating to the work of the Public Transport – Buses Scrutiny Task Group which relate to improving local bus services as this will (similar to improving Bromsgrove Railway Station) encourage the public to use public transport, therefore reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	The financial implications are dependent on the recommendations from the Public Transport - Buses Task Group. It is due to complete its work by the end of the 2007 and all financial implications will be detailed in their Scrutiny Report.

➤ Traffic Signals near the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)

At one particular meeting, representatives from the Highways Agency and Worcestershire County Council were both present and it was suggested by the Highways Agency that the County Council should alter the traffic signals on the A38 North into Bromsgrove as it was believed that this would reduce exit blocking and improve traffic flow near the AQMA (Lickey End, Junction 1 M42). As the traffic flow has a direct impact on air quality, the Task Group would like to push this suggestion forward.

To obtain evidence to show whether or not altering the traffic signals has been beneficial, we would also like to ask that both Worcestershire County Council and the Environmental Team monitor the area before and after the alterations.

<b>Recommendation 4</b>	(a) Request that Worcestershire County Council's Highways alter the traffic signals on the A38 North into Bromsgrove so to reduce the exit blocking and improve traffic flow near the AQMA; and
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	(b) Request that both Worcestershire County Council's Highways and this Council's Environmental Health Team monitor the area before and after the alterations in order to obtain evidence to prove whether or not the alteration have been successful.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are no financial implications for this Council for either (a) or (b).

➤ Yellow Box Markings at Junction 1 M42

The Task Group learnt from a Highways Agency representative that there was a proposal relating to the yellow box markings at Junction 1 M42 due to it being an AQMA. According to the Highways Agency, the exact date when this scheme will be implemented is dependent on costings but it is anticipated it will be in place by the end of 2008 if not before.

<b>Recommendation 5</b>	Request that Environmental Health monitor the AQMA before and after the Highways Agency have added and amended yellow box markings on the roundabout at M42 Junction 1 at gridlock (which is hoped will improve the flow of traffic) to investigate whether or not there has been a reduction in air pollution.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are no financial implications.

➤ M42 Westbound to M5 Scheme

We were informed that the Highways Agency completed another scheme earlier this year relating to changing signs and markings on M42 Westbound to the M5 to give drivers advanced warning and ensure they were in the correct lane. The Highways Agency hopes this will reduce the number of incidents which have often led to traffic congestion and therefore have a negative impact on the AQMA. We understand that as the scheme was only completed in May 2007, it is too soon to fully assess what impact it has made but we would like to make sure that the Highways Agency communicate their findings to the Environmental Health Team and therefore recommend the following:

<b>Recommendation 6</b>	Request that the Highways Agency monitor the area of the M42 Westbound to M5 to find out if this scheme has been successful in reducing the number of incidents (which has often led to traffic congestion and therefore impacted on the AQMA) and communicate their findings to the Environmental Health Team.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are no financial implications.

➤ Town Centre Re-Development

We feel very strongly that this Council should always consider air quality issues in what ever project or investigation it undertakes, for example, the redevelopment of the town centre, which is one of the priorities of the Council. Therefore, the next recommendation is as follows:

<b>Recommendation 7</b>	The Town Centre Redevelopment Steering Group (LSP Theme Group) be requested to consider air pollution caused by traffic congestion when looking at redeveloping the town. This would include the Group looking at the possibilities of having vehicle access to The Strand from Birmingham Road (by Davenal House) and investigate, in partnership with Worcestershire County Council Highway's, whether or not it might help decrease traffic congestion and therefore lower the air pollution at this location which has high NO <sub>2</sub> levels.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are no financial implications.

➤ High Street and The Strand Traffic Signals

Leading on from discussions we had in relation to the air pollution near Davenal House by The Strand, we briefly discussed the traffic build up at the lights at the top end of the High Street by The Strand. It was questioned whether the timings of these particular signals could be reviewed to ensure it did not cause unnecessary waiting time and traffic congestion in this area as this would have a negative impact on air quality in an area where there are a number of pedestrians. Therefore, similar to what the Highways Agency suggested in relation to recommendation 4, we would like to recommend the following:

<b>Recommendation 8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Request that Worcestershire County Council review the timing of the traffic signals located at the top end of the High Street by The Strand with a view to reducing the build up of standing traffic;</li> <li>(b) If (a) is agreed and County Council decide to amend the timing of the traffic signals, request that they monitor the traffic congestion before and after making the alteration to measure whether the action has had a positive impact; and</li> <li>(c) If (a) is agreed, request Environmental Health monitor air quality around Davenal House, Birmingham Road before and after the alteration to measure whether it has helped improve air quality (which is known to be poor at this location).</li> </ul>
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<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are no financial implications in relation to (a), (b) or (c).
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➤ Property Development

During the scrutiny investigation, we found out that with regard to Planning Policy, there was no specific policy in place to deal with air quality issues but we accept that there are other policies which are used as a mechanism to help reduce air pollution. We realise that although officers may recommend refusal for planning permission for certain builds in relation to environmental health issues such as the impact on air quality, it is understood this may not always be enough to withstand an appeal. However, to try and encourage developers to think about air quality issues, we feel that a guidance note could be produced.

The Task Group would prefer the Council to work towards reducing air pollution, particularly in relation to the AQMA. However, in the meantime, we would like to ensure that no one else suffers. We realise it is unlikely that there would be any significant builds in the AQMA at Lickey End, Junction 1 M42; nonetheless, we would like to recommend the following:

<b>Recommendation 9</b>	(a) The Head of Planning and Environmental Health Services be requested to consider the best ways to discourage development within an AQMA; and (b) An air quality guidance note for developers be drafted by the Planning and Environmental Health Officers to try and control and mitigate the impact property development has on air quality.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are no financial implications in relation to (a). There are minimal financial implications to (b) such as printing and copying leaflets as required. This could be met within the existing budget.

➤ Communication with local residents

Many Members of the Council are likely to be aware of the AQMA, however, we feel it is unlikely that many members of the public know about it. We understand that those individuals with properties living within the AQMA were informed around the time when it came into force, however, we feel that it is important that there is ongoing communication with those residents who have a property in the AQMA.

We also want to inform all those travelling through the vicinity and encourage them to think about their travelling behaviour. We realise that we are not going to change people's travelling habits overnight but that does not mean we should sit back and do nothing hoping things will change. We need to at least provide the

public with the facts to enable them to make informed decisions when it comes to their travelling choices and the impact it has on air quality for everyone.

<b>Recommendation 10</b>	<p>(a) There is ongoing communication with local residents who own and/or reside in a property located in the AQMA to ensure they are fully aware of the situation. (The Task Group will be ensuring the households affected receive a copy of this report for their information.); and</p> <p>(b) A sign is erected (by the County Council) in the AQMA to inform the public that it is an AQMA and that the District Council is working with other agencies to reduce air pollution in the vicinity. The sign should also pose the question “Is your journey necessary?” to encourage the public to think about their travel habits and the impact it has on air pollution.</p>
<b>Financial Implications</b>	<p>There are minimal financial implications in relation to (a). With regard to (b), the total cost of erecting a sign would be approximately £1000 maximum. However, the County Council and the Highways Agency may be prepared to share the total cost therefore reducing the cost for the District Council to approximately £335.</p>

➤ Website

One of the easiest and cheapest ways we can communicate to the public is via the internet but this is not worthwhile if the information on a website is not updated regularly. The information on the web pages relating to Air Quality on the pages for Environmental Health is years out of date and we would like this rectified as soon as possible. We are confident officers will support the following recommendation:

<b>Recommendation 11</b>	<p>Environmental Health be requested to update information on the Council’s website as soon as possible and ensure it is regularly updated.</p>
<b>Financial Implications</b>	<p>There are no financial implications.</p>

➤ Health of local residents

It is the view of the Task Group that poor air quality can have serious effects on people’s health as it can trigger and exacerbate respiratory illnesses such as asthma. This view is shared by local residents who attended one of our meetings and representatives from Worcestershire Primary Care Trust (PCT).



Asthma is increasing throughout the country and there is more evidence coming to light supporting a link between asthma and living in close proximity to traffic. This Council needs to ensure that it works with Worcestershire PCT and shares relevant information.

We heard from representatives of the PCT that some GPs are better than others at diagnosing asthma and recording data for the PCT to analyse. We would like to suggest that the PCT together with GPs work towards a more standardised approach to ensure consistency.

<b>Recommendation 12</b>	<p>(a) The Environmental Health Team be requested to work in partnership with Worcestershire PCT (and local GP surgeries) and ensure they are kept up to date in regards to which areas are known poor air quality areas to help investigate further the correlations between poor air quality areas and respiratory illnesses such as asthma; and</p> <p>(b) Request that Worcestershire PCT work closely with GPs to make certain the criteria used for diagnosing and recording data relating to asthma is standardised wherever possible to enable the analysis of data to be more meaningful.</p>
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are no financial implications.

➤ Bonfires

The Task Group questioned whether there was a need for the District to be a smoke control area. Under the Clean Air Act, local authorities can declare the whole or part of the District as a smoke control area. This would mean that it would be an offence to emit smoke from a chimney of a building, from a furnace or from a fixed boiler, if located in a designated smoke control area. As there are an extremely small number of complaints from residents about nearby domestic solid fuel fires, we agreed that a smoke control area was not necessary.

However, the Council does frequently receive complaints from residents in relation to bonfires and this was also one of the concerns raised at one of our meetings by the public. We are confident Environmental Officers deal with individual cases using appropriate legislation when incidents are reported and we as a Task Group support this approach. Although there is no legislation to ban bonfires, similar to our neighbour Birmingham City Council, we would like to recommend the following which will help show the public that we want to address their concerns:

<b>Recommendation 13</b>	(a) The Environmental Health Team be requested to actively discourage bonfires (with the exception of social events on and around 5th November)
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	through promotion, similar to Birmingham City Council; and (b) Ensure that members of the public are aware how to report bonfires if they are a nuisance.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are minimal financial implications as the Environmental Health Team is already doing similar work. The Task Group wish to strengthen this and ask that there is more frequent promotion through press releases, articles in Together Bromsgrove Magazine, letters to Parish Councils and information on the Council's website on this particular issue.

➤ Street Scene and Waste Management Vehicles

We understand that all vehicles must comply with legislation current at the time of purchase and that new vehicles recently purchased by Street Scene and Waste Management comply with Euro IV regulations as required by legislation. We were pleased to be informed that the current fleet of Refuse Collection Vehicles employ a Continuously Regenerating Trap (CRT) technology which scrubs the exhaust gases before releasing them to the atmosphere. This ensures that the fleet is achieving exhaust emissions better than that required (Euro V) even though there is no requirement to achieve Euro V until October 2009.

Bio fuel has been considered previously but we were informed that at the time, a supplier could not be found within an appropriate distance. However, officers will agree that the situation is changing all the time and alternative fuels such as bio fuel is becoming far more accessible than in the past.

This Council needs to make sure it is continually reviewing these types of issues as not only could they be of benefit in terms of reducing air pollution but there are potential savings to be made. Although, changing fuels can be an issue in terms of invalidating warranties, the Council's fleet are 3 years old and therefore are no longer under warranty. This makes it an ideal time to approve the following:

<b>Recommendation 14</b>	The Head of Street Scene and Waste Management be requested to further investigate and assess options available (such as using bio fuel in refuse and recycling vehicles) which could assist the Council in contributing to improving air quality.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are no financial implications, however, there are potentially significant savings in vehicle running costs which is another reason why this recommendation should be approved.

➤ Staff Travel Plan

There has been quite a lot of work which has taken place in the past in relation to a Staff Travel Plan and we were disappointed to learn that nothing has been implemented. However, we were pleased to find out from Worcestershire County Council that many schools in the District have a travel plan or were at least working towards one. We should be leading by example on this and therefore we would like to recommend:

<b>Recommendation 15</b>	It is requested that the newly established Energy Efficiency Project Group progress the Council's Staff Travel Plan as a matter of urgency and work together with the LSP Better Environment Theme Group.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are no financial implications.

➤ Training/Briefing

The Task Group feels that it is important that this Council leads by example when it comes to air quality issues and to do this it needs to ensure that all officers and Members are fully informed. Therefore we propose training or briefing sessions for both officers and Members sometime in the near future.

Refuse and Recycling crews need specific training in relation to what rules they should follow when they take a break on their rounds such as parking in an area where the vehicle does not become an obstruction and ensuring their engines are turned off (which will also help save fuel).

<b>Recommendation 16</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) To help the Council lead by example to other agencies, training be offered to all Members and staff (including those based at the Depot) on air quality (and other green issues) to improve their awareness of the impact their behaviour at home and at work can have on air quality;</li> <li>(b) As part of that training, it is suggested that the film "An Inconvenient Truth" relating to the work of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize winner Al Gore be shown at the Council House;</li> <li>(c) The Head of Street Scene and Waste Management ensure specific training is provided to refuse and recycling crews relating to where refuse vehicles should be parked (to avoid causing traffic congestion) with engines turned off during breaks; and</li> </ul>
<b>Financial Implications</b>	Minimal financial implications for (a) and (c) which could be met within the existing budget. There is no cost in relation to (b)

➤ Taxi Drivers

We would like taxi drivers to think about their behaviour as it has been witnessed that occasionally, taxi drivers have left their vehicles running unattended (i.e. not sat in their vehicle). It is understood that this is an offence to leave the engine of a vehicle running when the person licensed to drive it is not sitting in the vehicle and the Task Group would like to gently remind taxi drivers that it is in their interests not to commit this offence.

We would like to encourage taxi drivers to change their behaviour in this way as it will help towards improving air quality and therefore we would like to recommend the following:

<b>Recommendation 17</b>	The Licensing Section be requested to remind taxi drivers not to leave their engines running whilst waiting for the next fare at a taxi rank. As an incentive to change their behaviour, it should be pointed out that (a) it will save fuel; and (b) it is an offence to leave a vehicle running when not in the vehicle and any person doing so is at risk of receiving a fixed penalty notice. This information could be included in a newsletter for example.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are minimal financial implications which can be met within the existing budget.
<b>Legal Implications</b>	Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 Section 107. The Council would not necessarily have the authority to issue fixed penalty notices, however, the Police would have such powers.

➤ Car Sharing Scheme

We are aware that this Council joined the County Council Car Sharing Scheme in July 2007 which enables any member of staff to register and find a potential car share partner. We understand a review will be carried out in January 2008 by this Council's Communication Team and reserved car parking spaces for those in the scheme is likely to be considered which we fully support. We would also like to ask officers to increase the publicity of the scheme to ensure all staff are aware of it and help encourage them to at least consider joining the scheme.

<b>Recommendation 18</b>	(a) To ensure car parking spaces are reserved for those who join the car sharing scheme (which could act as an incentive); (b) Through various forms of publicity, the Communication Team ensure that staff are frequently reminded and encouraged to join the
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	Car Sharing Scheme and encouraged to use other alternatives to travel to work such as walking, cycling or public transport; and (c) The numbers of staff from Bromsgrove District Council joining the car sharing scheme be monitored.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are minimal financial implications which can be met within the existing budget.

➤ Essential and Casual Car Users

This Council needs to lead by example and encourage staff to be conscious of important issues as air quality. Therefore, we would like to request that the options contained within recommendation 19 are at least investigated further.

<b>Recommendation 19</b>	Further investigations be carried out by the Human Resources Section into the possibility of having: (a) a pool of Council owned environmentally friendly cars for essential and casual car users; or (b) a loan/lease scheme to assist and encourage staff to convert their own car to alternative fuel.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are no financial implications in carrying out further investigations.

➤ Car Allowance Pay Scales

Car allowances are nationally agreed rates but the Council is paying more to those who own larger engines and they are likely to be the worst polluters. The Task Group feel this is the wrong message to give out to staff and the Council should look to revise the rates similar to other local authorities.

<b>Recommendation 20</b>	The Council consider revising the current car allowance pay scales and not pay more to those who are potentially the worst polluters. Instead, base the car allowance pay scales on the Vehicle Exercise Duty (VED) Rates (attached as Appendix 5) to ensure payment is based on CO <sub>2</sub> emissions. (Alternatively, the Council could as a minimum follow the example of other local authorities who have introduced a flat rate for all users (regardless of engine size) as this method would indirectly benefit those employees with smaller engine sized cars as these use less fuel per mile.)
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are no financial implications in carrying out further investigations. It is possible that implementing different pay scales could lead to savings, particularly having a flat rate for all users for example.

➤ Home Working Policy

Although there is a facility to enable home working on an informal ad-hoc basis, which the Task Group supports, it is understood that the Corporate Management Team considered a Home Working Policy in July 2007 where it was agreed that a less detailed set of procedures was required. We are also aware of the pilot scheme currently taking place in Revenues and Benefits.

The Task Group would like to encourage home working where possible as this will mean that officers do not need to travel to the office unnecessarily and we would like the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development to ensure that she submits a report to the Corporate Management Team as soon as possible.

<b>Recommendation 21</b>	Support be given to a Home Working Policy as reducing the number of times staff need to travel to and from the office will help reduce the number of cars on the road and this will help towards improving air quality. Therefore, a report from the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development should be submitted to the Corporate Management Team without delay.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are no financial implications as it is simply supporting a policy which officers will be implementing.

## **CONCLUSION**

Members of the Task Group believe there is a lot this Council could do towards improving air quality. In many cases, they are simple actions that would be of little or no cost financially, however, it would be a step towards reducing air pollution which impacts on us all, particularly on our health.

No one agency can improve air quality. Partnership working is vital and this Council has to work closely with the Highways Agency, Worcestershire County Council as well as Worcestershire Primary Care Trust to ensure air quality issues are addressed. It is also important that the public is not forgotten. If the Council ensures it communicates better with the members of the public then they will be in a much better position to make more informed choices in relation to their travelling habits for example.

Looking into introducing low emission zones is a recommendation we are particularly keen to be approved as this will show the public how serious this Council is taking the health and wellbeing of its residents. We believe air quality issues should not be ignored and instead this Council should lead by example by taking action now to start addressing the issues.

It should also be pointed out that recommendations outlined in this report do relate to the Council objectives Environment and Improvement.

We have found this scrutiny exercise very valuable and hope the Cabinet will see the benefits of the recommendations put forward for consideration. We would also like to take this opportunity to once again thank all those who contributed to our scrutiny investigation.

## **REVIEW**

The Air Quality Task Group will reconvene in 12 months time to carry out a review of the outcome of this report including whether or not recommendations were approved and implemented and the impact of these actions.

**Councillor P. M. McDonald**  
Chairman of the Air Quality Task Group

### **Contact Officer**

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Tel: 01527 881407

# APPENDICES

**Appendix 1** – Task Group’s Terms of Reference

**Appendix 2** – A List of Individuals and Agencies the Task Group Consulted

**Appendix 3** – Map of the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)

**Appendix 4** – Classification of Vehicles - Low Emission Zone (LEZ)

**Appendix 5** – Vehicle Exercise Duty (VED) Rates 2007/08



**AIR QUALITY TASK GROUP**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The attached scrutiny exercise scoping checklist (which acts as the Air Quality Task Group's terms of reference) was approved by the Scrutiny Steering Board on 3rd July 2007 subject to the following being included:

“To carry out a scrutiny exercise to examine air quality issues in Bromsgrove District and to identify actions which can be taken to address the issues.”

The terms of reference was also agreed by the Task Group at its first meeting on 13th July 2007.

Councillor Hollingworth, Leader of the Council, asked if the Task Group could look at what impact the proposals to improve Bromsgrove Railway Station might have on the Air Quality Management Area (J1 M42) and on the A38. This was due to a concern that if more people are travelling to Bromsgrove Train Station in order to use the trains, it might lead to further traffic congestion on the A38. The Scrutiny Steering Board discussed this at the meeting held on 4th September 2007 and it was agreed that this was already covered within the Task Group's terms of reference. It should be pointed out that this specific point was covered by the Task Group and Worcestershire County Council was consulted, as mentioned within the body Scrutiny Report.

# SCRUTINY EXERCISE SCOPING CHECKLIST

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

When the Board decides to set up a Task Group to scrutinise a particular subject, the appointed Chairman of the Task Group should complete this checklist. Completed forms will be considered by the Board and by the Task Group as a whole at the Task Group's first meeting.

▪ General Subject Area to be Scrutinised: AIR QUALITY

Specific Subject to be Scrutinised: TRAFFIC CONGESTION / FLOWS / ROUTES / LOCAL AREAS AT RISK / B D C VEHICLES /

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

Should any Officers be invited to give evidence? **YES/NO**

If yes, state name and/or post title: M. BELL / P. STREET

Should any external witnesses be invited to give evidence? **YES/NO**

If so, who and from which organisations? FRIENDS OF EARTH / HIGHWAY AGENCY / COUNTY COUNCIL / PCT / A.A(RAC) LOCAL PETROL STATIONS

Should the Task Group receive evidence from other sources other than witnesses? **YES/NO**

If so, what information should the Task Group wish to see and from which sources should it be gathered? MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

Should a period of public consultation form part of the Scrutiny exercise? **YES/NO**

If so, on what should the public be consulted? FORWARD ILLNESSES RELATED TO AIR POLLUTION / TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

Have other authorities carried out similar scrutiny exercises? **YES/NO**

If so, which authorities?.....

.....

What were their conclusions and what can we learn from them?.....

.....

.....

Will the Scrutiny exercise cross the District boundary? **YES/NO**

If so, should any other authorities be invited to participate?.....

.....

.....

- Would it be appropriate to co-opt anyone on to the Task Group whilst the Scrutiny exercise is being carried out? **YES/NO**

If so, who and from which organisations?.....

.....

.....

What do you anticipate the timetable will be for the scrutiny exercise?

SIX WEEKS.....

.....

.....

.....

- Approximate number of Task Group Meetings?.....

Signed: 

Chairman of behalf of the:.....Task Group

Date:.....

Please return completed forms to:  
Della McCarthy  
Committee Services Officer  
Legal and Democratic Services  
Bromsgrove District Council

**A List of those the Task Group Consulted**

**External Witnesses:**

Highways Agency:

- Mr. R. Jackson, Route Performance Manager
- Ms. M. Hackman, Air Quality Officer
- Mr. P. Siddall, Officer from Area 9 Team

Worcestershire County Council:

- Mr. D. Balme, Transport Planning Officer
- Ms. S. Gilmore, Transport Planning Manager
- Mr. J. Howell-Thomas, Waste Management Services
- Mr. M. Walton, Senior Traffic and Development Coordination Engineer

Worcestershire Primary Care Trust:

- Ms L. Altay, Consultant in Public Health
- Ms E. Davis, Epidemiologist
- Ms. S. Fessey, Information Governance Officer
- Ms. H. Mossop, Speciality Registrar in Public Health

Network Rail

- Ms. K. Stokes, Community Relations Advisor

Minister of State and Minister for the West Midlands, Mr. L. Byrne – contacted by letter in relation to the work of the Highways Agency and specifically the AQMA.

Members of the Public via press releases and the Council's website. Four members of the public were invited to attend and speak to the Task Group at a meeting held on 20th September 2007.

Go West Midlands Limited (Diamond Buses) – they declined the invitation to attend a meeting of the Task Group at a date and time to suit because they were “extremely busy implementing its commercial strategy”.

**Internal Witnesses:**

Planning and Environmental Health:

- Mr. D. Hammond, Head of Planning and Environmental Health Services
- Mr. R. Goundry, Team Leader – Pollution and General
- Mr. M. Dunphy, Strategic Planning Manager
- Mr. A. Wyre, Principal Building Control Surveyor

Street Scene and Waste Management:

- Mr. M. Bell, Head of Street Scene and Waste Management
- Ms. A. Wardell, Waste Policy and Promotions Manager

Human Resources and Organisational Development:

- Ms. J. Pitman, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development
- Mrs. L. Stefan, Principal HR Advisor
- Mr. K. Day, Payroll Manager

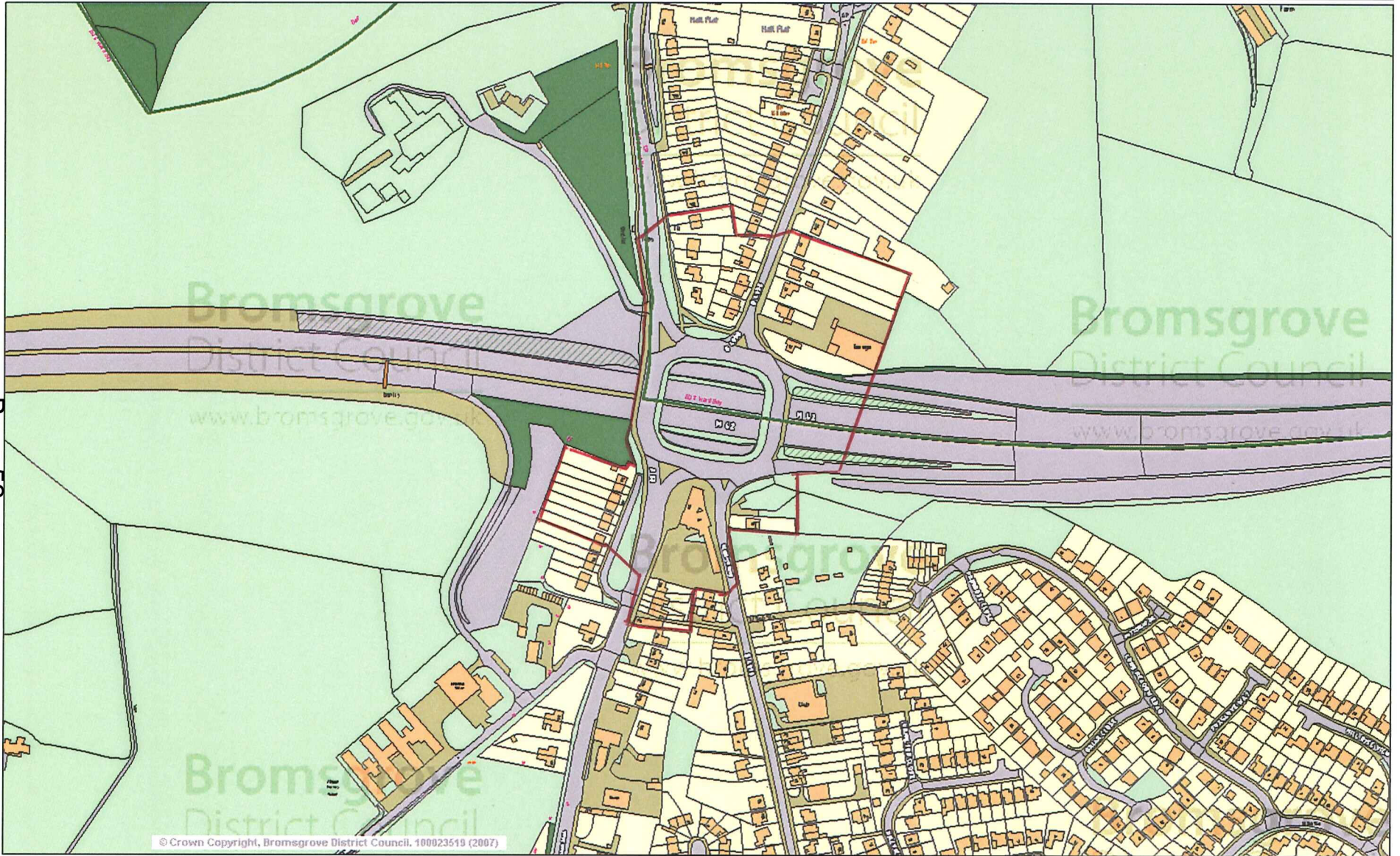
The majority of individuals listed attended at least one meeting of the Task Group. The rest provided written information for the Task Group to consider.

All relevant officers were made aware of the recommendations which would impact on their department and were given an opportunity to comment.






As with all scrutiny reports, all financial implications were checked by the Head of Financial Services and all legal implications were checked by a Senior Solicitor.



The Area outlined in red shows the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)



## Appendix 4: An example of types of vehicles which could be included in the proposed LEZs & minimum emissions standards

Vehicle type and definitions		Date affected	Required emissions standards
<p><b>Heavier lorries.</b> Heavy diesel-engined vehicles exceeding 12 tonnes Gross Vehicle Weight, including goods vehicles, motor caravans, motorised horseboxes and other specialist vehicles.</p>		<p>February 2008 - Euro III</p> <p>January 2012 - Euro IV</p>	<p><b>All Euro III vehicles meet the LEZ standard</b> Vehicles first registered as new on or after 1 October 2001 are assumed to be Euro III, so will meet the LEZ emissions standards. Vehicles not meeting the emissions standards could be made to do so by modifying them to meet the Euro III standard for particulate matter.</p> <p>Vehicles not meeting the emissions standards would need to pay a daily charge if used within the LEZ.</p>
<p><b>Lighter lorries.</b> Heavy diesel-engined vehicles between 3.5 and 12 tonnes Gross Vehicle Weight, including goods vehicles, motor caravans, motorised horseboxes and other specialist vehicles.</p>		<p>July 2008 Euro III</p>	<p><b>From January 2012 the required emissions standards are raised to Euro IV. All Euro IV vehicles will meet the LEZ standard.</b></p> <p>Vehicles first registered as new on or after 1 October 2006 are assumed to be Euro IV and so will meet the emissions standards.</p> <p>Vehicles not meeting the emissions standards could be made to do so by modifying them to meet the Euro IV standard for particulate matter.</p>
<p><b>Buses and coaches.</b> Diesel-engined passenger vehicles with more than eight seats plus the driver's seat exceeding 5 tonnes Gross Vehicle Weight.</p>		<p>January 2012 - Euro IV</p>	<p>Vehicles not meeting the emissions standards would need to pay a daily charge if used within the LEZ.</p>
<p><b>Large vans.</b> Diesel-engined vehicles between 1.205 tonnes unladen and 3.5 tonnes Gross Vehicle Weight and motor caravans and ambulances between 2.5 tonnes and 3.5 tonnes Gross Vehicles Weight.</p>		<p>October 2010 Euro III</p>	<p><b>All Euro III vehicles will meet the LEZ standard.</b> Vehicles registered as new on or after 1 January 2002 are assumed to be Euro III, so will meet the LEZ emissions standards.</p> <p>Vehicles not meeting the emissions standards could be made to do so by modifying them to meet the Euro III standard for particulate matter.</p> <p>Vehicles not meeting the emissions standards would need to pay a daily charge if used within the LEZ.</p>
<p><b>Minibuses.</b> Diesel-engined passenger vehicles with more than eight seats plus the driver's seat below 5 tonnes Gross Vehicle Weight.</p>			

- Taken from the Statement of the Mayor of London on Low Emission Zones (LEZ) -



**Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) Rates 2007/8****Pre-graduated VED (registered before March 2001)**

<b>£ per year</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>New rate</b>
1549cc and below	+£5	£115
above 1549cc	+£5	£180

**Graduated VED for Private Vehicles (registered from March 2001)**

<b>£ per year VED band</b>	<b>CO<sub>2</sub> (g/km)</b>	<b>Alternative Fuel Cars</b>	<b>Petrol cars</b>	<b>Diesel cars</b>
A	100 and below	£0	£0	£0
B	101 to 120	£15	£35	£35
C	121 to 150	£95	£115	£115
D	151 to 165	£120	£140	£140
E	166 to 185	£145	£165	£165
F	186 to 225	£190	£205	£205
G*	226 and above	£285	£300	£300

\*for new cars registered after 23 March 2006

It is worth noting that the Chancellor also announced that the VED rate for Band G vehicles will rise to a substantial £400 in 2008!

Posted March 21, 2007



## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### CABINET

9TH JANUARY 2008

#### Medium Term Financial Plan 2008/09-2010/11

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro
Responsible Head of Service	Jayne Pickering – Head of Financial Services

#### **1. Summary**

1.1. To provide information to enable the Cabinet to review the position on the medium term financial plan (revenue budgets) and on the Capital Programme for 2008/09-2010/11 and to make recommendations to full Council for its adoption.

#### **2. Recommendations**

2.1. It is recommended that Cabinet recommend to full Council that:

2.1.1 the budget pressures identified as unavoidable and high in Appendix A of the report be included within the Medium Term Financial Plan as follows:

- 2008/09 £1.691m
- 2009/10 £2.279m
- 2010/11 £2.271m

2.1.2 the recommended savings / additional income generation identified in Appendix A of the report be included within the Medium Term Financial Plan as follows:

- 2008/09 £1.424m
- 2009/10 £1.803m
- 2010/11 £1.881m

2.1.3 officers undertake a review of alternative methods of service delivery to achieve savings as identified in Appendix A

2.1.4 the Capital Programme for 2008/09 to 2010/11 as detailed in paragraph 16.16 comprising the continuation of existing schemes and the new 'High' priority capital schemes shown on Appendix G of the report be approved;

2.1.5 Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Financial Services, in consultation with the portfolio holder for Finance and Heads of Service in respect of projects, to release capital funds subject to receipt of a robust

business case and an option appraisal demonstrating that the Council is achieving value for money;

- 2.1.6 approval is given to proceed with the capital scheme totalling £45k to replace the hot water system at the Dolphin Centre in year 2007/08 as detailed in paragraph 16.3
- 2.1.7 approval is given for the cost of redundancy and early retirement be funded from balances

### **3. Background**

- 3.1. The Council on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2007 approved a medium term financial plan that included the Revenue and Capital budget requirements for 2008/09 to 2009/10.
- 3.2. On 5<sup>th</sup> September 2007 the Cabinet approved the budget process and timetable to be followed to review the medium term financial plan for 2008/09 to 2010/11.
- 3.3. As part of the approved budget process Cabinet proposed a streamlined set of 5 priorities against the Council objectives for focus of resources which were approved by Council on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2007. These were:

1. Regeneration

Priorities

- A Thriving Market Town
- Housing

2. Improvement

Priorities

- Customer Service

3. Sense of Community and Well Being

Priorities

- Sense of Community

4. Environment

Priorities

- Clean Streets & Recycling

- 3.4. The approved objectives and priorities have been used to drive the budget process as follows
  - Budget pressures have only been proposed to members by senior management if they have been identified as unavoidable / or they are fundamental in achieving the Council's priorities.
  - Financial savings have been focused on more efficient working practices and alternative methods of service delivery
  - Disinvesting in non priority areas.

- The capital programme proposals as detailed in later in the report have been considered in line with the priorities.
- 3.5 The current financial plan covers a period of 3 years. It is proposed that an overarching 3 year financial strategy will be reported to members in March . The Strategy will address the financial plans of the Authority in consideration of asset management ,ICT, risk management and investment strategies.
- 3.6 The approved objectives and priorities have been used to drive the budget process as follows:
- Financial savings have been focused on alternative methods of delivery e.g. collaborative and partnership working together with proposing savings on services that do not directly contribute to the priorities.
- 3.7 The Cabinet received an update with regard to the review of the medium term financial plan at its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2007 at which members agreed that officers should continue their work to identify further savings in order to balance the budget and invest resources in areas that will address the Council's priorities. This report sets out the work officers have done since that date and the proposals for the medium term financial plan.

#### **4 Base budget information**

- 4.1 The current budget book that was sent to all members in February 2007 includes the Base budget for 2008/09 and 2009/10. These budgets have been used as the starting point of the plan and the proposed pressures and savings will be included to form the new approved budget for 2008/09-2010/11.
- 4.2 The base budget for 2008/09-2009/10 included a number of approved changes to the funding of services from the financial position of 2007/08. These included:
- Carry forward of additional costs of £640k due to the anticipated impact of single status implementation. The £640k includes the anticipated cost of pay protection for any employees affected by a reduction in salary (£400k). The ongoing cost equates to £240k for the net impact of the implementation across the Council.
  - Increase in the car parking charges by 10p (average increase) for 2008/09 and 2009/10.
  - Savings in relation to delivering leisure services by alternative methods. (£100k)
  - Identified savings in relation to providing services in an alternative way £248k
- 4.3 Following detailed costings of the impact of salary increments and vacant posts the current estimated net operating expenditure for revenue services is:

- Base Budget for 2008/09 £12.065m
- Base Budget for 2009/10 £11.651m
- Base Budget 2010/11 £12.166m

4.4 Within this the following assumptions have been made for the main elements of the budget:

Pay awards	2.5% per annum (Note 1)
Utility costs	5% per annum
Business rates	5% per annum
Other costs	2.5% per annum
Government Grants	Actual figures provided by Government
Investment interest	5% per annum (Note 2)
Pension fund increase	Note 3
Vacancy Management	4%

Notes:

1. For the purposes of this exercise it has been assumed that a pay award of 2.5% will be given in 2008/09-2010/11.
  2. Investment interest for 2008/09-2010/11 has been included at a starting rate of 5.75% reducing to 4.75% in 2009/10. This is based on information obtained from the Councils fund managers as an appropriate level for investments during 2008/09. It is assumed that for 2010/11 the Council will have limited funds to invest and as such investment interest will be negligible.
  3. The pension fund actuaries have assessed that in order to move toward a fully funded pension scheme within six years the rate would need to increase by incremental steps of 0.7% per annum to a maximum of 19.1% by 2010/11. For 2008/09 the figure is 17.8%.
  4. Following the CSR review indicative grant levels for 2008/09 to 2010/11 have been received with regard to central government grant – these are detailed later in the report.
- 4.5 Savings of 4% each year on the pay bill have been assumed through vacancy management. These savings will also be used to cover the costs of recruitment.

## **5 Budget Pressures**

- 5.1 Officers have identified a number of budget pressures that have either been deemed “unavoidable” or “high” priority. Unavoidable includes the ongoing effects of pressures during 2007/08 together with any corrections in the budget. A high priority is something that is in direct pursuit of the Council’s priorities. Each unavoidable and high pressure has a specific “funding request” schedule completed which reflects how the funding required meets the Council objectives.

5.2 A number of other budget pressures have been identified but these have been categorised as medium and low and do not form part of the financial projections. These are identified at Appendix B.

5.3 A full list of budget pressures is included at Appendix A. The pressures have been shown on a departmental basis together with proposed savings per department. Those classified as unavoidable and high are included in the budget total:

- 2008/09 £1.691m
- 2009/10 £2.279m
- 2010/11 £2.271m

5.4 The Unavoidable and High Pressures are recommended for approval.

## **6. Budget reductions**

6.1 The savings have been proposed by Corporate Management Team who have sought to identify areas which could demonstrate:

- Additional income generation
- Reduction to costs with no impact on service delivery
- Alternative methods of service delivery / more efficient working practices / shared / collaborative working to realise savings
- Reduction in cost of services which do not directly impact on the Councils priorities

6.2 The savings are shown in Appendix A on a departmental basis together with the pressures required for the service. The savings shown in Appendix A are recommended for approval. These total:

- 2008/09 £1.424m
- 2009/10 £1.803m
- 2010/11 £1.881m

6.3 The savings as identified in 6.2 are recommended for approval.

## **7 Investment Interest**

7.1 A critical element within the overall medium term financial plan is investment interest. Working alongside our fund managers we have looked at the projections with regard to investment interest and it is anticipated that a rate of return ranging from 5.75% in early 2008/09 to 5.25% towards the end of the financial year will be achieved. This will reduce to 4.75% in 2009/10 and zero in 2010/11 if the capital programme is approved as the Council will be in a position of borrowing from 2010/11.

## **8 Government Grant**

8.1 The Council has received the draft settlement for 2008/09 to 2010/11 which is included in the base budget.

8.2 The main elements of the provisional grant settlement are (2007/08 figures provided for information):

	2007/08 £	2008/09 £	Increase £	Increase %
Revenue Support Grant	679,695	593,669	-86,026	-12.66
Redistributed business rates	4,050,128	4,264,616	214,488	5.30
<b>Formula Grant (FG)</b>	<b>4,729,823</b>	<b>4,858,285</b>	<b>128,462</b>	<b>2.72%</b>

8.3 For 2008/09 the indicative grant settlement represents a net 2.72% increase to the 2007/08 settlement. In comparison to other Districts:

	2007/08 £m	2008/09 £m	Increase £m	Increase %
Bromsgrove	4.730	4.858	0.128	2.72
Malvern Hills	4.965	5.059	0.094	1.89
Redditch	6.287	6.394	0.107	1.70
Worcester	7.981	8.112	0.131	1.64
Wychavon	7.122	7.341	0.219	3.07
Wyre Forest	7.687	7.879	0.192	2.50

## **9 Council Tax**

9.1 The Cabinet approved on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2007 the Council Tax Base for 2008/09 as 36,214.70 Based on a 4.99% increase in Council Tax for 2008/09 this would result in a demand on the Collection Fund of £6,557,396 an increase of £359,324 from 2007/08.

9.2 Given that the Government has given strong indications that it will cap any authority that imposes an increase in Council Tax of more than 5% it is felt that any rise needs to be carefully considered. It is therefore recommended that the Council Tax is increased by 4.99% for 2008/09 and 4.99% for 2009/10 and 2010/11. The demand on the Collection Fund for 2009/10 and 2010/11 has assumed an increase in the Council Tax base of 1%.

9.3 The impact of this increase will be an additional £8.61 on Band D with a revised charge of £181.07. This will be formally considered by Council in February as part of the Council Tax resolutions which can't be considered until details of Parish Council precepts are received.

## 10 Collection Fund

10.1 Every year the Council has to estimate the surplus or deficit on the Collection Fund. The surplus as at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 has been estimated in accordance with statutory requirements. The surplus was calculated as £264,190. This is then distributed to the major precepting authorities pro rata to their Band D charge, thus the surplus will be paid as follows:

<b>Worcestershire CC Share</b>	<b>69.67%</b>	£184,078
<b>*Bromsgrove DC Share</b>	<b>13.88%</b>	£36,682
<b>West Mercia Police Share</b>	<b>11.64%</b>	£30,750
<b>Hereford &amp; Worcester FB</b>	<b>4.79%</b>	£12,680
<b>Totals</b>		£264,190

10.2 This means that the Council will receive £36,682 in 2008/09 to help fund the revenue budget.

10.3 The main way in which the Collection Fund generates a surplus is if the Council collects more council tax, in percentage terms, than was assumed when setting the Council Tax base. When setting the Council Tax base for 2008/09 the collection rate was set at 99.0%. At this level it is not considered that any further surplus will be generated in the period covered by the Medium Term Financial Plan 2008/09 to 2010/11.

## 11 Overall Position

11.1 Based on the assumptions and the proposed pressures and savings the overall position for each of the three years is as follows:

	<b>2008/09 £'000</b>	<b>2009/10 £'000</b>	<b>2010/11 £'000</b>
Base cost of General Fund Services	12,065	11,651	12,166
Pressures	1,691	2,279	2,271
Savings	-1,424	-1,803	-1,881
Investment Income	-426	-145	
Recharge to capital programme	-130	-133	-136
Net operating expenditure	11,776	11,849	12,420
Transfer from (-) to balances	-324	49	0
Collection Fund Surplus	-37		
Government Grant	-4,858	-4,945	-5,047
Assumed Council Tax @ 4.99%	-6,557	-6,953	-7,373
Overall Shortfall	0	0	0

11.2 The balanced budget for 2008/09-2010/11 assumes the Council will deliver the recommended savings and will fund the Capital Programme as detailed in the Capital Programme later in the report.

## 12. Balances

- 12.1 The projected level of balances at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 is £1.055m assuming that the 2007/08 budget is underspent approximately £300k. The level of balances can be utilised for one off costs and it is proposed that the funds required for any redundancy or early retirement costs are met from this area.
- 12.2 The estimated costs of redundancies and the cost of the pension strain on the redundant posts is £424k.
- 12.3 The impact on the use of balances are shown in the table below:

	2008/09 £000	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000
<b>Balance available at start of year</b>	1,055	731	781
Use of balances	-324	50	
<b>Balance available at end of year</b>	731	781	781

- 12.4 When considering the medium term financial plan last year an assessment was made of the financial risk to the Authority. This concluded that the minimum level of revenue balances that the authority should hold was £600k. £600k represents approximately 5% of the Councils base cost of general services. It is not recommended that this amount be changed.

### **13. Fees and charges**

- 13.1 The financial plan currently includes a 2.5% increase on fees and charges together with a 10p average charge on car park income.
- 13.2 The details of the Fees and Charge rates will be presented to members at the February meeting.

### **14 Scrutiny and Consultation of Budget**

- 14.1 The budget proposals are to be presented to Scrutiny Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2008 – their comments together with the response from officers will be tabled at the Cabinet meeting.
- 14.2 As was reported to Cabinet in December 2007 the Council's detailed budget proposals were subject to public consultation through two focus groups undertaken in November and were supplemented by placing the detailed budget on the Council's website with a series of questions contained in a feedback form.
- 14.3 The Council's priorities, which are driving the budget process have already been subject to consultation through a focus groups over the last two years, through the Customer Panel, Together Bromsgrove and Street Theatre. The Equalities and Diversity Forum have also been asked to put forward a number of budget bids, which will also feed into the budget deliberations.



- 14.4 Appendix G contains the results of the two recent focus groups held on the 2008/09 budget. Obviously Cabinet should pay due regard to the findings, but are not duty bound to adjust the budget as a result of the findings.

## **15 Other Issues**

- 15.1 In 2007/08 £300k was identified as saving to be achieved in 2008/09 as a result of the implementation of the Spatial project. The basis of the savings relied on the achievement of additional income in respect of Planning Delivery and Pendleton Grant, the sale of land searches and the achievement of software savings following implementation of the full project. As members are aware there has been a change to the main sub contractor in the last 2 months which has resulted in a delay in the full implementation of the project. In addition there has been a change to the criteria of obtaining both PDG and Pendleton Grant and it is assumed that the Council may not be in a position to receive these grants in the future. The pressures associated with the non delivery of these savings have been included in the Appendix and Heads of Service have proposed alternative savings to meet these targets.
- 15.2 Currently Heads of Service are undertaking a feasibility study with regard to Phase 2 of the Spatial Project. This feasibility study will identify what improvements can be made both in terms of improvements to services and operational efficiencies (including the level of savings that need to be achieved to justify the level of expenditure on Phase 2). The budget projections include initial estimates with regard to savings that can be achieved.

## **16 Capital Programme**

- 16.1 The level for capital spend within the Authority is set at £1m per annum. As part of the 2007/08 review of the financial plan members approved a Capital Programme of £7.681m for 2008/09 which included the funding required for the spatial project of £5.793m.
- 16.2 Officers have requested £1.445m of new funding as part this review of the financial plan into 2008/09. The details of the new bids are at Appendix C. The bids prioritised as medium or low are shown at Appendix D. The additional funding over the £1m is due to funding key priorities including the Town Centre Development and clean streets.
- 16.3 Ongoing maintenance at the Dolphin Centre has also revealed the urgent need to replace the hot water system at the Dolphin Centre on health and safety grounds and for the work to be carried out whilst the pool is closed in early 2008. A separate report will be submitted to Cabinet giving full details but Members approval is now requested to include the scheme costing £45k in the capital programme for 2007/08.
- 16.4 If Members approve the level of Capital Spend to 2010/11 the effect on capital receipts will be as follows based on expected expenditure in 2007/08:

	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Opening Balance	10.586	2.553	0.873
Used in Year	8.325	1.772	1.176
Received in year	0.292	0.092	0.092
Closing Balance	2.553	0.873	(0.211)

The figures in the above table represent both general and receipts ring fenced for housing purposes, and currently there are estimated unallocated housing receipts available totalling £0.603m at the end of year 2010/11. If these receipts are deducted the closing balance available for general purposes is estimated at (£814k).

- 16.5 If all Capital Programme funding requests are approved there will be a need to fund £0.211m through borrowing in 2010/11. This calculation is based on the utilisation of the unallocated receipts to minimise the estimated borrowing requirement. Allocation of the resources will affect future borrowing requirements. Officers are currently reviewing the financial impact of the most appropriate option for borrowing purposes.
- 16.6 All capital schemes that receive approval from Members will be developed into detailed business cases and it is proposed that approval to release capital funds should only be given on receipt of a robust business case, including an option appraisal demonstrating that we are achieving value for money.
- 16.7 Criteria has already been approved in relation to the Capital Programme to include:
- The capital programme is limited to £1m per annum funded from the Council's own resources (in order to maximise the investment interest);
  - Cabinet give consideration to fund housing grants over and above the £1m.
- 16.8 Cabinet also approved the capital investment criteria (as part of the Capital Strategy) that a scheme should satisfy for inclusion in the capital budget as follows:
- Maintain existing assets to standards suitable for service delivery.
  - Improve and acquire assets to meet service and customer needs.
  - Improve the stewardship of assets; spend to save (innovative schemes that will secure the Council a better rate of return than the investment interest earned); to reduce longer-term problems and liabilities.
  - Satisfy legal obligations of the Council (e.g. health and safety requirements, and compliance with the disability discrimination legislation).
  - Develop community assets in areas of need.
  - Maximise the use of other funds to encourage investment in specific areas such as energy efficiency, economic development

and infrastructure developments (using funds derived from Section 106 agreements with developers).

- Maximise the benefits of partnership working.

16.9 Officers are currently updating the capital strategy which will include the above. This will be presented to Members at the March 2008 Cabinet meeting.

### **Capital Income**

16.10 It is estimated that the level of capital receipts available at the start of 2008/09 will be £10.586m.

16.11 A review of the likely capital receipts in the period 2008/09 to 2010/11 has been undertaken and it has been estimated that the level of capital receipts is as follows:

	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£M</b>
Estimated total capital receipts for Council use	£1.024	£0.292	£0.092	£0.092

The £10.586m available for investment at the beginning of 2008/09 quoted above includes the £1.024m estimated to be received for 2007/08.

16.12 The amounts shown are for Council use after the housing capital receipts have been 'pooled' and a proportion paid over to Central Government as required under the Local Government Act 2003 and the Prudential Code capital control system which began on 1st April 2004. Poolable housing capital receipts now only relate to the low level of payments of mortgage principal on mortgages granted by the Council in earlier years where the advance was greater than £10k. Capital receipts on the re-sale of pre Large Scale Voluntary Transfer Right-to-Buy sales ceased on 31st March 2007.

16.13 Capital receipts are also still being received on low levels of sales of the Council's holding in shared ownership properties, and sales of retained housing land and assets which have been transferred to General Fund.

16.14 Capital receipts of up to £400k are also anticipated in 2007/08 and a further £200k in 2008/09 from Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) under a VAT Shelter/Sharing arrangement following the transfer of the Council's housing stock. This relates to a refund of Value Added Tax previously paid over to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) which will be shared between BDHT and the Council. The precise amount is currently uncertain because it depends on ongoing discussions between BDHT

and HMRC. The £600k has been included in the projected capital receipts.

- 16.15 The Capital Programme has been reviewed in accordance with the above timetable and process and attached at Appendix G is the complete list of new bids for schemes that have been brought forward for consideration. Corporate Management Team has reviewed all schemes proposed by officers and only brings forward those that meet the investment criteria.

### **Capital Expenditure**

- 16.16 A summary of the proposed capital programme including the new High priority capital schemes only is shown in the following table:

	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>Future Years</b>
<b>New proposals</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Street Scene & Waste Management	0.025	0	0.093	0
Policy and Performance	0	0	0	0
Legal and Democratic	0.286	0.207	0.284	0
Culture and Community	0.200	0	0.079	0
e-Government/ICT schemes	0.035	0	0	0
Housing schemes / P&E	0.769	0	0.865	0
Support Services Recharges (to be charged to schemes)	0.130	0.133	0.136	0
<b>Total (new proposals)</b>	<b>1.445</b>	<b>0.340</b>	<b>1.457</b>	<b>0</b>
Existing Schemes	7.361	1.713	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.806</b>	<b>2.053</b>	<b>1.457</b>	<b>0</b>

- 16.16 The capital programme will be financed from a variety of sources including the BIG lottery fund, Government Grants, capital receipts including those that the Council has been allowed to retain under the new capital 'pooling' arrangements, and borrowing. Details of the proposed financing arrangements for the capital programme are shown below:

	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>Future Years</b>
<b>Capital Receipts</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Capital receipts	8.162	1.772	0.362	0
Capital receipts or borrowing	0	0	0.603	0
Borrowing	0	0	0.211	0
Housing schemes financed from	0	0	0	0

capital receipts ring fenced for low cost housing				
Housing schemes financed from retained capital income after pooling	0.009	0	0	0
<b>Total capital receipts or borrowing</b>	<b>8.325</b>	<b>1.772</b>	<b>1.176</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Other funding</b>				
BIG Lottery Childrens Programme	0.200	0	0	0
Government Grants	0.281	0.281	0.281	0
<b>Total other funding</b>	<b>0.481</b>	<b>0.281</b>	<b>0.281</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Programme</b>	<b>8.806</b>	<b>2.053</b>	<b>1.457</b>	<b>0</b>

16.17 As Members can see from the above the proposed schemes significantly exceed the £1m limit, however given the impact on the Council's priorities it is not felt possible to reduce the proposals any further and the capital programme comprising the existing schemes, rolling programmes, and the 'High' priority capital scheme bids as shown on Appendix G is recommended for approval.

16.18 As can be seen from the above table the estimated balance at 31st March 2010 will be insufficient to fund a significant capital programme within the district. The Council therefore will have to address the issue of borrowing.

16.19 The Prudential Code that came into force on April 1st 2004 as part of the Local Government Act 2003, allows councils to borrow without the consent of central government, as long as they remain within their own affordable borrowing limits. Future revenue streams are used as security for loans. Any borrowing would have an impact to the Revenue account and therefore would represent an additional charge against the Council Tax.

## **17 Local Government Act 2003**

17.1 There are a number of requirements that fall upon me, as the Council's Section 151 officer, to include in the budget report. These are set out below, together with my comments on each of the issues:

17.1.1 The level and use of reserves to be formally determined by the Council must be informed by the judgement and advice of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

*Section 151 officer's comments: I have reviewed the level of balances and assessed against the financial risk to the Authority. In my professional opinion the revised minimum level of £600k meets the Authorities needs. In addition, and a continuation of the previous medium term financial plan, balances should not be used to fund ongoing revenue expenditure. I believe this strategy remains robust and the Council should seek to achieve this position as soon as possible.*

17.1.2 The CFO to report the factors that have influenced his/her judgement in the context of the key financial assumptions underpinning the budget, and ensure that his/her advice is formally recorded. Where that advice is not accepted, this should be formally recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

*Section 151 officer's comments: The main assumptions included in the calculation of the budget are as follows:*

<i>pay awards</i>	<i>2.5% increase per annum</i>
<i>utility costs</i>	<i>5% increase per annum</i>
<i>business rates</i>	<i>5% increase per annum</i>
<i>other costs</i>	<i>2.5% increase per annum</i>
<i>Government grants</i>	<i>Actual figures provided by Government</i>
<i>investment interest rate</i>	<i>See 7.1</i>
<i>employer's pension fund</i>	<i>increase to 17.8% from April 2008 and 18.5% from April 2009 –</i>
<i>vacancy management</i>	<i>4% per annum</i>
<i>Council Tax</i>	<i>4.99% per annum</i>
<i>Council Tax base</i>	<i>1% increase per annum.</i>

17.1.3 The report should include a statement showing the estimated opening balance on general fund reserves for the year ahead, any contribution to/from the fund, and the estimated closing balance.

*Section 151 officer's comments: statement included in this report.*

17.1.4 The report should show the extent to which reserves are financing ongoing expenditure.

*Section 151 officer's comments: included in this report*

17.1.5 The report should include a statement from the CFO on the adequacy of general reserves and provisions both for the forthcoming year and in the context of the medium term financial plan.

*Section 151 officer comments: the reserves are sufficient for the period of the medium term financial plan i.e., 2008/09 to 2010/11.*

17.1.6 The report should include a statement on the annual review of earmarked reserves showing:

- list of earmarked reserves
- purpose of reserve
- advice on appropriate levels
- estimated opening / closing balances
- planned additions / withdrawals

*Section 151 officer's comments: detailed at Appendix E.*

17.1.7 Prudential indicators and related matters

*Section 151 officer's comments: This will be covered by the Treasury Management Strategy which will be presented to Cabinet in March.*

18.1 None other than those included in the report.

## **19. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

19.1 Section 188 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 provides that where an employer proposes to make 20 or more employees redundant at one establishment within 90 days he must consult all the representatives of any of the employees who may be dismissed. Consultation must begin in “good time” and in any event at least 30 days before the first dismissal takes place. This consultation must include consultation about ways of avoiding the dismissals, reducing the number of employees to be dismissed and mitigating the consequences of the potential dismissals.

By virtue of the S188 requirements, an employer must, for the purposes of consultation, provide employees’ representatives with certain information in writing. If the employer fails to comply with these consultation obligations an Employment Tribunal has the power to require him to make protective awards equal to 90 days pay to each of the employees. A trade union may also bring a claim against the employer.

The Secretary of State for the Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (formerly the DTI) must also be notified if the employer is considering making 20 employees or more redundant.

## **20. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

20.1 The delivery of a balanced budget demonstrates the Councils ability to fund objectives and priorities within a reasonable level of increase to residents.

## **21. RISK MANAGEMENT**

21.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:

21.1.1 Non compliance with the statutory deadlines to set a balanced budget.

21.1.2 No formal consultation undertaken with the public

21.1.3 Poor use of resources scoring in relation to consideration of the budget

21.1.4 Failure to carry out statutory consultation requirements with the Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR), recognised trade unions, and individual employees in respect of posts being considered for redundancy before the final budget decisions are made. Failure to enter into such consultation could lead to employment tribunal claims for failure to ensure proper consultation arrangements which in turn could lead to the awarding of financial compensation to both individuals and the trade unions and ultimately, potential claims for unfair dismissal.

21.2 An overall risk assessment of the budget is included in Appendix F.

21.3 These risks are being managed as follows:

21.3.1 Non compliance with statutory deadlines

Risk Register: Financial Services  
Key Objective Ref.: 6  
Key Objective: Effective and Efficient Accountancy Service

21.3.2 No formal consultation undertaken with the public

Risk Register: Financial Services  
Key Objective Ref.: 6  
Key Objective: Effective and Efficient Accountancy Service

21.3.3 Poor use of resources scoring in relation to consideration of the budget

Risk Register: Financial Services  
Key Objective Ref.: 6  
Key Objective: Effective and Efficient Accountancy Service

21.4 Key actions and controls to manage these risks include:

Detailed timetable in place to manage the budget process with departments and accountancy support

Allocation of qualified and professional staff to focus on budget setting accounts

Regular updates at Corporate Management Team in relation to budget processes

Formal consultation in place with unions and individual employees

Formal consultation with customer panel via SNAP in place

## **22. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

22.1 Public feedback is included within Appendix G.

22.2 The setting of the budget against the Corporate Priorities will ensure that the Council demonstrates to the customer that we have aligned our resources to the key services required.

## **23. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **23.1 Personnel Implications**

23.1.1 In the spirit of developing and maintaining an open and positive industrial relations environment, the Chief Executive, Head of Financial Services and Head of Human Resource and Organisational Development have met with the unions to begin the necessary consultation process. Consultation with all potentially affected employees has also begun, and notification to the Secretary of State **has been** put in place. As a matter of courtesy and best practice, all individual employees who are affected by these budget proposals were made aware of how the proposals may



affect them personally in advance of the first budget proposals to Cabinet becoming public.

23.1.2 The effect of the proposals as they currently stand is that 34 posts are to be considered for redundancy in order to ensure that the budget is aligned to the Council's priorities.

23.1.3 9 of those posts are current vacancies, with a further 1 becoming vacant in January 2008; therefore a total of 10 vacancies will be used to mitigate against the possibility of compulsory redundancies and therefore do not present threats of redundancy to any particular employees.. 10 represent individuals who have volunteered to leave the Council's employment and who fall within service areas that are directly at risk of redundancy. 1 represents a job which is to be reshaped, for which the postholder will be ringfenced and which it should be possible to retain them in post. A further 1 is also expected to be successfully redeployed. This will leave **3.5 FTE** employees at risk of compulsory redundancy, and for whom the Council will do its utmost to seek redeployment opportunities, although it is not possible to guarantee that we will be successful. We will also ensure that those individuals at risk of redundancy receive appropriate outplacement support/training.

It is worth noting that in addition to the 10 volunteers above, we have also received a number of additional volunteers for early retirement/redundancy from across the Council, which will be considered after the closing date of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007. The costs of any volunteers that the Corporate Management Team propose to accept as part of the wider strategy to minimise redundancies or to deliver further efficiencies in services will be tabled nearer the time of the meeting.

23.1.4 Representatives from the Corporate Management Team have to date met with the unions on 3 separate occasions in order to promote an effective consultation process, and will be meeting for what is expected to be the final time on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2008 prior to Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> January, and Full Council setting its budget on 16<sup>th</sup> January. Representatives from the Cabinet (the Portfolio Holder for Finance, and the Portfolio Holder for HR, Legal, Democratic and Equalities) have also attended one of the early meetings in order to demonstrate their willingness to listen to any views/representations that the trade unions may wish the Cabinet to take into account before making its final recommendations to Full Council. All meetings have been constructive.

23.1.5 As referred to above, part of the strategy agreed with the trade unions for minimising the possible effect of the budget proposals for 2008/9 and the medium term financial plan upon jobs, was to seek expressions of interest for voluntary redundancy/early retirement. The Corporate Management Team will also consider every vacancy as it arises in order to maximise the potential for redeployment of any employee who may find that their current post is made redundant as a result of these budget proposals.

23.1.6 Conversely, by way of a conscious decision to respond to some of the comments by the CPA Inspectors and to demonstrate that the Council is

prepared to redirect resources into the Council's priority areas, the Corporate Management Team is also proposing to increase staffing resources in a number of areas. Any new posts which are approved as part of the budget process will be considered as potential redeployment opportunities for any employee who may be at risk in order to minimise the potential number of compulsory redundancies.

Procurement Issues N/A
Governance/Performance Management N/A
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 N/A
Policy N/A
Environmental N/A
Equalities and Diversity The Equality and Diversity Forum have received a presentation on the budget and the issues arising from the identified pressures and savings. The budget bids included as high priority include those proposed by the Equalities and Diversity Forum. In addition the budget is available for comment on the internet and via the focus groups with the aim to reach as diverse as possible residents and customers.

#### **24. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	<b>Yes</b>
Chief Executive	<b>Yes</b>
Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects	<b>Yes</b>
Assistant Chief Executive	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Service	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Financial Services	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Legal & Democratic Services	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Organisational Development & HR	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Procurement Team	<b>Yes</b>

## **25. APPENDICES**

Appendix A – pressures and savings - high  
Appendix B – pressures and savings - medium & low  
Appendix C – Capital bids – High  
Appendix D – Capital bids – medium & low  
Appendix E – Statement of Reserves  
Appendix F – Risk Analysis  
Appendix G – Feedback from consultation

## **26. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Budget timetable  
Detailed budget working papers

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

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**BUDGET OPTIONS 2007/08 -**  
**2010/11**

APPENDIX A

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Link to Priorities	Description of funding request
	£'000	£'000	£'000		

**P&E**

**Known unavoidable pressures**

Loss of PDG income	186	157	163		Anticipated loss of PDG income to fund permanent posts
Income from BDHT re sale of houses	70	70	70	Housing	Income received from BDHT when houses are sold to tenants (£10k per sale). Originally set at £140k per annum. Target now reduced due to decline in sales
Land Charges	45	45	45		Income shortfalls due to public using private companies for searches
Loss of income/expenditure from Hostel and B&B	12	12	12	Housing	Loss of income due to impact of the hostel remodelling and increased use of B&B
Taxi Licensing Vehicle Maintenance	9	9	10		Financial error in setting budget for 2007/08.
Choice Based Lettings Revenue costs	10	10	10	Housing	Operating choice based letting scheme - approved scheme

**High Pressures Identified**

"Scores on the Doors" on-line publication of food hygiene inspection results	7	2	2	Customer Service	To provide a "Scores on doors" scheme whereby the public can access information relating to hygiene assessments of restaurants within the District
Disabled Facilities Grants Admin / Arch staff to be made full time	23	23	23	Housing	This is a request to make two members of staff in the Private Sector Housing team up to full time permanent staff. The officers process the DFG and discretionary grant budgets (which is consistently underspent). The team is understaffed and performance on budget spend and processing of DFGs will not be improved unless we make these staff FT.
Relocation of market stalls	17	3	3	Customer Service	Cost of operating markets from the High Street rather than the market hall.
Nightstop	6	6	6	Housing	To provide a nightstop facility for young people who become homeless to discuss mediation with support officers with the aim to return to home - established in Redditch
Loss of income on decision notices	16	16	16		Government have changed the charge for copy decisions notices to 10p from £20

**Savings identified**

Additional income re licensing	-30	-32	-34		Additional income generated in 2006/07 - anticipated to continue
Additional income re building control	-5	-5	-5		Additional income generated in 2006/07 - anticipated to continue
Planning Delivery Grant and Local Authority Business Grant Initiative	-345				To transfer all funds arising from these grants received over the last 3 years. It is anticipated that there will be a significant reduction of grant available for the next 3 years.
Sales of location maps/aerial photos	-2	-2	-2	Customer Service	Additional income generated in 2006/07 - anticipated to continue
Cease sending out copies of plans with decision notices	-1	-1	-1	Customer Service	Additional income generated in 2006/07 - anticipated to continue
Charge for pre application advice		-1	-1	Customer Service	Additional income generated in 2006/07 - anticipated to continue

**BUDGET OPTIONS 2007/08 -**  
**2010/11**

APPENDIX A

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Link to Priorities	Description of funding request
	£'000	£'000	£'000		
Tree advice to County	-5	-5	-5	Customer Service	Income Target to be set for advice to County
Restructure of Department due to more efficient processes	-75	-247	-247		Reduction in number of posts due to vacancies and as a result of more efficient processes being undertaken.
CAB Housing advice service grant reduced	-3	0	0		Grant payable has been renegotiated for 2008/09
	<b>-65</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>65</b>		
<b><u>Finance</u></b>					
<b><u>Known unavoidable pressures</u></b>					
Grant reduction Amphlett Hall	14	14	14		To provide funding to enable a review of the operations of Amphlett Hall equivalent to the grant paid in previous years
<b><u>High Pressures Identified</u></b>					
Aspiren	6	6	6	Customer Service	Software to link with Department of Work and Pensions information across 100 other Councils ( including Birmingham & Walsall) to identify checks on new claims for previous addresses and to identify customer in other areas for repayment of overpayments of benefit. Cross Check landlord information. Will support the achievement of PM10 (DWP performance indicator)
Internal Audit Trainee	19	19	20	Customer Service	As part of restructure to recruit post to support audit team
<b><u>Savings identified</u></b>					
Misc savings	-12	-12	-12		
Restructure of Department due to more efficient processes	-61	-61	-77		Reduction in number of posts due to transfer of Leisure Trust and as a result of more efficient processes being undertaken.
	<b>-34</b>	<b>-34</b>	<b>-49</b>		

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**BUDGET OPTIONS 2007/08 -  
2010/11**

APPENDIX A

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Link to Priorities	Description of funding request
	£'000	£'000	£'000		
<b><u>Legal &amp; Dem</u></b>					
<b><u>Known unavoidable pressures</u></b>					
Case Management System	7	7	7	Customer Service	License fee of approved system.
<b><u>High Pressures Identified</u></b>					
Standards board local filtering	30	31	32	Sense of Community and Customer Service	Based on additional staff member to support the new system of local filtering re member conduct Requirement to change arrangements - currently undertaken by standards board - now need our own staff to do this work
Outsourcing document scanning process	0	48	48	Customer Service	Cost of outsourcing internal post service as part of spatial project
Councillors Remote Access	15	15	15	Customer Service	Upgrade routers used by Members - number of Members still using old equipment for remote access which causes download problems.
Increase bandwidth for Internet link	9	9	9	Customer Service	Increase bandwidth to improve remote access speeds for Members.
Equality & Diversity Forum bids	5	5	5	Customer Service	To enhance the Equality and Diversity events across the district.
External valuation support	10	10	10	Customer Service	Due to the outsourcing of facilities management there will be a need to fund external valuation work
<b><u>Savings identified</u></b>					
Income generation from BDHT	-10	-10	-10		Risk - BDHT withdrawing service request
Restructure of Department due to more efficient processes	-104	-190	-193		Reduction in number of posts as a result of more efficient processes being undertaken.
	<b>-38</b>	<b>-75</b>	<b>-77</b>		

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**BUDGET OPTIONS 2007/08 -**  
**2010/11**

APPENDIX A

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Link to Priorities	Description of funding request
	£'000	£'000	£'000		
<b><u>HR &amp; OD</u></b>					
<b><u>High Pressures Identified</u></b>					
Restructure of Department due to more efficient processes	25	25	9	Customer service	This post supports the HR team and concentrates largely on key administration associated with recruitment i.e. advertising, interviews, offer letters and serving of contracts of employment, the latter of which is within a statutory timescale. The funding is only required if the proposed restructure of the HR&OD department is not approved. If it is, then these additional costs will be met as part of that restructure.16k PA funded from training budget
Cost of outsourcing Payroll in partnership with Redditch	30	30	30	Customer service	The transfer of the payroll function will also contribute towards the principle of demonstrating VFM.
<b><u>Savings identified</u></b>					
Less expenses payroll service	-2	-2	-2		Savings of general expenses
Changes of childcare scheme- replace with Childcare vouchers	-14	-14	-14	Customer Service	Removal of budget £10k plus £4k potential take up of scheme generating savings in Employers NI and pension payments
Review of Corporate Training Budget	-10	-10	-10	Customer Service	Reduction in corporate training budget
Restructure of Department due to more efficient processes	-106	-106	-90		Reduction in number of posts due to transfer of Leisure Trust and as a result of more efficient processes being undertaken.
	<b>-77</b>	<b>-77</b>	<b>-77</b>		
<b><u>SSWM / C &amp; C</u></b>					
<b><u>Known unavoidable pressures</u></b>					
Non achievement of co-mingle saving	0	500	500	Customer Service	Impact of non achievement of previously anticipated savings target. Original target was set on the basis actual expenditure rather than budget. During 2008/09 officers will be discussing the issue of co mingle with the County with the aim to identify savings.
Loss of income from Highways work	50	50	50		Income target no longer achievable due to County providing service.
Income from Phase 2 Dolphin	60	60	60	Sense of Community	Income target set in budget on basis of Phase 2 being undertaken. Savings now identified as part of Leisure Trust transfer.
Museum Grant to trust	21	14	7	Customer Service	To fund the provision of the museum via a trust agreement. 3 year contract
Additional Staff CCTV Control Room	23	23	23	Sense of Community	To ensure appropriate budget and staffing in place to support the delivery of the CCTV & lifeline monitoring service. This budget bid addresses the issues of lone working that has resulted from an oversight when the service was first established, for example annual leave cover not budgeted for.



**BUDGET OPTIONS 2007/08 -**  
**2010/11**

APPENDIX A

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Link to Priorities	Description of funding request
	£'000	£'000	£'000		
<b><u>High Pressures Identified</u></b>					
Additional street theatre events	10	10	10	Sense of Community	To expand the street theatre programme throughout the district by 3 more events each year (6 in total). The new locations are perceived to be Hagley, Wythall and Rubbery, these are yet to be confirm in terms of a venue.
Develop vetting policy for children & young people	5	2	2	Sense of Community	To support the development and ongoing running of a Vetting & Barrier policy of BDC employees for safeguarding of children & young people
Sports dev officers	60	60	60	Sense of Community	Based on 2 sports assistants and operational budgets, that will be used to support the development of additional activities/sessions and diversionary projects across the district. The additional staff will be used to promote the use of council facilities and promote activities with in partner organisations sites where required.
Neighbourhood wardens	45	45	45	Sense of Community- Clean streets	Based on 2 additional wardens to enhance the current level of provision and to tackle the implications of the new ASB performance indicators. The wardens will also work closely with the Sports Development team in the implementation of an expanded diversionary programme across the district.
Hit Squads	56	56	56	Clean streets and recycling, Sense of community and Customer service	Additional staff and operational costs for hit squads for hotspots
Restructure of Department due to more efficient Processes	124	149	152	Customer Service	Linked to the restructure of the department, essential to enhance service delivery, to maximize resources and delivery savings targets.
<b><u>Savings identified</u></b>					
Lifeline	-5	-5	-5	Sense of Community	Additional income target to increase business
Restructure of Department due to merger of C & C with Street Scene and Waste Management together with more efficient processes being undertaken.	-219	-262	-268		Restructure due to transfer of Leisure Trust and merge with Street Scene and Waste management
Concessionary parking passes for the elderly - stop issuing (phased basis as annual passes in issue)	-90	-120	-120	Clean streets and recycling, Sense of community and Customer service	To cease providing concessionary passes. To review concessionary policy with the aim to provide equal across the District in the provision of Council Services

**BUDGET OPTIONS 2007/08 -**  
**2010/11**

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Link to Priorities	Description of funding request
	£'000	£'000	£'000		
Increase saving from leisure trust	-50	-50	-50	Clean streets and recycling, Sense of community and Customer service	To not provide any free parking on the weekends prior to Christmas
Increase Excess Charge Fee	-20	-20	-20	Clean streets and recycling, Sense of community and Customer service	Increase Excess Charge Fee to fall in line with National charges
Sponsorship	-25	-25	-25	Clean streets and recycling, Sense of community and Customer service	Officers currently undertaking feasibility of providing civil parking enforcement to generate more income within the District
Charge green waste		-400	-400	Clean streets and recycling, Sense of community and Customer service	To charge for the provision of green waste from 2009/10. Anticipated charge of £30 per household.
	<b>45</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>77</b>		
<b><u>E-Government</u></b>					
<b><u>Known unavoidable pressures</u></b>					
<b><u>High Pressures Identified</u></b>					
CSC Staffing capacity enhancement	22	22	22	Customer Service	Provision of additional CSA to improve telephony performance.
Partnership Office	25	25	25	Customer Service	To provide a neighbourhood office in a rural area of the district

**BUDGET OPTIONS 2007/08 -**  
**2010/11**

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Link to Priorities	Description of funding request
	£'000	£'000	£'000		
<b>Savings identified</b>					
Desktop printer reorganisation - cancellation of Icon project - balance of saving	-3	-3	-3		Printer support contracts have been reviewed as part of the desktop printer reorganisation.
Contribution from revenue refresh budget	-38	-13	-13		Reduce hardware revenue budget initially by £38k as one off - to be funded via capital scheme
Bring ICT Helpdesk in-house		-25	-25	Customer Service	Explore the options for providing an in house ICT helpdesk - to cancel external contract with current providers
To review alternative methods of service delivery - working in partnership / joint approach	?	?	?	Customer Service	Officers to review the service delivered by the internal ICT department with the aim to explore the shared service/ joint working approach with other Councils
	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>		
<b><u>Corporate Communications</u></b>					
<b><u>Known unavoidable pressures</u></b>					
<b><u>High Pressures Identified</u></b>					
<b>Savings identified</b>					
Deletion of Senior Corporate Policy and Performance Officer post. Figure is net of cost of pension strain.	-25	-26	-27		Officer has already left the authority, so this can be actioned from 01 April 2008.
General savings	-13	-13	-13	Customer Service	Miscellaneous Savings
Income generation from additional advertising in Together Bromsgrove.	-10	-10	-10	Customer Service	Additional income target for Together Bromsgrove
Savings on area cttes	-16	-8	-8		Funding for area cttees agreed at £24k for 2008/09 ongoing.
	<b>-64</b>	<b>-57</b>	<b>-58</b>		

**BUDGET OPTIONS 2007/08 -**  
**2010/11**

APPENDIX A

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Link to Priorities	Description of funding request
	£'000	£'000	£'000		
<b><u>Corporate Services</u></b>					
<b><u>Known unavoidable pressures</u></b>					
Charge for land rental Bromsgrove Rovers	15				To review position on lease at expiry date of 2009/10
Approved savings 2008/09 - split to all services	529	691	694		Savings approved as part of 2007/08 budget. Includes £300k spatial and £100k re corporate wide savings to be reallocated
<b><u>High Pressures Identified</u></b>					
Improvement plan	75	0	0	All Priorities	To fund to continual improvements in council performance
<b><u>Savings identified</u></b>					
Cease ongoing transfer to replacement reserve ICT	-107	-107	-107		This is an ongoing allocation of funds to provide over £500,000 by year 5 to totally refresh the ICT infrastructure. There is a danger that this allocation will fall short of what will be needed by year 5. However, this risk will be mitigated by using advances in technology (virtualisation) to deliver an improved infrastructure
Contribution from general revenue balances			-65		
Deletion of general expenses budget	-18	-18	-19		Miscellaneous Savings
	<b>494</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>503</b>		
<b>Net Additional Pressures</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>390</b>		
<b><u>Summary</u></b>					
Savings	-1424	-1803	-1881		
Unavoidable pressures	1051	1662	1665		
High pressures	640	617	606		
	<b>267</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>390</b>		

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**BUDGET OPTIONS 2008/09-2010/11**

<b>Other Pressures identified</b>	<b>2008/09 £'000</b>	<b>2009/10 £'000</b>	<b>2010/11 £'000</b>	<b>Link to Priorities</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b><u>Medium Pressures</u></b>					
<b><u>Culture &amp; Community</u></b>					
Children & Young People Audit	5	0	0	Sense of Community	To review the policies that the Council has in place for supporting young children and adults.
Play activity days	5	5	5	Sense of Community	To increase play activity in the district
	10	5	5		
<b><u>P&amp;E</u></b>					
Assistant Drainage Engineer	23	23	23	Customer Service	To support current postholder to understand drainage operation & responsibility for Council
Comprehensive Housing Market Asst – LSP Action	20	20	20	Customer Service	
Sanctuary Scheme	2	2	2	Customer Service	
	45	45	45		
<b><u>Finance</u></b>					
Contingency for payment of up front bailiff fee	65	65	65	Customer Service	Funding for new scheme to pay bailiff up front fees for chasing debts
	65	65	65		
<b><u>Legal &amp; Dem</u></b>					
Roof repair to corner of main building	4	0	0	Customer Service	Council House in need of minor repairs
	4	0	0		
<b><u>SSWM</u></b>					
Operatives for 2 new Mechanical Sweepers	50	50	50	Clean streets and Recycling	2 operatives for sweepers
Operational cost Mech sweepers	14	14	14	Clean streets and Recycling	Maintenance & fuel costs
	64	64	64		
<b><u>E-Government</u></b>					
Staff to provide reception point for customer service centre	17	17	17	Customer Service	To provide additional staff for the Customer Service Centre
	17	17	17		

Other Pressures identified	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000	Link to Priorities	Description
<b>Corporate Communications</b>					
Charter Mark accreditation	5	1	1	Customer Service	To support the implementation of charter marks across the Council
Staff Champions	2	2	2	Customer Service	To support the staff champions specific projects within the Council
	7	3	3		
<b>Total Medium</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>198</b>		
<b>Low Pressures</b>					
<b>Culture &amp; Community</b>					
Interactive CCTV - " talking cameras"	2	2	2	Sense of Community	To install talking cameras in rubery as a pilot scheme
Replacement of PNC3 Lifeline Soft & Hard Ware by PNC4 System	4	4	4	Sense of Community	Improvements to technology of lifeline system
	6	6	6		
<b>P&amp;E</b>					
Surveys of Special Wildlife Sites	6	0	0	Sense of Community	To provide a survey of wildlife sites in the district
Rural Housing Enabler	2	2	2	Housing	Possible additional contribution towards Rural Housing Enabler if Gov't withdraws their subsidy.
Budget for Strat Hsg Professional Fees	1	1	1	Housing	Additional professional support in the delivery of the service
BDHT SLA review (consultants fees)	5	5	5	Customer Service	Professional support to revieve the BDHT management agreement to ensure it provides VFM for the Council.
	14	8	8		
<b>Finance</b>					
Westmap	3	3	3	Customer Service	System to provide cross check of benefit information with a number of other Councils. Currently Bromsgrove host partner to delivery and enhance system
Experian Citizen view	5	5	5	Customer Service	To fund a review by Experian of the citizens of Bromsgrove to enable services to be delivered to specific customers includign the vunerable and those of low income
Residency Checker verification of Council Tax Single Person Discounts	16			Customer Service	To check level and eligibility of single person discounts claimed in the district.
Customer Insight – Experian Mosaic	31	18	18	Customer Service	Using agency to develop social mapping of district to focus services on key areas of need
	55	26	26		
<b>Legal &amp; Dem</b>					
Cleaning equipment	3	3	3	Customer Service	Replace equipment
Council house & Spadesbourne signage	1	1	1	Customer Service	Additional signage
	4	4	4		

Other Pressures identified	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000	Link to Priorities	Description
<b><u>HR &amp; OD</u></b>					
Maternity Cover	30	30	30	Customer Service	To provide funds to cover staff during periods of maternity and long term sick
	30	30	30		
<b><u>SSWM</u></b>					
Enforcement Staff Street Cleansing	25	25	25	Clean streets and Recycling	Additional staff to provide enforcement within the District
Recycling Operatives to cover balance of District	50	50	50	Clean streets and Recycling	2 operatives for vehicle to provide cover in all areas of district
Operational cost recycling vehicle	7	7	7	Clean streets and Recycling	Maintenance & fuel costs
Additional promotion and publicity of services	15	15	15	Customer Service	Publicise the environmental issues/ litter in schools
	97	97	97		
<b><u>E-Government</u></b>					
IP Telephony	2	2	2	Customer Service	To provide an enhanced Ip phone system
Out of hours support	60	60	60	Customer Service	To provide a greater out of hours support for users of the systems
Vault storage system	20	20	20		ICT storage systems
	82	82	82		
<b><u>Corporate Communications</u></b>					
Area Committees	16	16	16	Customer Service	To increase to £20k each area
Develop compact - small grants to local charities and businesses	3	3	3	Customer Service	To support local charities by granting small donations - issue of other bodies requesting funds - LSP ?
	19	19	19		
<b>Total Low</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>272</b>		
<b>Total Medium &amp; Low</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>470</b>		

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**CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008/09-2010/11  
CAPITAL BIDS RANKED AS "HIGH"**

APPENDIX C

Schemes by Department	Original Budget 2008-09 £	Estimate 2009-10 £	Estimate 2010-11 £	Estimate for Future Years on Approved Schemes £	Financing Original Budget 2008/09 (See Key)	Brief Description of Project
<b>Street Scene &amp; Waste</b>						
New Tipper Vehicle for Hit Squad	25,000				Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)	
<b>Legal Equalities &amp; Democratic Services</b>						
Remedial Work to Council Buildings following Stock Condition Surveys	286,000	207,000	284,000	0	Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)	Condition surveys were undertaken in September and October 2007. These surveys categorised the necessary remedial work to bring the buildings up to satisfactory condition. The categories identified are:- 1 - Urgent Work. 2 - Essential Work. 3 - Desirable Work. and 4 - Long Term Routine Maintenance.

<b>Egov &amp; Customer Services</b>						
<b>Councillors Remote Access</b>	<b>25,000</b>				<b>Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)</b>	Standardise on the ICT equipment provided to Councillors. Enabling a more efficient service and remote support capability.
<b>Increase Bandwidth for Internet Link</b>	<b>10,000</b>				<b>Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)</b>	Increase in the available internet bandwidth. This will speed up access for current remote and home workers such as Councillors and shop mobility staff. It will also provide more capacity to increase the numbers of remote workers.
<b>Planning and Environmental Services</b>						
<b>Town Centre Development</b>	<b>100,000</b>				<b>Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)</b>	To fund consultants to support development of Town Centre
<b>New Toilet Block in Town Centre</b>	<b>174,000</b>				<b>Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)</b>	To fund a new toilet block in the Town Centre
<b>Upgrading of Houndsfield Lane Caravan Park</b>	<b>110,000</b>				<b>Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)</b>	The scheme is to upgrade the caravan site to modern standards.

<p><b>Grants to Principal Preferred Partners (BDHT / W Mercia) for the development of affordable housing in the District.</b></p>	<p><b>350,000</b></p>				<p><b>£114k 'Low Cost' Ring Fenced Capital Receipts, £227k Capital Receipts or Borrowing, £9k 'Debt Free' Housing Capital Receipts.</b></p>	<p>Local authority grant budget for allocation to the Council's Principal Preferred Registered Social Landlord (RSL) Partners to assist in the development of affordable housing in the District. Funding will be allocated to schemes proposed by the RSL that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meet housing need as identified by the Strategic Housing Section;</li> <li>- Are Affordable;</li> <li>- Provide good Value for Money;</li> <li>- Provide meaningful opportunities for tenant participation;</li> <li>- Provide quality and accessible housing management;</li> <li>- Provide good standards of affordable housing.</li> </ul>
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<b>Energy Efficiency Grants Home Insulation Project</b>	<b>25,000</b>				<b>Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)</b>	<p>The Energy Efficiency Home Insulation Project will enable free cavity wall and loft insulation to dwellings that fulfill the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Occupants are 65 and over</li><li>- The dwelling is owner occupied or privately rented</li><li>- The property is within Council Bands A-E</li></ul> <p>Qualification for assistance is also dependant upon there being access to loft space ands the construction being suitable for cavity wall treatment. Based upon an average installation being in the region of £600, the budget would insulate 40 plus homes.</p>
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<p><b>Low Carbon – Renewable Energy Grants</b></p>	<p><b>10,000</b></p>				<p><b>Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)</b></p>	<p>Low Carbon Renewable Energy Grants of up to £1k will be made available to encourage the installation of renewable energy systems to homeowners accessing the Government grant scheme which assists in meeting the costs of installing solar panels, wind turbine generators and ground heat source energy systems. This is a Countrywide Scheme developing to support one of the agreed Housing Priorities under the LAA.</p>
<p><b>Culture &amp; Community Services</b></p>						
<p><b>Dolphin Centre Hot Water System Replacement</b></p>						<p>Ongoing maintenance inspections have revealed health and safety risks with the hot water system at the Dolphin Centre and urgent replacement is now required. Work is to be carried out at the forthcoming closure of the Centre.</p>

<p><b>Childrens Play Schemes (funded by BIG Lottery Childrens Programme funding)</b></p>	<p><b>200,000</b></p>				<p><b>Lottery</b></p>	<p>The money from the BIG Lottery shall contribute to the following schemes;  <b>Wythall Play Project</b> - a new adventure play area at Wythall Park, a more innovative/natural play facility at Hollywood Lane Play Area and an improved toddler/young childrens play area at May Farm Close. <b>Rubery</b> - a new MUGA. <b>Sidemoor</b> - additional risky play items at King George play area.</p>
<p><b>SUPPORT SERVICES RECHARGES TO CAPITAL (To be recharged over all schemes in 2008/09, 2009/10 &amp; 2010/11)</b></p>	<p><b>130,000</b></p>	<p><b>133,000</b></p>	<p><b>136,000</b></p>		<p><b>Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)</b></p>	
<p><b>SUB-TOTAL FOR 'HIGH'</b></p>	<p><b>1,445,000</b></p>	<p><b>340,000</b></p>	<p><b>420,000</b></p>	<p><b>0</b></p>		

# CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008/09-2010/11

## CAPITAL BIDS RANKED AS "MEDIUM & LOW"

APPENDIX D

Schemes by Department	Revised Budget & Additions 2007-08 £	Financing Budget & Additions 2007-08 (See Key)	Original Budget 2008-09 £	Estimate 2009-10 £	Estimate 2010-11 £	Estimate for Future Years on Approved Schemes £	Financing Original Budget 2008/09 (See Key)	Brief Description of Project
<b>CAPITAL BIDS RANKED 'MEDIUM'</b>								
<b>Street Scene &amp; Waste Management</b>								
1 Large & 1 Small Sweeper Vehicle			160,000				Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)	Additional equipment to target detritus element of littering.
<b>CAPITAL BIDS RANKED 'LOW'</b>								
<b>Culture &amp; Community</b>								
Interactive CCTV - " Talking Cameras"			31,000				Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)	This scheme is to establish a pilot for the implementation of an interactive CCTV system (talking cameras) in the Rubery area of the District. The scheme will endeavour to deliver a greater range of applications for CCTV to prevent and deter low level crime and ASB.

<p><b>Closed Churchyards - Wall Repairs</b></p>			<p><b>10,000</b></p>				<p><b>Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)</b></p>	<p>This scheme is to carry out repairs to the perimeter sandstone walls at Christ Church Cemetery Catshill.</p>
<p><b>Purchase of a Minibus</b></p>			<p><b>28,000</b></p>				<p><b>Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)</b></p>	<p>This scheme is designed to allow enhanced service delivery and support the work of the department and the wider community by allowing residents to be bussed to and from activity venues around the district. This will deliver greater opportunity for all and ensure that we remove as many barriers to participation as possible. This will be particularly relevant in relation to diversionary activities, sports and development projects, ASB and the upcoming youth provision projects.</p>
<p><b>Community Safety</b></p>								



Replacement of PNC3 Lifeline Soft & Hard Ware by PNC4 System			36,000				Revenue Funding	<p>It will meet Bromsgrove District Council's requirement for a reliable, call monitoring and management system capable of integration with corporate network services. This will enable BDC to provide a platform for the expansion of services and equipment to existing and potential customers for Telecare and Lone Worker monitoring.</p> <p>NB We already pay exactly the same amounts for Disaster Recovery and Maintenance for PNC3 as projected for PNC4. We would save £14,605 maintenance costs for the first 12 months as it would be subject to 12 months guarantee (all subject to RPI increases.)</p>
Street Scene & Waste Management								
1 Tipper Vehicle			30,000				Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)	Increase coverage of recycling service to 100% of District (not green waste).
Egov & Customer Services								

<b>IP Telephony</b>			<b>36,000</b>				<b>Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)</b>	Single number calling enables customers to dial one number and it be routed either to a desk phone, mobile number or external land line. Voice, video and web conferencing. Listen to e-mails over the telephone.
<b>Vault Storage System</b>			<b>90,000</b>				<b>Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)</b>	System to facilitate the archiving of corporate documents and email.
<b>Corporate Communications &amp; Policy</b>								
<b>Windmill Avenue, Car Parking</b>			<b>12,000</b>				<b>Capital Receipts or Prudential Borrowing (1)</b>	The project will deliver a one way system and increased parking on the triangle of land outside Windmill Stores on Windmill Avenue, Rubery.
<b>Financial Services</b>								
<b>SUB-TOTAL FOR 'LOW'</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>433,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>		

**Earmarked Reserves  
Position Statement 2008/09**

**APPENDIX E**

	Anticipated Balance as at 31st March 2008	Utilised in Year	Received in Year	Anticipated Balance as at 31st March 2009	Comment
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
<b>Revenue</b>					
Building Control Partnership	9	0	0	9	Ring fenced surplus re Building Control fees
Planning Delivery Grant	345	-345	0	0	Grant received for improvements in planning performance
Replacement Reserve	429	0	0	429	Repairs and renewals reserve re vehicles, plant & equipment
<b>Total Revenue Reserves</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>-345</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>438</b>	Repairs and renewals reserve re vehicles, plant & equipment

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## Budget Strategy - Risk Matrix 2008/09-2010/11

Description	Base Budget 2008/09 £'000	Base Budget 2009/10 £'000	Base Budget 2010/11 £'000	To which year does the risk relate?	Potential Risk	Possible Solution
Salaries - vacancy management provision	-378	-394	-410	All years	4% per annum allowed for vacancy management is not achieved	The Council budget for salaries on a full establishment basis - i.e., all posts filled by the same person for the period of the budget strategy (assuming incremental increases year on year). This is unlikely and a vacancy management provision should be easily achieved, however, in order to ensure this is achieved a strict vacancy management regime needs to be followed. In addition monthly budget monitoring will need to be undertaken ensure (with a specific element dedicated to monitoring employee related costs).
Central Government Support i.e. Formula Grant	-4,858	-4,945	-5,047	2007/08 onwards	Despite a 3 year settlement being granted the Government may change the criteria year on year. Potential for efficiency cuts in the future	There will be sufficient funds in balances to fund any short term reduction in grant. Efficiency savings will be monitored on a monthly basis.
Land Charges - Income	-400	-410	-420	All years	Not achieving income target	Tight budgetary control, and if necessary, report to Members requesting additional funds, budget reduction and/or policy changes
Insurances	117	120	125	All years	Assets not insured. Repair of damaged assets less than cost of insurance.	Tight budgetary control, and if necessary, report to Members requesting additional funds, budget reduction and/or policy changes.
Investment Interest	-426	-145	0	All years	Non achievement of target due to lower than anticipated investment rates and higher than anticipated spend	Tight control over investments and budgetary control in general. Quarterly monitoring to members on the return from investments
Car Parking Income (excluding fines, including annual tickets/residents permits)	-1,001	-1,036	-1,120	All years	Demand led; may be subject to fluctuation if option to increase prices proceeds	Feasibility study/Market Testing prior to any price increases
Building Control - Fees and charges and Income	-368	-376	-400	All years	Income unpredictable	Tight budgetary control, and if necessary, report to Members requesting additional funds, budget reduction and/or policy changes
Planning Applications - Fees and charges and Income	-415	-425	-440	All years	Income unpredictable	Tight budgetary control, and if necessary, report to Members requesting additional funds, budget reduction and/or policy changes
Alternative methods of service delivery	-296	-373	0	All years	Potential of not achieving efficiency savings and quality of service provision through alternative methods eg -shared / partnership or outsourcing.	Discussions with other districts/partners underway to plan for alternative ways of providing services. Strict budgetary control and quarterly reports to members to demonstrate savings are being achieved

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# **Appendix G**

## **Bromsgrove District Council**

### **Budget Focus Groups**

**November 2007**

### **Draft Report**





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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Officers at the council have submitted a number of budget bids for consideration in the forthcoming negotiations over the budget. In order to help inform these negotiations, it was decided that a number of these bids should be submitted for testing by residents in focus groups. It is hoped that by inviting residents to consider the bids, decision-makers at the council will be able to more accurately reflect the needs of the community when allocating funds.

## 1.2 Methodology

Snap Surveys was invited to facilitate two focus groups on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2007. The groups were hosted at the council offices in Bromsgrove.

A topic guide was developed that covered 14 budget bids. It should be noted that more than 14 budget bids had been submitted, but it was considered expedient not to include all bids, for the sake of brevity and also to keep respondents interested. The council decided which bids should be included in the research.

The focus groups lasted an hour and a quarter each and were recorded for analysis purposes. Respondents were also given a 'respondent pack', this included a number of exercises for the respondents to complete during the course of the groups.

The recruitment of the groups was out-sourced to a third party. Potential respondents were stopped in the street and invited to participate. Willing residents were asked a number of questions about themselves (including where they lived, age group and socio-economic group) so that a wide range of residents were recruited.

As a thank you for participating each member of the group was given an envelope containing £25 cash. In total there were 8 respondents to the first group and 10 in the second group.

## 1.3 Analysis of results

The analysis of qualitative data is by its very nature a subjective exercise. This should not be considered a weakness of qualitative research, but it is an important issue for the reader to consider. In particular, not all quotes from each individual have been included in this report, and some individuals may have been quoted here more frequently than others.

The findings from focus groups are not truly quantifiable, groups are not randomly selected and are not truly replicable, as such it is very important to

note that findings here are therefore not statistically valid, and focus groups should not be analysed in statistical terms.

#### 1.4 Structure of this report

This report has been structured in a way that is similar to the structure of the group:

- Demographics
- What the council should spend more/less on
- Culture and community services
- Planning and environment services
- Financial services
- Street scene and waste management
- E-Government and customer services
- Final comments

## 2 DEMOGRAPHICS

### 2.1 Introduction

Normally focus groups are made up of people from similar demographic and socio-economic backgrounds, this helps to improve the group dynamic and makes it easier to draw out comparisons between different sub-groups. Unfortunately, due to time and budget constraints, this was not possible for these groups, so a mix of people from the area were recruited.

### 2.2 Demographics

The key demographic characteristics of the first group were as follows:

Gender	AGE	Marital Status	Children living at home?	Housing Status	SEG	Ethnic Origin	Area
Female	55-64	Married	No	Owned	Retired	White British	Hagley
Male	65+	Married	No	Owned	B	White British	Hagley
Female	55-64	Separated	No	Owned	C1	White British	Bromsgrove
Male	35-44	Single	No	Privately renting	C1	White British	Bromsgrove
Male	65+	Married	No	Owned	Retired	White British	Wythall
Female	25-34	Married	under 12	Privately renting	C2	White British	Stoke Prior
Female	45-54	Divorced	12 & 18	Owned	C1	White British	Bromsgrove
Male	25-34	Married	12 & 18	Renting council	C1	White British	Catshill
Male	45	Married	under 12	Privately renting	B	White British	Bromsgrove

The key demographic characteristics of the second group were as follows:

Gender	AGE	Marital Status	Children living at home?	Housing status	SEG	Ethnic Origin	Area
Male	35-44	Single/ Cohab	under 12	owned	A	White British	Wythall
Male	65+	Married	none	owned	B	White British	Wythall
Male	35-44	Married	under 12	owned	A	White British	Wythall
Male	25-34	Single	1x under 12 1x over 12	owned	C1	White British	Rubery
Female	45-54	Divorced	1x under 12 1x over 12	owned	D	White British	Hagley
Female	65+	Widowed	none	owned	Retired	White British	Hagley
Male	35-44	Married	under 12	owned	A	Asian	Sidmore
Female	35-44	Single	none	owned	B	White British	Stoke Heath
Female	35-44	Divorced	none	privately renting	B	White British	Bromsgrove
Female	35-44	Married	under 12	owned	C1	White British	Blackwell

### 3 THE COUNCIL SHOULD SPEND MORE/LESS ON

#### 3.1 Introduction

As a warming up exercise, respondents were asked what they thought the council should spend more or less money on.

#### 3.2 What the council should spend more on

There was some confusion over what services the council provides and what services are provided by the county council and parish councils. In order to help overcome this, respondents were read a list of council services.

Responses to the question focused on operational areas, in particular:

- ✓ Waste and recycling
- ✓ Crime prevention and antisocial behaviour
- ✓ Affordable housing
- ✓ Activities for young people

This is summarised by some of the following quotes:

*"General environmental issues e.g. make the Spadebourne Stream by the bus station in Bromsgrove cleaner" – Female 55-64*

*"Crime prevention – working with other organisations – police to reduce anti-social behaviour – remove graffiti. Making Bromsgrove a better environment – street cleaning, not just town centre. Bring shops into town, keep existing shops there, reduce rates. More accountable" - Male 45-54*

*"Recycling for large families. Traffic calming!. Local villages outside Bromsgrove"*

*"Facilities for young people e.g. play areas. Better lighting in some areas. Cleaning leaves from footpaths. Cutting back overhanging trees in local roads. Improving facilities for the elderly including sensible old people and young people housing. Local bus services and make bus passes free to all pensioners in the council area." – Male 65+*

In addition, a number of respondents from outside Bromsgrove itself said that they felt that the council focuses most of its energy and resources on Bromsgrove, at the expense of the outlying areas. This particularly related to transport services, (for which Bromsgrove District Council is not responsible).

One respondent highlighted the fact the Bromsgrove Council is in special measures and suggested more money should be spent on recruiting high-profile officers to give the council a clearer strategic direction.

### 3.3 What the council should spend less on

Whilst it was easy for respondents to identify areas where they would like to see investment, identifying areas where less money should be spent was a more difficult task.

Responses tended to centre on the arts as several respondents suggested that the council should seek more sponsorship arrangements for events and services such as museums and the fireworks display. Other respondents felt that more money could be saved on the internal processes within the council; in particular on councillors and bureaucracy.

Some felt that the council was guilty of wasting money by not seeing through some major projects, and also unnecessarily spending on others, such as the re-development of the recently re-developed market hall.

*"No more CCTV needed in Hagley Park" – Female 55-64*

*"Arts – get private sector to help funding to reduce costs on front line services. Less managers" – Male 45-54*

*"Councillors salaries. Affordable housing for older adults, just to get the central government funding" – Female 35-44*

*"Internal politics"*

*"Arts development in Bromsgrove Town, if necessary reduce street activities" – Male 35-44*

*"Arts, museums, B.D.H.T, refuse"*

*"Changing the centre of Bromsgrove – when other areas appear to be watching. In planning, make sure that shops are made to serve the public of the area, too many hot food shops" – Male 65+*

*"Allowing fairground rides and circus in the area. CCTV-generate fear. Paper" – Male 65+*

*"Replacing the market hall, which does not need doing. Useless website" – Female 25-34*

*"Car parks. Council functions, i.e. fireworks" – Male 35-44*



## 4 CULTURE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

### 4.1 Introduction

Culture and community services is responsible for Sports services, parks and open spaces, arts development and community safety. Officers at the council have submitted a number of budget bids to council for improving these services, in particular to spend money on sports development officers, a CRB vetting system, expansion of street theatre, more neighbourhood warden and additional staff in the CCTV control room.

### 4.2 Sports development officers

Respondents were told that the council would like to hire two new sports development officers to provide additional sports activities and diversionary projects for children and young people.

The reaction to this bid was largely positive, with people recognising that there was a need to give children and young people more to do and some respondents spontaneously suggesting that it could help to reduce anti-social behaviour. The following helps to illustrate this:

*"Great idea if it works and can maintain the interest of the kids" Female – 25-34*

*"Fantastic. Get the kids off the street corners. Less crime, less drinking in the streets, less litter, kids will be fitter" – Female – 45-54*

*"Local children need more things to do- hopefully reduce antisocial, will need auditing to ensure more children take up." Male – 45-54*

*"Will take children off the streets" – Male 25-34*

However, other respondents, whilst recognising the benefits, felt that this activity was the sort of thing that the community and voluntary sector should lead on, and that fostering the CVS would be a more sustainable way of delivering this service:

*"Scouts and Guide groups do a wonderful job in this respect" Female – 55-64*

*"Should look to organisations such as youth sports trusts who can provide this anyway" – Male 35-44*

*"Good idea but needs to be processed via schools and local projects" - Male 35-44*

Only one respondent felt that this was not something that the council should be investing in, giving the following comment:

*"Won't work. Needs to be something permanent in the village. Remember Youth Clubs that used to give young people base? Needs to be done locally" - Female 35-44*

### 4.3 CRB vetting system

Respondents were told that the council would like to strengthen its' CRB checks and make them more robust. Some respondents felt that the council should be doing this anyway and that there was little point in testing this initiative with them as the cost is low in the overall context of the council's total budget:

*"If required do it but at £5k and £2k ongoing, its really not worth asking us" – Male 65+*

Other respondents felt that they would have benefited from more detail about the types of checks currently in place compared to the new checks being proposed.

Overall the reaction as to whether money should be spent on this were very mixed (with the majority not giving a strong opinion). One respondent in particular felt that the budget bid should be supported, and gave the following reason:

*"Yes important. We need to keep our children and other vulnerable people safe. (Must be enhanced disclosure)" – Female – 45-54*

Not all respondents were convinced that this should be a priority, as is illustrated by the following comment:

*"Good idea but I think there are more urgent issues to deal with" – Female 25-34*

### 4.4 Expansion of street theatre programme

Respondents were asked whether or not they were familiar with the street theatre programme, in both groups there were some people who were aware of the initiative, although not all were aware that it was a council initiative. Those that were aware of the street theatre programme were all from Bromsgrove itself rather than the surrounding areas. When they explained to the rest of the group what the street theatre scheme involved many people felt that it was a positive initiative, recognising the benefits that such projects bring to the community.

*"Great idea, love the street theatre with young people" – Female –35-44*

*"Excellent project for local community. Needs to ensure it reaches all areas and be well advertised" – Male – 35-44*

*"Enables outlying areas to feel part of District" – Female 35-44*

However, the positive reaction was not unanimous, with some respondents questioning whether a four-week programme of events would deliver value for money:

*"Enjoyed by local children at the moment. (10K a bit too much to extend it to surrounding areas). Children in villages are usually from well off families" – Female – 45-54*

*"Don't think it will be cost effective" – Male 45-54*

#### 4.5 Neighbourhood wardens

Respondents were told that the Culture and Community Services team was bidding for a budget allocation to employ 2 new neighbourhood wardens. All respondents were familiar with the roles that neighbourhood/community wardens play, however, very few had anything positive to say.

The main reasons for criticising the initiative were cost...

*"Two people is not enough – at £22k per annum each is far too much money. When I qualify to be in paramedic I would not earn that much" – Female – 25-34*

*"Too much money for two people, good idea though" – Male 25-34*

...and a lack of faith in their effectiveness:

*"A drop in the ocean, waste of time, neighbourhood watch more effective" – female 45-54*

*"Money better spent on things for kids to do" – Male 35-44*

*"Local people should report any incidences via neighbourhood watch groups" – Female 55-64*

There was some debate about the effectiveness of neighbourhood wardens, with many people's knowledge of them being informed by national media coverage criticising the initiative as ineffective "plastic policemen".

*"What authority do they have? They are pointless"*

*"They are not taken seriously, they don't have the same respect as police officers"*

One lady, who was involved in her local neighbourhood watch criticised neighbourhood wardens because they did not appear to show a genuine interest as they did not even turn up to the neighbourhood watch meetings.

However, some recognised that the presence of officials in uniform and high visibility jackets does have a positive impact on antisocial behaviour.

*"It has a psychological effect- it has had an impact"*

#### 4.6 Additional staff in the CCTV control room

Respondents were told that the council would like to recruit more staff for the CCTV control room to monitor the screen and help man the Lifeline. CCTV was an issue that split respondents, who tried to balance the issue of civil liberties and a 'big brother' society against the benefits that CCTV brings in terms of reducing antisocial behaviour and increasing the bank of evidence for prosecution.

Several respondents felt that the CCTV infrastructure should be improved before recruiting new staff to monitor it. Some claimed to know that not all the CCTV cameras in the town work, and that it would therefore be more important to repair the network than to increase the number of staff manning it:

*"Better spent on repair of existing cameras" – Male – 35-44*

*"Council needs to ensure existing cameras work (all the time) – Females 45-54)*

*"Ensure cameras already in place working" – Male – 45-54*

Others felt that the council should be careful about over-relying on CCTV since they felt that CCTV was replacing the traditional 'bobby on the beat'.

## 5 PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

### 5.1 Introduction

Planning and Environmental Services are responsible for a range of services, including planning applications and building regulations, Environmental Health, Housing Services, Economic Development and promoting quality of life. The Planning and Environmental Services Directorate had five bids tested in the focus groups, these were:

- ✓ 'Scores on the doors',
- ✓ The development of Bromsgrove town centre
- ✓ Employing disabled facilities grants staff on a permanent basis
- ✓ Improving housing services by commissioning a housing market assessment update, employing new housing staff and launching a night-stop programme
- ✓ Appointing an Assistant Drainage Engineer.

### 5.2 Scores on the doors

Respondents were told that the Environmental Health Team would like to introduce a system whereby their inspection assessments are clearly visible to customers of catering outlets. This would take the form of putting stickers on the doors of all cafes, restaurants, takeaways and pubs in the area, and also publishing the scores on the council website.

Some respondents commented that a scheme of this cost was not worth testing with the public, (*"£7K is peanuts!"*) and others were confused as to how the scheme would operate. Overall the reaction was mixed, with some feeling that scores on the doors was something of a 'quick win' in protecting the public, whilst others felt that it was an unnecessary expense. These feelings are summarised by the statements below taken from the respondent packs:

*"Environmental Health important for protection of public. Star rating a good idea, to improve quality and performance of local businesses" – Female 45-54*

*"Not worth that much money for stickers" – Male 25-34*

*"Service is already provided so why duplicate" – Male 65+*

*"Not a priority, these measures are already in place so I don't really think it is that important" – Female – 25-34*

*"Good idea – but thinking of council budget, more major concerns""- Male 45-54*

*"Why do we need it? They do it anyway"*

### 5.3 Bromsgrove town centre development

At the beginning of the groups many people, especially those that lived in Bromsgrove commented on the town centre. Most said that they were worried about the increasing number of shops closing (often citing business rates and expensive parking as the key reasons for this) but others said that they had noticed an improvement in recent times.

*"I like the town centre but if there are lots of shops closing it will need discussion to invigorate the centre" – Female 55-64*

*"Main popular shops need to stay – Woolworths would be a loss. But smaller shops can only be supported by chains-which is good! E.g. La Senza, Subway." – Female 45-54*

However, there was a broad level of consensus that improvements to the town centre were required. Many spontaneously suggested that the council should seek investment from private companies in order to achieve this, partly due to a lack of faith in the councils ability to deliver on major projects and partly because they recognised that a substantial investment would be required for a satisfactory outcome.

Respondents were told that Planning and Environmental Services recognised that residents wanted change in this area, and that they would like a one-off payment to help 'get the ball rolling' by exploring partnerships to help develop the town.

Responses were generally positive, although due to the strategic nature of the bid, some respondents were confused as to what the money would buy- e.g. would it pay for a new member of staff, would it cover the cost of meetings and functions, etc.

*"Is this the £60 grand for a new planning officer I heard of?"*

*"I don't know what to expect from £60K"*

One or two respondents from outside the city, whilst recognising that Bromsgrove town Centre would benefit from improvements, felt that it would be of little benefit to residents who shop elsewhere:

*"Waste of money for persons living out of Bromsgrove" – Male 65+*

#### 5.4 Making permanent disabled facilities grants staff

Residents were told that the council currently employs two members of staff on a temporary basis to administer grants for the adaptations to the homes of disabled people.

The majority of respondents recognised the importance of looking after disabled people, and one respondent criticised the council for being behind schedule in making buildings DDA compliant.

*"Especially relevant to those who are disabled and need adaptations to maintain a standard of life" - Male 35-44*

*"Excellent idea! We need to help people with disabilities here" – Female 35-44*

However, some people thought that employing staff on a permanent basis, when the job is already being carried out by temporary staff would add unnecessary expenses in 'on' costs (e.g. pensions, holidays, sickness etc) and that the council as an employer has more flexibility when employing temporary staff:

*"Keep temporary. Quality not necessarily going to be better"*

*"Especially relevant to those who are disabled and need adaptations to maintain a standard of life" - Male 35-44*

*"Long term temporary is fine. A change in employment status is not going to bring improvements in quality of performing the job" – Female 35-44*

#### 5.5 Housing Market Assessment update, Nightstop programme and more housing staff

Many respondents brought up the issue of affordable housing in the warm-up session, and it was universally recognised as an issue that needs addressing, especially for young people. Some were aware that there is a long waiting list for those needing affordable housing, and were worried that local people might not always get priority.

Respondents were told that there were three separate elements of a bid, including the need for a housing assessment update, the nightstop programme and new staff.

In terms of the Housing market assessment update, generally speaking respondents were surprised that the council would not have that information readily available and most conceded that such a report would be required in order to inform any sort of affordable housing strategy. There was also some disappointment that the report would have to be outsourced, as opposed to undertaken in-house.

The nightstop programme was considered to be a good idea in principle, but some respondents felt that the programme might be difficult to deliver, and that it might be dangerous for both host and guest.

*"A nice idea to get youngsters of the streets and give them some sense of security"*

*"If people do not get help it could cost the community more in the long term" - Male 35-44*

*"Great idea to help homeless young people"- Female 35-44*

## 5.6 Appointment of Assistant Drainage Engineer

The proposed appointment of an assistant Drainage engineer to support the officer in the current role was proposed. Whilst many had been effected by recent flooding or were aware of it as a key issue *"for the future"*, few felt that the bid would deliver value for money.

The main reasoning behind this was temporary staff could be employed or that the private sector could be called upon in times of crises:

*"Outsourcing would be cheaper" - Male 25-34*

*"If required why not buy service from outside sources if and when required" - Male 65+*

*"Bromsgrove building too many houses, no where for rain to go when flooding occurs, employ someone as required (agency). - Male 45-54*

## 6 FINANCIAL SERVICES

### 6.1 Introduction

Only one bid from the Financial Services team was submitted for testing- this was for Aspirin IT software for benefits claims

### 6.2 Aspirin IT software

Aspirin IT software would be used to help allocate benefits to those eligible and to reduce overpayments and fraud. A description of the software was read to respondents to test their reaction. At this stage in the second group, some respondents reacted quite negatively, not to the bid proposal itself, but due to the fact that it was more of a strategic bid which respondents found hard to relate to.

Most of the reaction to the purchase of an Aspirin licence was positive, largely because it was seen to be capable of paying for itself by reducing fraud and because it reallocated the money to more vulnerable people:

*"If a one of payment and not an annual contract to use the service. I would expect back within 6 months!" – Male 35-44*

*"May quicken up procedure and process and simplify paperwork. (Often correspondence coming out of the office is difficult to understand). Often need help to understand the procedure".*

*"Good. Needs to be justified and correct monitoring to ensure value for money" – Male 35-44*

*"Will savings be put forward to overall council tax payments? Needs to be"*



## 7 STREET SCENE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

### 7.1 Introduction

Only one bid from the Street Scene and Waste Management service area was submitted for testing at the focus groups- this was for 2 additional staff for a streets hit squad.

### 7.2 Two new members of staff for a 'Hit Squad'

Respondents were told that the streets hit squad would drive around the area responding to fly tipping, littering incidents etc. Most respondents were in agreement that litter was a problem in the area, (*"Something's got to be done about it"*) in particular in the centre of the town.

*"Always need more street cleaners" – Male 25-34*

*"Bromsgrove does require additional cleaning, litter removal, removing graffiti. People feel better when environment is clean and tidy. When I lived in Catshill the new litter picker really made a big improvement. Also when bin men collect rubbish, when they drop litter they do not always pick it up" – Male 45-54*

*"Litter problem is huge and depressing for everyone. Local businesses need to be encouraged to follow McDonalds example, e.g. all wrappers "please dispose of this responsibly". Campaign for every household to take some responsibility for helping to clean up for everyone's benefit. (Cleanest street competition". Supply replacement lids for recycle boxes as paper blows down the street". – Female 45-54*

Respondents who were not from Bromsgrove itself were concerned that the officers would focus predominantly on the town rather than on outlying areas:

*"In Hagley please, especially for alleyways where school children constantly working."*

*"Will they cover the whole council area, if so good and useful;" – Male 65+*

*"This is required and if they perform district wide and not just in the Bromsgrove contract area" – Male 65+*

Not all respondents felt that the additional funding in this area was warranted, this is mainly because either litter was not an issue in their area, or because they felt that the community itself should be encouraged to do more to keep their environment clean and tidy:

*"We should all be more responsible for looking after our own streets /environment. We are all capable of picking up a piece of litter if we see some" – Male 35-44*

*"2 people couldn't cover the whole area. Individual people should take responsibility. Already people pick up litter they see around their locality" – Female 55-64*

*Street hit squad-good idea and is a need for fly tipping etc but not seen as a priority as the local area seems to be on top of this regarding the particular area I live in" – Male 35-44*

Finally, a couple of respondents suggested that a proportion of the litter was down to the council's own doing- because recycling bins are not always distributed with fitting lids, or because bins are too small for some families, or because *"the binmen drop litter and don't pick it up"*.

## 8 E-GOVERNMENT AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

### 8.1 Introduction

The E-government and Customer Services team included two bids for consideration by the focus groups. These were for more customer service staff at the call centre, and to make improvements to internet access and IT equipment for councillors.

### 8.2 Two additional customer service centre staff

When this bid was introduced to respondents, few claimed to have had any problems actually getting in contact with the council:

*"Pleased with call centre service. Do not see a need." – Female 35-44*

*"Not had any problems" Female 65+*

*"Service delivery and customer service has been good" – Male 35-44*

Most who had contacted the council claimed that the problem was not accessing a council employee it was getting that employee to take ownership of the issue and/or call them back:

*"Try and improve internal efficiencies"*

A few said it was easier to contact the council than their bank. One respondent also mentioned that they expect a wait when they contact the council.

However, it was noted that customer service is important and that it was good that the council recognised this:

*"Look after your customers! Should look to identify peak times that staff will be needed" – Male 35-44*

### 8.3 Improvements to internet access and IT equipment for councillors

Respondents were asked whether an investment in the IT equipment for councillors was a worthwhile expense. A very mixed response was received, with some saying that this area was not a priority, whilst others claimed that it is a necessary expense, and that an upgrade is worth doing sooner rather than later to prevent a larger bill in the future:

*"Need to keep up constantly with info. Tech, will cost more next time"*

*"In sufficient to make any significant progress-would end up being far more costly-needs watching closely" – Male 65+*

*"Needs implementing but could changing processes reduce this cost/saving? Is 15K a realistic cost?" – Male 35-44*

## 9 FINAL COMMENTS

Respondents were invited to write down any final comments for the council in their respondent packs for officers at the council to read first hand. These are listed below:

*"I like Bromsgrove very much. It has a small town feel to it and supplies all my needs very adequately. I prefer to come here from Hagley than to go anywhere else. I enjoy the Artrix centre, the library and the pedestrianised high street. I always come on the bus which is very reliable and pleasant to use" – Female 55-64*

*"I was born and bred in Bromsgrove – please look after my town – keep it clean and safe. Bring shops etc into town centre. How many empty shops already? And how many more are going to leave Bromsgrove. It is still a nice place to live but could be so much better" male – 45-54*

*"Interesting evening, all the bids need to be thought about in a lot more detail" – Male 35-44*

*"Please let PACT/NHW – know exactly who is responsible for alley ways – Stokeheath. Please give financial support to children in Charford. Bigger recycling boxes - keep weekly bin emptying. Please invest in town centre. Increase in leisure activities for over 60's" – Female 35-44*

*"Would definitely like to see Bromsgrove Council taking more part in Hagley village with Pavement (resurfacing, cleansing, leaf clearing). Roads to and from schools. Policing. Planning applications – taking more notice of Hagley objectives. Also, suggest Bromsgrove quarterly reports not put in free post for delivery but delivered separately. Would be noticed more."*

*"Take ownership. Plan properly. See projects through to the end. If you want to create a market town that is thriving : \*Attract business by covering rates \* Improve access by roads \*Why did we build a single lane bypass? \* We need a bypass for West Bromsgrove too!" – Male 35-44*

*"Please be more transparent with your costs, e.g. post in local paper. This meeting was excellent for informing us about potential council expenditure, but it is the first time I've had any knowledge of budgeting" – Male 35-44*

*"There has been a little improvement in Bromsgrove Council. More contact with various offices, prompt action and replies to letters" – Female 65+*

*"I would like to find out what the councillors do with our information as it has been great to be involved. Thank you for inviting me to attend." –Female 35-44*

*"Reduce car park charges, they are ridiculous. We need green bins collected all year round. The leaves have not finished falling yet and it is November and the bins are not being collected. I still have loads of leaves in my garden which need to be collected" – Female 25-34*

*"Needs more money spent on the youth to stop them hanging around. More money for regeneration of the town centre" – Male 25-34*

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**Summary of issues arising from Budget Focus Groups, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2007.**

The Council has a general duty to consult with residents, taxpayers and local businesses under the Local Government Act 2000. This agenda has been strengthened by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and is emphasised in guidance for the Comprehensive Performance Assessment of councils and the new Comprehensive Area Assessment. The Council has clearly stated its commitment to consultation in its Improvement Plan for recovery from Voluntary Engagement.

As part of the budget consultation for 2008/09 two Focus Groups were commissioned from SNAP surveys who run the Council's Customer Panel. The groups were held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2007 and 19 residents from around the district attended. Attendees were asked to consider the high pressure budget bids that have been submitted by Heads of Service for the 2008/09 budget round. These budget bids link to the five corporate priorities agreed by Full Council at its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2007 as a result of public consultation in the summer. The Focus Group discussions were digitally recorded and notes were also taken to ensure an accurate record was made of all the opinions proffered.

The 2008/09 budget consultation is an ongoing process and the detailed budget proposals are currently available for the public to view on the Council's website, together with a feedback form that members of the public have been encouraged to complete. The ongoing consultation has been publicised in the local press, and any feedback forthcoming will be fed into the Cabinet and Full Council reports ahead of the respective meetings or reported verbally if necessary.

The key issues arising from the groups were as follows:-

- Residents focused on arts as an area where the Council should spend less and suggested the Council should look to make greater use of sponsorship; however, there was broad support for the sports development officers and street theatre expansion budget bids. The Council should therefore be careful about cutting expenditure in areas that help bring communities together, especially where views are contradictory and particularly given the 'Sense of Community' corporate objective.
- The attendees did not express a great deal of opinion on the CRB vetting budget bid due to its small size. However, not progressing the bid could have massive consequences for any victim and for the reputation of the Council. Equally, the 'Scores on the Doors' bid was too small to create a great deal of opinion. This bid was originally a staff suggestion, so it would be good for staff to see this bid go ahead.
- The feedback on Neighbourhood Wardens was expected to be positive. Comments were actually mixed and may have been

influenced by negative national media coverage around Community Support Officers, and the fact that attendees are likely not to have had any personal experience of the Neighbourhood Wardens (there are only three in the whole district). There was certainly a sense that the attendees were not fully aware of the powers possessed by the wardens. An evaluation to confirm the positive effect of existing wardens on the neighbourhoods they serve should be considered alongside raising the profile of the wardens, should this bid proceed.

- The bid on additional CCTV control room staff also received a mixed response, however there was again a sense that the attendees were not entirely aware of the work undertaken by the existing staff at the control room as it is not 'visible' to the public.
- Feedback on the Town Centre budget bid indicated the attendees thought investment was clearly needed. This bid is also directly linked to the Council's 'Town Centre' value.
- The 'Making temporary Disabled Facilities Grant staff permanent' bid received a variety of positive and indifferent comments with some attendees seeing no reason why the current post holders should not remain in temporary employment. However, in terms of the Council being an 'Investor in People', Members should consider the type of employer it wants to be (i.e. an employer of choice that recruits to permanent posts) and balance the benefits of a secure and happy workforce against the costs associated with this bid.
- Attendees were not supportive of the Assistant Drainage Engineer bid and suggested outsourcing the work involved; however, this would mean a loss of the knowledge available to the Council, and this loss would become more critical in the face of further climate change and an increased potential for flooding in the District.
- The Aspiren software budget bid received general support, as did the Housing Market Assessment and other housing bids.
- The feedback on the Hit Squad staff for Street Scene and Waste Management Services was interesting; whilst litter was recognised as a problem the attendees did not largely support the Council's solution. Feedback from attendees who lived outside of Bromsgrove was markedly different to those who were from the town (who regarded litter as much more of a problem). The Catshill litter picker was specifically identified, suggesting that this type of visible clean up did make a difference to the attendee that had experienced it.
- Like the Customer Panel survey feedback reported in September 2007, attendee comments about their experience of using the Customer Service Centre were positive, suggesting there was no need to employ additional staff; however, PI outturn data for average speed of calls answered and the percentage of calls answered has until recently been



consistently poor. Targets were reduced in October and November 2007 and the average speed of answer was 31 seconds against a target of 35 (previously a target of 20), whilst the 86% of calls were answered against a target of 80% (previously 85%). The level of performance suggests extra staff and a continued focus on improving the interface between the CSC and “back office” are required to consistently achieve our targets for the CSC.

- The attendees gave a mixed response to the bids around ICT equipment and support for Members, but were on the whole positive.

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## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### CABINET

9<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2008

#### COMMITTEE PROGRAMME 2008/09

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Leader of the Council
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services

#### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the proposed programme of Council and Committee meetings for 2008/09.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee Programme for 2008/09, as set out at Appendix 1, be recommended for approval by the full Council.

#### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The proposed Committee Programme for 2008/09 is on similar lines to the current year in that the Cabinet is scheduled to meet on a monthly basis and the ordinary meetings of the Council are every two months (i.e. a Council meeting for every two Cabinet meetings). The Scrutiny Steering Board continues to be scheduled to meet the evening before Cabinet.
- 3.2 Although the Cabinet usually meets on the first Wednesday in the month, this is not possible in May 2008 due to the Annual Meeting of the Council. It is therefore proposed that the Cabinet meeting takes place on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2008 with the Scrutiny Steering Board meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008. Similar arrangements are proposed for the Cabinet and Scrutiny Steering Board in late April 2009.
- 3.3 It is further proposed that no meetings of the Cabinet and Scrutiny Steering Board take place in August 2008 but instead they meet at the very end of July (which will still allow for a 4 week gap between the meetings scheduled for the start of July).
- 3.4 The meetings of the Performance Management Board and Audit Board have been scheduled to feed in to Cabinet meetings

- 3.5 A special meeting of the Cabinet and an extraordinary meeting of the Council have been included at the end of June 2008 to approve the Council's accounts. It is a statutory requirement that the accounts be approved by the end of June 2008.
- 3.6 A special meeting of the Cabinet and an extraordinary meeting of the Council have been included in late February 2009 for consideration of the budget.
- 3.7 As with the current year, meetings of the Licensing Committee have not been included in the programme. It is proposed that such meetings will be arranged as and when required during 2008/09.
- 3.8 The Standards Committee has been scheduled to meet six times which reflects the programmed meetings for the current year. Any further meetings will be arranged if and when required.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications.

#### **6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

- 6.1 The forward planning of the Council's decision-making processes links to the Council's Improvement and Sense of Community objectives.

#### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 There are no direct risks arising from this report.

#### **8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Once approved the Committee Timetable will be publicised within the Council and on the Council's website to provide advance notice of future meetings.

#### **9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Efforts have been made to avoid meetings clashing with key religious festivals.

**9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Procurement Issues – None
Personnel Implications – None
Governance/Performance Management –None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – None
Policy – None
Environmental – None

**10. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	No
Executive Director - Partnerships and Projects	No
Assistant Chief Executive	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

**11. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Committee Programme 2008/09

**12. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**CONTACT OFFICER**

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## COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE DATES 2008/09

### Bank Holidays:

2008 – 5th May, 26th May, 25th August

2009 – 4th May, 25th May, 31st August

### Easter:

2008 – 21st March (Good Friday), 24th March (Easter Monday)

2009 – 10th April (Good Friday), 13th April (Easter Monday)

Tuesday 29th April 2008  
Wednesday 30th April 2008

Scrutiny Steering Board  
Cabinet

### **Wednesday 7th May 2008**

Monday 19th May 2008

Tuesday 20th May 2008

### **Council (Annual Meeting)**

Planning Committee

Performance Man. Board

Tuesday 3rd June 2008  
Wednesday 4th June 2008  
Monday 9th June 2008  
Thursday 12th June 2008  
Monday 16th June 2008  
Tuesday 17th June 2008

Scrutiny Steering Board  
Cabinet

Audit Board

Standards Committee

Planning Committee

Performance Man. Board

### **Wednesday 25th June 2008**

**Cabinet (Special Meeting)/  
Council (Extraordinary Meeting)  
(Accounts)**

Tuesday 1st July 2008  
Wednesday 2nd July 2008  
Monday 14th July 2008  
Tuesday 15th July 2008  
**Wednesday 16th July 2008**  
Tuesday 29th July 2008  
Wednesday 30th July 2008

Scrutiny Steering Board  
Cabinet  
Planning Committee  
Performance Man. Board  
**Council**  
Scrutiny Steering Board  
Cabinet

Monday 11th August 2008  
Thursday 14th August 2008  
Tuesday 19th August 2008

Planning Committee  
Standards Committee  
Performance Man. Board

Tuesday 2nd September 2008  
Wednesday 3rd September 2008  
Monday 8th September 2008  
Monday 15th September 2008  
Tuesday 16th September 2008  
**Wednesday 17th September 2008**  
Tuesday 30th September 2008

Scrutiny Steering Board  
Cabinet  
Planning Committee  
Audit Board  
Performance Man. Board  
**Council**  
Scrutiny Steering Board

Wednesday 1st October 2008  
Monday 6th October 2008  
Thursday 16th October 2008  
Tuesday 21st October 2008  
Monday 3rd November 2008

Cabinet  
Planning Committee  
Standards Committee  
Performance Man. Board  
Planning Committee

Tuesday 4th November 2008	Scrutiny Steering Board
Wednesday 5th November 2008	Cabinet
<b>Wednesday 12th November 2008</b>	<b>Council</b>
Tuesday 18th November 2008	Performance Man. Board
Monday 1st December 2008	Planning Committee
Tuesday 2nd December 2008	Scrutiny Steering Board
Wednesday 3rd December 2008	Cabinet
Thursday 11th December 2008	Standards Committee
Monday 15th December 2008	Audit Board
Tuesday 16th December 2008	Performance Man. Board
Monday 5th January 2009	Planning Committee
Tuesday 6th January 2009	Scrutiny Steering Board
Wednesday 7th January 2009	Cabinet
<b>Wednesday 14th January 2009</b>	<b>Council</b>
Tuesday 20th January 2009	Performance Man. Board
Monday 2nd February 2009	Planning Committee
Tuesday 3rd February 2009	Scrutiny Steering Board
Wednesday 4th February 2009	Cabinet
Thursday 5th February 2009	Standards Committee
Tuesday 17th February 2009	Performance Man. Board
Wednesday 18th February 2009	Cabinet (Special Meeting – Budget)
<b>Wednesday 25th February 2009</b>	<b>Council (Extraordinary Meeting - Budget)</b>
Monday 2nd March 2009	Planning Committee
Tuesday 3rd March 2009	Scrutiny Steering Board
Wednesday 4th March 2009	Cabinet
Monday 16th March 2009	Audit Board
Tuesday 17th March 2009	Performance Man. Board
<b>Wednesday 18th March 2009</b>	<b>Council</b>
Monday 30th March 2009	Planning Committee
Tuesday 31st March 2009	Scrutiny Steering Board
Wednesday 1st April 2009	Cabinet
Thursday 2nd April 2009	Standards Committee
Monday 20th April 2009	Planning Committee
Tuesday 21st April 2009	Performance Man. Board
<b>Wednesday 22nd April 2009</b>	<b>Council</b>
Tuesday 28th April 2009	Scrutiny Steering Board
Wednesday 29th April 2009	Cabinet
<b>Wednesday 6th May 2009</b>	<b>Council (Annual Meeting)</b>



## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### CABINET

9TH JANUARY 2008

#### CONCESSIONS POLICY FOR USERS OF COUNCIL SERVICES

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Margaret Sherrey
Responsible Head of Service	Michael Bell / Jayne Pickering / John Godwin

#### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council currently provide a reduction in cost for certain services for residents in particular circumstances. This report is considering the application of a standard concession to all services.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That members consider option 3 for future application of concessions across relevant services as being the most equitable.

#### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council currently provide a range of discounted services for residents who fall into certain users groups. This primarily refers to the over 60's, Students, people on Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance, the disabled and carers of disabled people.
- 3.2 However different departments apply differing criteria to discounting of services and apply them to different user groups, thus producing an inconsistent approach.
- 3.3 At its meeting in November 2006 Cabinet agreed, in relation to the provision of a free Pest Control Service that the definition of vulnerable was 'where the main householder is in receipt of one of the following, Income Support, Housing Benefit or Council Tax benefit.'
- 3.4 It further agreed that this definition is used in the future as a Council definition for determining any service concession.
- 3.5 Cabinet also agreed that any concession be considered on a service by service basis until such time as a comprehensive concessions policy is developed.

3.6 The following are some of the concessions currently provided by this Council:

- Parking Passes for residents over the age of 60 at a discount of approximately 95%
- An extra hours parking for blue disabled badge holders.
- A free pest control service for 'vulnerable' people as defined above.
- A discount of 50% for Dolphin Centre Services for Students, those on Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance and the over 60's. Disabled users are provided with free access to Dolphin Centres services for off peak usage.

	Parking	Dolphin Centre	Rodent Control
Vulnerable People	0%	50%	100%
Students	0%	50%	0%
Disabled	Extra time allowed	100%	0%
Over 60's	95%	50%	0%

3.7 This list demonstrates the inconsistency between different services, but also shows that the same groups are being provided with concessions but to a different degree. However it also demonstrates that it will be difficult to standardize concessions across all services.

3.8 It is therefore proposed that concessions continue to be delivered along departmental lines but with some modification to the reductions given in order to make them more equitable.

3.9 The two areas that are most obviously inconsistent are the over 60's group and the disabled group and a number of options for resolution of this inconsistency exist.

3.10 Changes also need to take into account that the fact that 'objective justification' can be a reason to apply a specific concession in particular circumstances.

#### Option 1

	Parking	Dolphin Centre	Rodent Control
Vulnerable People	0%	50%	100%
Students	0%	50%	0%
Disabled	0%	50%	0%
Over 60's	0%	50%	0%

In this option the concession for parking for those over 60 is removed as is the extra time allowance for disabled parkers. This provides a completely equitable system across all services except for pest control for the vulnerable. However there is 'objective justification' for this concession

## Option 2

	Parking	Dolphin Centre	Rodent Control
Vulnerable People	97%	50%	100%
Students	0%	50%	0%
Disabled	Extra time allowed	50%	0%
Over 60's	0%	50%	0%

In this option the concession for parking for those over 60 is removed, but extra time for disabled parkers is retained, disabled users of the Dolphin centre have the concession brought in line with others within the target group by a reduction in concession of 50% and 'vulnerable people' have a concession for parking based on the existing concession for rodent control minus an administration fee. There is 'objective justification' for each of these changes and for retaining the pest control discount for the vulnerable group.

## Option 3

	Parking	Dolphin Centre	Rodent Control
Vulnerable People	0%	50%	100%
Students	0%	50%	0%
Disabled	Extra time allowed	100%	0%
Over 60's	0%	50%	0%

In this option the concession for parking for those over 60 is removed, but extra time for disabled parkers is retained and the 100% discount for disabled users at the Dolphin centre retained. There is again 'objective justification' for retaining the pest control discount and the current discount for disabled users at the Dolphin Centre..

## 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Option 1: Increased income of £93,000 in year 1. There is likely to be an additional income from removing the extra time concession for disabled users of car parks but this is difficult to quantify. Higher increases in future years once existing passes have run out.

Option 2: Increased income of £90,000 in year 1 for parking however there is likely to be an offset of this income because of the granting of an additional concession to vulnerable people. This has the potential to be in excess of £90,000. It is difficult to predict the impact on Dolphin centre usage and income increases but this is likely to be small because the concession applies to off peak services.

Option 3: Increased income of £90,000 in year 1 for parking. Higher increase in future years similar to Option 2. No change to usage of the Dolphin Centre

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There is currently a Discrimination Law review which is likely to result in a single Equalities Act. This would mean that current legislation under age discrimination which currently only applies to employment and training will be extended to the provision of goods, facilities and services. Consequently concessions based on age could be classed as unlawful discrimination under the new legislation.

## **6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

6.1 Improvement in the equality of access to services would support the Councils aim of Customer First and Equality.

## **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:

- Resistance from user groups affected by the changes
- Negative press coverage to changes

7.2 These risks are being managed as follows:

- Resistance from user groups affected by the changes

Risk Register:  
Key Objective Ref No:  
Key Objective

- Negative press coverage to changes

Risk Register:  
Key Objective Ref No:  
Key Objective:

7.3 Currently the risk identified in the bullet point in 7.1 and 7.2 are not addressed by any risk register and will be added to the Street Scene and Waste Management risk register as follows:

Ensure sufficient advanced warning through press releases.  
Regular press releases in period approaching change.

## 8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Press releases and information bulletins will be prepared in advance of the change. Detailed discussion will be had with CSC to update Resource Level Agreement. Stock responses will be prepared for staff answering queries.

## 9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 This report aims to provide consistent access to services for users, with concessions based on equality and diversity. It uses the principle of 'objective justification' for varying the charges for some services. However members need to be aware that when charges were introduced for disabled users of car parks there was considerable resistance to this change. This resulted in additional time being granted to disabled users when purchasing a parking ticket. There is 'objective justification' for doing this hence the retention of this extra concession within the recommendation.

## 10. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Please include the following table and spell out any particular implications in the relevant box. If there are no implications under a particular heading, please state 'None':-

Procurement Issues:	None
Personnel Implications:	None
Governance/Performance Management:	None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998:	None
Policy:	
Environmental:	None

## 11. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Please include the following table and indicate 'Yes' or 'No' as appropriate. Delete the words in italics.

Portfolio Holder	<b>Yes</b>
Chief Executive	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Director (Services)	<b>Yes</b>

Assistant Chief Executive	
Head of Service	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Financial Services	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Organisational Development & HR	<b>No</b>
Corporate Procurement Team	<b>No</b>

**12. APPENDICES**

None

**13. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Executive Cabinet Report, Review of Pest Control Services: Update November 2006

**CONTACT OFFICER**

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## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

9TH JANUARY 2008

### CABINET

#### IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT [OCTOBER 2007]

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Roger Hollingworth Leader of the Council
Responsible Officer	Hugh Bennett Assistant Chief Executive

#### **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To ask the Cabinet to consider the attached updated Improvement Plan Exception Report for October 2007.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Cabinet considers and approves the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception Report, and the corrective action being taken.
- 2.2 That the Cabinet notes that for the 167 actions highlighted for October within the plan 85.0 percent of the Improvement Plan is on target [green], 9.6 percent is one month behind [amber] and 1.8% percent is over one month behind [red]. 3.6 percent of actions have been rescheduled [or suspended] with approval.

#### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 July 2007 Cabinet approved the Improvement Plan 2007/08. The Improvement Plan is directly linked to the 10 corporate priorities and 12 enablers identified in the Council Plan 2007/2010.
- 3.2 At July 2007 Cabinet Members approved the inclusion of an additional number of actions from the Improvement Director. The Improvement Plan is designed to push the Council through to a rating of Fair during 2008.

#### **4. PROGRESS IN OCTOBER 2007**

- 4.1 Overall performance as at the end of October 2007 is as follows: -

September 2007

October 2007

<b>RED</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>RED</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.8%</b>
<b>AMBER</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9.6%</b>
<b>GREEN</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>89.2%</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>85.0%</b>
<b>REPROGRAMMED</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>REPROGRAMMED</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3.6%</b>

Where: -

	<b>On Target or completed</b>
	<b>Less than one month behind target</b>
	<b>Over one month behind target</b>
	<b>Original date of planned action</b>
	<b>Re-programmed date.</b>

4.2 Out of the total of 167 actions for the month, 10 actions have been deleted, suspended or the timescales have been extended. This amounts to 6.0 percent of the plan. These actions are: Overall Customer Satisfaction (4.1.1, 4.1.11), Three Charter Marks (5.2.3), Brand Recognition (5.4.1), Review Annual Business Cycle (6.4.5), Improvements in Use of Resources scoring in relation to VFM (11.3.4, 11.3.6, 11.3.9), ROI (13.1.1) and Satisfaction with leisure centre offer (18.3.3).

4.3 An Exception Report detailing corrective actions being undertaken for red and amber tasks is attached at **Appendix 1**

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 No financial implications.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 No Legal Implications.

**7. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

7.1 The Improvement Plan relates to all of the Council's four objectives and ten priorities as approved on the 19<sup>th</sup> September Full Council.

**8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

8.1 The risks associated with the Improvement Plan are covered in the corporate and departmental risk registers.

**9. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

The Improvement Plan is concerned with strategic and operational issues that will affect the customer.



## 10 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues: Delivery of the Improvement Plan involves various procurement exercises.
Personnel Implications: See Section 18 of the Improvement Plan.
Governance/Performance Management: See Section 4 of the Improvement Plan.
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998: See sections 12.2 and 12.3
Policy: See Section 4 of the Improvement Plan.
Environmental: See Section 8 of the Improvement Plan.
Equalities and Diversity: See Section 3 of Improvement Plan.

## 10 OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	<b>At Leader's Group</b>
Chief Executive	<b>At CMT</b>
Corporate Director (Services)	<b>At CMT</b>
Assistant Chief Executive	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Service	<b>At CMT</b>
Head of Financial Services	<b>At CMT</b>
Head of Legal & Democratic Services	<b>At CMT</b>
Head of Organisational Development & HR	<b>At CMT</b>
Corporate Procurement Team	<b>No</b>

## 11 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Improvement Plan Exception Report October 2007

## 12 BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Full Improvement Plan for August will be e- mailed to all Members of the Corporate Management Team and can be found at [www.bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk) under meetings Minutes and Agendas where there is a direct link to the Improvement Plan.

### CONTACT OFFICER

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Tel: (01527) 88163

<b>CP1: Town Centre</b>																		
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date	
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action			
1.1.2	Commence process of identifying development partner															PS	Aug-07	Nov-07
1.1	<b>Public Support for Plans</b>																	
1.1.2	Commence process of identifying development partner	PS /PM																The approach to appoint a development partner is being reconsidered as more effective strategies have been identified. Meeting planned for November 2007.

<b>CP1: Town Centre</b>																		
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date	
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action			
1.2.2	Consultation with community.															PS	Sept-07	Nov-07
1.2	<b>Work Commenced</b>																	
1.2.2	Consultation with community.	PS																Action not yet commenced due to approach being reconsidered as in 1.2.2. Proposed start date is November 07

# Exception Report for October 2007 Improvement Plan

# Appendix 1

CP4: Customer Service																	
Ref	October 2007 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
4.1.1	Agree customer survey		Orange		Will be completed by end of November										HB	Oct-07	Nov-07
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
4.1.	Overall Customer satisfaction																
4.1.1	Agree customer survey	HB				Orange	Diagonal									Delayed due to protracted negotiations.	

CP4: Customer Service																	
Ref	October 2007 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
4.1.11	Customer Service Peer Review and Update of Customer First Strategy.		Red		Delayed due to capacity issues. Will be reported to February 08 Cabinet										KD	Oct-07	Jan-08
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
4.1.	Overall Customer satisfaction																
4.1.11	Customer Service Peer Review and Update of Customer First Strategy.	KD	Green	Green	Green	Red	Diagonal	Diagonal	Diagonal							Delayed due to capacity issues. Will be reported to February 08 Cabinet	

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<b>CP5: Reputation</b>																		
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date	
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action			
5.4.1	Framework contract established with single supplier for graphics.															HB	Sept-07	Nov-07
<b>5.4</b>	<b>Brand Recognition</b>																	
5.4.1	Framework contract established with single supplier for graphics.	HB															A pilot for funding all of Together Bromsgrove through advertising has been agreed. Given the financial saving from this, it was considered a higher priority.	

<b>CP6: Performance</b>																		
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date	
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action			
6.4.5	CCPP Team to review business plans and team plans.															HB	Oct-07	Nov-07
<b>6.4</b>	<b>Review Annual Business Cycle (and reinforce business planning cycle)</b>																	
6.4.5	CCPP Team to review business plans and team plans.	HB															Reviews now completed. CEO, Executive Directors and ACE to meet with HoS in mid-January 2008 to finalise detailed business plans.	

CP6: Performance																	
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
6.5.1	Monthly meeting between Assistant Chief Executive and Head of Financial Services (to update integrated planner).		Meetings have stopped of late, but need to start up again. New dates set for remainder of year.												JP/HB	Oct-07	Nov-07
6.5	Ensure Financial and Performance Integration																
6.5.1	Monthly meeting between Assistant Chief Executive and Head of Financial Services (to update integrated planner).	JP/HB														Meetings have stopped of late, but need to start up again. New dates set for remainder of year.	

CP6: Performance																	
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
6.5.6	Monthly Integrated reporting to CMT (with pilot in September)		Will go live by end of November												JP/HB	Sept-07	Nov-07
6.5	Ensure Financial and Performance Integration																
6.5.6	Monthly Integrated reporting to CMT (with pilot in September)	JP/HB														Template launched and will go live at the end of November	

CP10: Planning																		
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action													Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action			
10.3.2	Prepare Briefs/ appoint technical baseline reports for Local Development Scheme															MD	Oct-07	Nov-07
10.3	<b>Rolling Vision of the District</b>																	
10.3.2	Prepare Briefs/ appoint technical baseline reports for Local Development Scheme	MD																Briefs have been prepared for three studies (Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, PPG17 and Employment Land Review), and approaches will be made to specialist consultants in November. The draft RSS2 imposes a high housing allocation on the authority, which will be consulted upon by the RPD in Jan 08.

FP1: Value for Money																	
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date
11.3.4	Evaluate scoring of VFM template with HoS		Evaluation to take place in December												JP	Oct-07	Dec-07
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
11.3	Improvements in Use of Resources scoring in relation to VFM																
11.3.4	Evaluate scoring of VFM template with HoS	JP														Business plans to be reviewed and HOS to be evaluated against the proposed scores in Dec.	

FP1: Value for Money																	
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date
11.3.5	Identify services for detailed benchmarking & cost analysis to be undertaken		Report taken to Cabinet in November												JP	Aug-07	Nov-07
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
11.3	Improvements in Use of Resources scoring in relation to VFM																
11.3.5	Identify services for detailed benchmarking & cost analysis to be undertaken	JP														VFM action plan and report presented to Cabinet in November. Initial cost analysis being undertaken – report to be taken to CMT to identify the areas for further analysis.	

<b>FP1: Value for Money</b>																	
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date
11.3.9	Report VFM actions to CMT and member group.		Delayed production of action plan – will be presented to Cabinet in November												JP	Sept-07	Nov-07
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
<b>11.3</b>	<b>Improvements in Use of Resources scoring in relation to VFM</b>																
11.3.9	Report VFM actions to CMT and member group	JP														Action plan presented to CMT in October & will go to Cabinet in November	

<b>FP2: Financial Management</b>																	
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date
12.1.1	Implementation of the POP project to account for commitments & accruals on the Agresso system		Due to the vacant Accountancy Manager post the full implementation will be delayed with a new proposed start date for the remainder of the Council for Feb 08												JP	July-07	Feb-08
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
<b>12.1</b>	<b>Improved Financial Management by budget holders</b>																
12.1.1	Implementation of the POP project to account for commitments & accruals on the Agresso system	JP														New upgrades have been implemented. Due to the vacant Accountancy Manager post the full implementation will be delayed with a new proposed start date for the remainder of the Council for Feb 08.	



FP2: Financial Management																	
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date
12.1.3	Train all managers to use web access for Agresso reporting		Due to the vacant Accountancy Manager post the full implementation will be delayed with a new proposed start date for the remainder of the Council for Feb08.												JP	Sept-07	Feb-08
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
12.1	Improved Financial Management by budget holders																
12.1.3	Train all managers to use web access for Agresso reporting	JP														Delayed due to focus on implementation of POP as linked with web access. New upgrades have been implemented. Due to the vacant Accountancy Manager post the full implementation will be delayed with a new proposed start date for the remainder of the Council for Feb08.	

<b>FP3: Financial Strategy</b>																
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action											Who	Original Date	Revised Date
13.1.1	Review effectiveness of Treasury management principles with external fund managers.		To be undertaken in November											JP	Oct-07	Nov-07
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action	
13.1	<b>ROI</b>															
13.1.1	Review effectiveness of Treasury management principles with external fund managers.	JP														Due to the refund of treasury funds back in house there has been a slight delay on consulting with advisors on the principles.

<b>PR2: Improved Governance</b>																
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action											Who	Original Date	Revised Date
16.4.2	Identify peer mentors for the Leader (and Cabinet Members) and the Leader of the Opposition.		Mentoring to commence in December.											CF	Oct-07	Dec-07
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action	
16.4	<b>Improve Member Capacity</b>															
16.4.2	Identify peer mentors for the Leader (and Cabinet Members) and the Leader of the Opposition.	CF														Mentors have been identified. Mentoring was due to have started in September, but will now commence in December

PR4: Improved Partnership Working																		
Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action													Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action			
18.3.3	Review the customer consultation systems and implement a revised annual satisfaction survey. To Include reprofiled budgets to meet issues identified following the survey/ongoing feedback.															JG	Oct-07	Nov-07
<b>18.3</b>	<b>Satisfaction with leisure centre offer</b>																	
18.3.3	Review the customer consultation systems and implement a revised annual satisfaction survey. To include reprofiled budgets to meet issues identified following the survey/ ongoing feedback.	JG																These APSE surveys are user surveys which feed into a national benchmarking database. Due to low return levels the annual user satisfaction survey have been delayed as more time has been allowed for completion. This has resulted in outturn reviews being delayed by a month.

## Exception Report for October 2007 Improvement Plan

## Appendix 1

### PR4: Improved Partnership Working

Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date
18.4.1	Chief Exec (BDC) to meet monthly with Chief Exec (WCC)		Meetings have stopped with CEO, although are ongoing with senior officers.												KD	Oct-07	Nov-07
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
<b>18.4</b>	<b>Improved Working Relationship with the County</b>																
18.4.1	Chief Exec (BDC) to meet monthly with Chief Exec (WCC)	KD														Meetings have stopped until new WCC appointee is in post; however, the CEO meets regularly with two senior officers from the Council	

### HR&OD3: Positive Employee Climate

Ref	October 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date
21.1.6	Implement Action Plan		Action Plan implementation delayed by delayed publication of results. Report will go to CMT in Jan 08												JP	August-07	Jan-08
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
<b>21.1</b>	<b>Employee satisfaction</b>																
21.1.6	Implement Action Plan	JP														Employee Focus Groups to be held in November to look at how to address the issues raised and determine an action plan.	

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### CABINET

9<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2008

#### DOLPHIN CENTRE & HAYBRIDGE SPORTS CENTRE

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mrs June Griffiths
Responsible Head of Service	Phil Street

#### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report outlines the progress made towards the transfer of the Dolphin Centre and Haybridge Sports Centre to Wychavon Leisure Community Association Ltd (trust) (WLCAL) and seeks approval to move towards the final stages of transfer subject to the negotiation of a satisfactory business case and transfer agreement.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that:

- 2.1.1 Cabinet approve the progress towards the transfer of the Dolphin Centre and Haybridge to WLCAL as detailed in the report.
- 2.1.2 Cabinet delegates authority to the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects, the Section 151 Officer and the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Culture and Community and Finance to take all actions and decisions needed to ensure the transfer of the centres to Wychavon Leisure Community Association Ltd (WLCAL) subject to the finalisation of a satisfactory business case and transfer agreement.
- 2.1.3 That the above delegation may only be exercised if the overall savings to the Council as detailed within the confidential annexe to this report are exceeded or met within a margin of 5%.
- 2.1.4 Cabinet recommend to Full Council that in so far as they relate to procurement issues the Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules be suspended.

#### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council has been exploring for some time ways in which the efficiency of its Leisure Centres can be increased. The Council has concluded that the current arrangements were no longer sustainable and proposed in 2006 to close Woodrush and Haybridge Centres. Subsequently the Woodrush Centre was transferred from the Council to the management of the school,

but due to the nature of the lease at Haybridge and change to 'conditions of the original funding of the building at Haybridge and the terms of the Shared Use Agreement there

- 3.2 A major study by the Audit Commission, published in summer 2006 highlighted the latest trends in local authority leisure service management. The report acknowledged that whilst no single management option delivered the best overall value for money, or consistently resulted in more investment or higher levels of participation, in-house services tended to be significantly more expensive than the other options. However, the transfer of facilities to a leisure trust is a favoured option both for Government and local authorities in the context of Best Value and enabling local communities to participate in the running of their public services. The transfer of facilities to trusts can assist councils to avoid the payment of non-domestic rates which can release funds for re-investment.
- 3.3 A certain amount of work was undertaken by Council officers regarding an options appraisal. This explored retaining the in-house management of the centres, working with a not for profit trust and outsourcing to a private sector organisation.
- 3.4 The outcome of this officer appraisal pointed to a non-profit-distributing-organisation (NPDO) or leisure trust, working in partnership with the Council as the most likely to secure the improvement sought by the Council at the least overall risk, whilst also meeting the Council's social objectives in relation to both users and employees.
- 3.5 Consequently, the Council began to explore opportunities for the future management of the Haybridge Centre and in so doing specifically explored the option of transferring to a leisure trust.
- 3.6 The adjoining district of Wychavon had transferred their leisure centres to a trust in 1999 and as part of the option appraisal discussions were held with Wychavon District Council (WDC) regarding their experience.
- 3.7 These discussions revealed that a high level of satisfaction existed within WDC with the arrangements they had entered into with the trust and indicated that as a result of transfer they had improved and increased the efficiency of the management of the leisure centres. WDC obtained a 66% satisfaction level for its leisure services in the most recent residents survey which is top quartile performance.
- 3.8 WDC has also secured annually over £200,000 of savings on its grant payments to the leisure provider over the last 7 years and has also retained over £100,000 of business rates savings. Representatives from BDC have met with key WDC staff including the Managing Director and has seen the

benefits WDC has secured by working with the leisure trust on behalf of the users and tax payers.

- 3.9 Following discussion with WDC and subsequent meetings with the “trust” operating their leisure centres, the scope for transfer was widened from Haybridge to include the Dolphin Centre for which there were also concerns regarding overall efficiency. Single site operations do not have much scope for financial savings and in the case of small authorities with relatively small leisure services the trend is for working with others to secure the economies of scale needed. This is one of the main reasons that the idea of setting up a stand alone Bromsgrove Leisure Trust was rejected.
- 3.10 The Council believes that there are substantial and beneficial reasons to negotiate with a single “trust” and the track record of WLCAL is clear. An analysis of the local leisure market has shown that WLCAL have been securing contracts from other authorities against open competition and have a public sector ethos which will complement the aspirations of the Council and its leisure customers.
- 3.11 BDC began some informal work on transfer to a trust to test the viability of the concept and subsequently requested Member approval to pursue formally the exploration of transferring the Dolphin Centre and Haybridge Sports Centre to WLCAL. This request was approved and since February 2007 discussions have progressed into detailed work on transfer.
- 3.12 A project group has been established to progress the Human Resources; financial; property and legal elements of transfer. This group meets on a regular basis to ensure that all operational issues are addressed and that a transfer, if approved, can be carried out by the end of the financial year.
- 3.13 The key financial and operational information has now been provided to WLCAL, the preferred leisure partner, based on current information they have prepared an initial 5 year business plan which shows that substantial savings are achievable by transferring the service.
- 3.14 The point has now been reached where Members are being formally asked to approve in principle measures that would result in the transfer of the Dolphin Centre and Haybridge Sports Centre to a leisure trust subject to a satisfactory final business case being presented. Furthermore that powers be delegated to the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects etc. in line with delegation to agree the final arrangements for transfer.
- 3.15 In the case of the Dolphin Centre there has been a gradual increase in the Council’s expenditure. The Council invested over £1m in the Centre in upgrading some of the facilities in 2004/05. This has improved the appearance of the facility, but has not significantly increased income and

the costs of running the Centre have continued to grow. In the period 2006/7 the Council made a net payment for the Centre of £414,000. The net payment for Dolphin in 2007 / 8 is £470,000.

- 3.16 The Council has agreed to make a further investment through the financing of a fitness suite at the Dolphin Centre. This will attract further income and consequently will lead to a reduction in costs. It is crucial that this increase in income is realised as there is a reduction in the net budget for operating the Dolphin Centre. It is proposed that the trust possesses proven skills of the sort that will be needed to ensure the optimum return from the investment.
- 3.17 The Council needs to ensure that the trust undertakes a proactive marketing campaign and that dedicated customer advisors are put in place. The trust will ensure staff training is refocused to improve customer care and engagement. Through doing this the return from the substantial investment will be maximised.
- 3.18 One of the most forceful reasons for supporting transfer is that at some point in the future, should costs continue to increase regardless of whether this is at the current rate or not, the Council will have to make a decision about the Centre's future. It will have to decide whether it wants to go on bearing these costs, close the centre or outsource the facility. The longer the time taken to arrive at a decision the less attractive the facility will be to an external organisation and the greater the cost to the Council. In making any such decisions the Council needs to be mindful of its responsibilities for providing leisure and community facilities and how it would deliver its social agenda in the future. The focus on young people, disadvantaged users and health are all supported by the leisure facilities.
- 3.19 In the case of Haybridge, the Council received a National Lottery Grant in 1999 which the Council would be required to repay (over £800,000) should it withdraw from the agreement within 21 years. This could be challenged by the Council, but the risk is that if the challenge failed, resources would be expended and the Council would still be responsible for operating the sports centre. This is a key risk to the Council as it is currently meeting a substantial ongoing deficit which is likely to rise in the future.
- 3.20 Transfer to a trust has a number of significant attractions. Discussions based on the outline business case from WLCAL indicate that they would provide substantial savings over a five year period. The potential savings are detailed in the confidential annex to this report.
- 3.21 WLCAL would provide proven and high quality management. They have specialist management with a single focus on the effective delivery of leisure centre services. They can provide swift and informed leisure industry



decisions, a record of effectively marketing facilities, high level of customer satisfaction and have good working relations with local authorities.

- 3.22 The Council will also be able to transfer some of the operational risks to the trust such as income levels, staffing risks etc, and will be able to use a number of control / influence measures to ensure it maximises the benefits of the proposed arrangements. The Council will be able to adjust the level of grant paid to the trust on an annual basis if performance exceeds expectations and will also be able to use its future investment decisions to exert control if necessary.
- 3.23 Indications are that Bromsgrove's interest in the Shared Use Agreement of the Haybridge Centre can be transferred to WLCAL for a period of 7 years without having to repay the original funding received from Sport England . Discussion have already taken place with the various parties to the agreement and they are supportive of the proposals. The Council will transfer its existing obligations to WLCAL, but will still be responsible for the performance of the obligations under the agreement in the unlikely event that the trust does not fully discharge them.
- 3.24 In the longer term the Council will endeavour to renegotiate the basis of the agreement to reduce its costs and risks. All parties in the agreement – the schools, Sport England and the Council can potentially benefit from a revised agreement. The council will need to secure beneficial occupation for the trust and which will allow NNDR savings to be made which can be shared between the parties by an overall reduction in cost.

#### **4. MANAGEMENT FEE**

- 4.1 The transfer of the service would still result in the service operating at a deficit so a management fee would be required by the trust. The first years management fee would be based on the initial business plan approved by the Council. Subsequent years would also reflect the business plan as well as any adjustments needed due to under or over performance against the previous years proposal as well as any service improvements requested by the Council.
- 4.2 The management fee negotiations with the trust have worked on the basis of transferring as much of the operational risk as possible to them and they would be responsible for any failure to meet the business plan target unless the failure was due to a Council omission such as not maintaining the building or plant satisfactorily.
- 4.3 The other main risk in the business plan is a significant error being found in the information provided by the Council such as the TUPE information or in the operational information provided about the cost of running the service. If

the error is substantial the trust would seek additional management fee to offset any additional costs they incur. The Council will need to warrant the information provided but the detailed scrutiny this project is receiving from a number of Heads of Service mean that the risk of incorrect information being provided is negligible.

- 4.4 A five year business plan has been provided showing the assumed deficit funding requirement in each year. The total savings compared with the cost of retaining the service in-house is over £1m over the 5 years. An initial 3 year management fee agreement has been proposed as this will give the trust the comfort they need to invest in the service whilst protecting the Council's position in respect of future negotiations.
- 4.5 The experience from Wychavon is that the revenue payment has reduced over eight years as the benefits of capital investment have lead to a reduced management fee requirement and the Trust has been able to spread its overheads by taking on new contracts.
- 4.6 In the case of Bromsgrove a reduction in the management fee level over time in excess of that shown in the business plan may occur as the negotiations have been based on a full operational risk transfer to the Trust. As such the Trust will have allowed for costs associated with this in their proposals. If the risks do not materialise the Council can expect to benefit from further reductions over time.
- 4.7 A management fee reduction arrangement has been agreed which will see BDC benefit from a share of any surplus generated beyond an agreed level. The level will be negotiated with the trust before transfer and will be included in the management fee agreement. This will be dealt with by way of a net reduction in the following years management fee.
- 4.8 Management fee by their nature are discretionary and can be withdrawn or withheld if necessary. In the worst case the Council could refuse to provide a management fee and this would trigger an inevitable closure of the service. In this circumstance a more managed process would actually be implemented to ensure the service and staff revert to the Council or are transferred to a new operator. It is most unlikely that such draconian measures would be needed or that the relationship with the trust would fail to such an extent. However it is prudent to ensure measures are available to the Council should they be necessary.
- 4.9 The powers that can be used to make management fee payments are discussed elsewhere in this report.
- 4.10 In addition to making a revenue management fee to the Trust for the operation of the service the Council would retain responsibility for major

capital repairs, improvements and maintenance of certain items of plant. To this end £50,000 has been included within the Business Plan although this would be retained by the Council until such time as it was required.

- 4.11 Having a long-term contract with a private sector operator would not have such flexibility as the contract sums would need to be negotiated initially and the mechanism for varying the sum agreed in detail. Whilst it is possible to achieve contracts which replicate the benefits of the above arrangements they are difficult to agree and require substantial legal input.
- 4.12 The Council would be able secure its social responsibilities within the management fee agreement for discounted access to priority groups etc. The business plan includes the current level of discounts on offer and the Council can choose to enhance the offer by redirecting savings.
- 4.13 Key groups such as the swimming club, schools etc. can be deemed as “protected users” within the management fee agreement but the Council must use this ability with care otherwise it will limit the trust in their ability to manage the centres and maximise the income levels.

## **5. STAFFING ISSUES**

- 5.1 Transfer to a trust is supported by staff at the leisure centres and has been positively received by the trade unions. A letter of support has been provided by the Union. The TUPE (2006) arrangements protect the rights of those currently employed at the two centres but does not include their pension rights. Negotiations with the trust which is an admitted body in the Worcestershire County Pensions scheme have been on the basis that staff who are in the scheme on the day of transfer can continue to be part of the pension scheme (this is typical in this type of transfer).
- 5.2 The impact on the authority in providing this guarantee is neutral as the Council currently meets the cost of the pensions and will continue to do so indirectly in the management fee. Although there has been an increase in the number of staff joining the scheme as a consequence of the discussions with the trust (which is a cost to the Council prior to transfer) the opportunity exists to reduce, in effect, the cost of the staff which will include pensions should the management fee decline in the future years.
- 5.3 The Council will almost certainly need to enter into a pension guarantee with the Pension fund in respect of the staff transferring to the trust. Although the Council should expect the trust to make the required contributions to the fund it is possible that should the Council not renew the lease after 7 years or withdraw its management fee support the staff may revert to the Council under a reverse TUPE. Any deficit on the pension fund as a result of non

payment or actuarial movements would then be the responsibility of the Council.

- 5.4 The Council is currently nearing completion of a council wide pay review. It is expected that the revised pay structure will be implemented in April 2008. As the Council is unable to provide the trust with details of the likely impact on the leisure staff the Council has agreed in principle to underwrite these costs. Again this has a neutral effect on the Council as the costs would be borne by the Council if it retained the service (and provision for the effects of Single Status are included elsewhere with the revenue budget). It does however prevent finalisation of the business plan until the results are known as staffing costs are the main head of expenditure within the service.
- 5.5 Financial savings are already being realised with the deletion of an establishment post currently held vacant due to the acting up of the post holder. The transfer of the leisure centres will reduce the activities of the Culture and Community Department and will allow for a restructuring which will generate savings which have been included within the review of the medium term financial plan.
- 5.6 However, the effective operation of any agreement reached with the trust will require vigorous monitoring and control. This has been built into the proposed restructuring of the Culture and Community Service merger with Street Scene and Waste Management. It will be essential that an appropriately qualified and experienced officer of BDC act as commissioning officer. It will be expected that the commissioning officer will sit on the local management group. The local management group will consist of the portfolio holder for Culture and Community; BDC's commissioning officer; a representative of WLCAL; BDC's Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects and a user representative.
- 5.7 Under the provisions of TUPE the Council must give 90 days notice to staff that they are likely to be transferred under TUPE to a new economic operator. This notification was made on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2007. However, if BDC decides not to proceed with the transfer the notices can be withdrawn.

## **6. TRANSFER PROCESS**

- 6.1 The process of transfer is demanding and detailed. However, it is proven and reasonably straightforward and actions have already taken to ensure that the process can be completed by the end of this financial year, subject to Agreement in principle to the transfer being obtained from the Cabinet.
- 6.2 Members should note that the proposed transfer is already creating capacity issues within the Council and that external support is being used to ensure

timely delivery of the scheme (as approved by Executive Cabinet on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2007).

- 6.3 Support is being provided by an officer from WDC who is familiar with the transfer process. However, all decisions are taken by the project team which is comprised of the Heads of Service or their representatives. The group is led by the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects and currently meets on a three weekly basis. The Group will increase the frequency of its meetings as the transfer date nears.
- 6.4 BDC is using external specialist financial and legal advisors to satisfy themselves as to the possible tax savings and procurement issues. It is also intending to appoint external solicitors to provide a technical oversight on the transfer documentation.
- 6.5 Specialist VAT advice is also being taken from PriceWaterHouse Coopers who have already provided confirmation that the VAT arrangements and structure that are being proposed are workable.
- 6.6 The Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services and her team are closely involved in the process and are assisting in the preparation of leases, contracts, deed of variation, grants and management document.

## **7. THE DECISION**

- 7.1 The Council is now faced with a choice. The benefits and risks of transferring the operation and management to the trust are clear and have been set out above. It is recommended that the transfer proceeds subject to the agreement of the business plans and transfer documentation.
- 7.2 Retaining the management of the Dolphin Centre and Haybridge in house has a high risk of increased costs and future service failure. Alternatively the Council could decide to carry out a full market test and / or to seek a commercial partner with which to work. This last option has been discounted in the initial review as it is not considered likely to deliver the same benefits as the trust option. A full market test would take at least a year to complete and cost around £100,000. This would present a significant difficulty to the Council both in capacity terms and in respect of total costs. A delay of a year would cost the Council at least £150,000 (saving as a result of transfer) plus procurement costs of £100,000.
- 7.3 It is therefore recommended to proceed with the transfer to WLCAL.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 A detailed business case is being prepared by the leisure trust. However, due to changing circumstances a final business case cannot be presented until March 2008. This is due to changes in staffing levels and costs and the uncertainty as to the opening date of the new gym development.
- 8.2 It is projected that the Council will save a substantial sum over the next five years (over £1m). The medium term financial plan includes £150,000 savings in 2008/9 in relation to the transfer.
- 8.3 An updated report in relation to the financial savings will be presented to members once the final business case is produced.
- 8.4 The Council will need to establish a sinking fund / reserve to meet its obligations as Landlord. The annual costs of this reserve will be met from overall savings generated by the proposed transfer. This is estimated at £50,000 per annum.
- 8.5 The costs of the transfer process are being met from the £25,000 approved in August and from savings expected to be made on VAT attributable to the gym development which should be recoverable if the Council are not the operator of the Dolphin centre.
- 8.6 The Council currently has to account for VAT on certain types of expenditure within the leisure centre such as capital works and repairs. Should the transfer proceed the Council's VAT position will improve as the Council will no longer be receiving a substantial amount of exempt income.
- 8.7 The proposed transfer to the trust will require the Council to reallocate certain internal costs in the short term but it will provide the opportunity to reduce some service costs in the short to medium term which may provide additional savings to the Council. These costs have been considered as part of the review of the medium term financial plan.
- 8.8 Savings will also arise from the transfer of vacant Head of Service post, which have been included within the review of the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 8.9 Should the Council decide not to proceed with the transfer it will be faced with a number of abortive costs which will need to be met from within existing resources e.g. legal costs, external advisory support and fees.
- 8.10 VAT planning will be critical to the overall financial arrangements and advice on this matter has been sought from VAT experts conversant with the process.

8.11 The overall project plan includes a significant contingency sum to meet unexpected costs should they arise. This sum will also be used to replace the telecommunications systems in the leisure centres as they are currently integrated into the Councils systems.

8.12 The report of the Review of the Medium Term Financial Plan elsewhere on the agenda shows how this transfer will contribute towards the Councils Gershon savings requirements.

## **9. OVERALL FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES**

9.1 Total savings over a 5 year period are expected to be at least £1M against the cost of retaining the service in house. Even after recovery of some of the capital spent on the gym extension the Council is likely to save over £1M in five years.

## **10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are significant legal implications associated with transfer. These are being addressed, but include:

10.1.1 Drawing up a transfer agreement which details responsibilities and payments. This is critical to ensuring the Council maximise the benefits of the transfer, ensures local representation in the operations of the leisure facilities and minimises the Council's ongoing risks. External legal opinion is being obtained on this and a number of other issues to provide members and officers with comfort that the agreements are reasonable and legally sound.

10.1.2 Preparation of a lease. It is proposed that the Council would enter into a seven year lease with the trust with the Council retaining responsibility for the building structures and major plant. This maximises the respective financial positions of the trust and the Council and enables the service cost to be reduced. The Council will still retain the freehold of the Dolphin Centre and will ensure that the right to renewal is removed.

10.1.3 A Deed of Variation needs to be completed which will allow the Council to transfer its obligation under the existing shared use agreement at Haybridge to WLCAL for a period of seven years. This variation will be prepared following discussions with Sport England and the school. This not expected to be a problem as the community use will be maintained. The use of a third sector not for profit operator should be welcomed by Sport England and there is a similar arrangement in operation within the County.

10.1.4 Preparing a management fee document that will secure and identify monitoring and governance involvement by the Council. The management fee agreement will include defining and preserving the following:

- Service level outcomes
- Local representation
- Management Group Composition
- Priority Users
- Insurance
- Accounting arrangements
- Information exchanges

10.1.5 Preparing a management fee Document which will clearly define the service outputs expected in return for the Council management fee support.

10.1.6 s19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 states that 'a local authority may provide inside or outside its area, such recreational facilities as it thinks fit' and assist 'by way of grant or loan towards the expenses incurred.... by a voluntary organisation in providing any recreational facilities.'

10.1.7 s111(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that 'Without prejudice to any powers exercisable apart from this section ..... a local authority shall have power to do anything (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.

10.1.8 The Local Government Act 2000 allows for the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of an area. S2(1) includes a power to incur expenditure, give financial assistance to any person, enter into arrangements or agreements with any person, co-operate with or facilitate or co-ordinate the activities of any person.

10.1.9 Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that a Council may dispose of land in any manner they wish. However, they are precluded, except with the consent of the Secretary of State, to dispose of land otherwise by way of a short tenancy for a consideration less than the best that can be reasonably be obtained. However, the General Consent (England) 2003 gets around this obstacle by allowing any authority to dispose of any interest in land at an under value which the local authority considers will help them secure the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well being of the area provided that the under value does not exceed £2m. Therefore, the Council to enter into a lease of the Dolphin Centre for a period of seven years at a peppercorn lease.



- 10.1.10 Pension guarantees can be justified under economic development powers.
- 10.1.11 Compliance with procurement legislation. This is a key issue for the Council as Members will wish to be sure of the legality of the process being undertaken. BDC has taken advice from a senior consultant to Clarke Willmott solicitors who are satisfied that the Council does have the power to do as it proposes. The advice to BDC supported by the Council's procurement officer shows how the European and UK legislation is satisfied and how the process is robust enough to enable the Council's Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules to be suspended in this case. In simple terms the award of a contract for leisure services is not subject to a requirement for competitive procurement in the EU as it is classed as a part B service.
- 10.2 Given the above advice it is necessary that the Council's Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules are suspended in order that the transfer can be progressed.
- 10.3 In respect of UK law the Council has a fiduciary duty to demonstrate best value on behalf of its taxpayers. Whilst a competitive process may do this other methods are also justifiable. In this case the likely partner has an excellent track record of delivering these services and the comparison with the in-house operation shows demonstrable VFM.
- 10.4 The study by the Audit Commission, published in summer 2006 mentioned earlier in the report also acknowledges that transfer to a Trust is a cost effective alternative to direct provision.

## **11. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

- 11.1 The proposed transfer supports the Council Objectives in relation to enhanced customer service and town centre regeneration. The improvements to the Dolphin Centre form part of the raising of standards in the town centre. Bromsgrove's town regeneration will be based on providing high quality services for people who want high quality life styles.
- 11.2 The transfer specifically contributes to improving performance. The Council has stated in its Council Plan that the Council seeks to improve performance and maintain service delivery standards. The transfer of the leisure centres to a trust is designed to contribute to the achievement of these priorities.

## **12. RISK MANAGEMENT**

### **Risks**

#### **Of not transferring**

Continue to be managed in current format  
Will not result in maximising return from investment  
Continue to invest increasing levels of BDC funds into centres  
Have to undertake a fundamental review of the centres  
Market test the centres  
Spend a year market testing and then be required to devote significant resources to preparing the tender documents

#### **Mitigate these risks**

Carry out a wide ranging review, revise the management structure, up skill management and centre staff and invest further into sites.

#### **Risks associated with transfer process**

Transfer delayed  
Business plan in sufficiently robust  
Construction over runs  
Dip in performance during transfer and loss of business

#### **Carry out transfer**

Marketing is inappropriate, cleaning regime inadequate and customer service unsatisfactory  
Trust underperforms according to business plan  
Grant payments increase  
Bring back staff into BDC on enhanced conditions based on TUPE requirements  
Performance is poor and adversely affect BDC's reputation  
Not sufficiently rigorous in applying standards and health and safety  
Insufficient clarification in agreements  
BDC does not perform its landlord responsibilities appropriately

#### **Mitigation these risks**

Vigorous analysis of business plan  
WLCAL business plans have a good record in similar situations  
WLCAL have good user satisfaction ratings  
Grant fixed for 3 years  
Vigilant control and monitoring of contract, management of centre and commissioning

Continued investment on site to improve customer experience  
Adopting a detailed and thorough approach to preparation of lease, grant and management agreements  
Performance management and WLCAL's track record will secure high levels of marketing, cleanliness and customer satisfaction.

### **13. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 There is currently low and decreasing customer satisfaction with the Dolphin Centre and a view that Haybridge is not being used to best meet customer demands. The satisfaction rating from the user panel published in 2007 indicated levels of customer satisfaction..

13.2 The trust has high customer satisfaction rating (National Benchmarking Service) and an excellent record in delivering services within the leisure community. As shown by the contracts secured from Malvern Hills District Council (Dysons and Martley), Matthew Boulton College and Gloscat. The trust has repeatedly reached and improved its usage targets and has built respect within its sector for the quality of its work.

13.3 The overall Customer Care objectives of transferring the service to a Trust are:

13.3.1 Improved residents satisfaction level from 53% in 2006/07 to 58% in 2009 / 10 as recorded in Audit Commission Best Value review.

13.3.2 Increased user satisfaction level as recorded in the customer user satisfaction survey from the current 55% to 70% in 2009 / 2010

13.3.3 Improved QUEST score from 71 to 77 by 2010 / 2011

13.3.4 NBS data showing top quartile in 2009 / 2010 based on performance areas to be identified in grant agreement document.

13.3.5 Increased level of use – BDC expects 2% year on year

13.3.6 More priority group use – set targets in grant agreement

13.3.7 Get 1 BDC user onto the WLCAL main Board within 3 years ( by election )

### **14. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 The trust has indicated its commitment to equality and diversity and access arrangements will form part of the management agreement with the trust. As a not for profit organisation operating in the public sector the trust is fully aware of its duties and responsibilities as well as those of its partners.

14.2 Equality issues apply to both customers and staff and measurement of use of the centres by a range of groups will be carried out regularly, The trust also includes steps to facilitate easier use of its sites by people for whom English is not their First language.

14.3 The protection of children and vulnerable adults is part of the day to day working procedures and policies of the trust and all staff are subject to regular CRB checks.

## 15. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

15.1 All of these issues are addressed in the report but are summarised below

<p><b>Procurement Issues</b> – See main body of report</p> <p>Discussion took place with the procurement officer at several stages in the transfer discussions, External advice has been sought from an experienced procurement lawyer who has approved the processes. The Council has the legal power to enter into a contract with an external provider for the provision of leisure services by virtue of the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997, which provides that “every statutory provision conferring or imposing a function on a local authority confers power on the local authority to enter into a contract with another person for the provision or making available of assets or services, or both, (whether or not together with goods) for the purposes of or in connection with, the discharge of the function by the local authority.”</p>
<p><b>Personnel Implications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Consultation has been instigated with staff who have been involved throughout the process. TUPE is being pursued and HR are a key member of the leisure trust transfer group</li><li>➤ Unions are supportive of the process</li><li>➤ Pension implications and Guarantees are being discussed with Pension Fund and County Council</li><li>➤ Staff employed by the Trust can stand for election to the main Board.</li><li>➤ Staff can become shareholders in the Trust</li></ul>
<p><b>Governance/Performance Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Arrangements will be established as part of the grant agreement that ensure that BDC is involved in the trust’s governance and site management arrangements.</li><li>➤ Local representation in the management of BDC leisure centre has been agreed by the Trust including member representation</li><li>➤ Regular meetings to discuss performance and outcomes will be held with the Head of Service</li><li>➤ BDC will set clear measurable objectives within the grant</li></ul>

<p>agreement and have the right to reduce grants payments if objectives are not met.</p> <p>➤ BDC will retain considerable influences and controls via its grants, investment and Landlord responsibilities and could decide to bring the arrangements to an end if necessary by withdrawing the grant. Steps would need to be taken to have a new operator in place otherwise the Council would be faced with the cost of running the service and meeting any pension liabilities which have accrued.</p>
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – N/A
Policy – This is in line with the Council's VFM Strategy.
Environmental - N/A

## 16. **OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	<b>Yes</b>
Chief Executive	<b>Yes</b>
Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects	<b>Yes</b>
Assistant Chief Executive	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Service	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Financial Services	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Organisational Development & HR	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Procurement Team	

## 17. **APPENDICES**

None.

## 18. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Details of Progress with Leisure Centre Developments – Executive Cabinet report 1<sup>st</sup> August 2007

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## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### CABINET

9<sup>th</sup> January 2008

#### REDEVELOPMENT OF THE MARKET HALL SITE

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Leader of the Council
Responsible Head of Service	Phil Street

#### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report proposes the most appropriate approach to the redevelopment of the Bromsgrove Market Hall site and adjacent areas and the transfer of the market hall business to an out door venue.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet recommend to Full Council that:

- 2.1.1 The market hall site be redeveloped as an initial element of the town centre regeneration.
- 2.1.2 The market hall site be developed as a prime retail site focusing on a style of design and quality of retailer capable of setting the tone for future regeneration of the town centre.
- 2.1.3 Redevelopment option Model 3 be pursued as this is adjudged to be most appropriate to the Council's capacity and needs.
- 2.1.4 The consultants that were engaged to prepare the market hall development brief in 2004 be requested to support the Council in refreshing the brief and carry out the work entailed in bring the site to market (Model 3).
- 2.1.5 The sum of £90,000 be release from the capital receipts in 2008/09 to bring the site to market.
- 2.1.6 Authority be delegated to officers to undertake the appropriate procurement exercise to identify a developer to carry out the work associated with the redevelopment of the market hall site.
- 2.1.7 The market hall business be transferred to an out door venue and that £30,000 be included in the capital programme for 2008/09 as part of the review of the medium term financial plan.
- 2.1.8 Authority be delegated to officers to enter into negotiations with the County Council to enable the market stalls at the market hall be re-located at an out door site in the High Street.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Executive Cabinet considered a report on Bromsgrove Town Centre at its meeting on 7th November 2007 in which a series of quick wins were presented for member's consideration. One of the potential quick wins identified in that report was the disposal, by lease of the Market Hall site. The specific part of the report associated with the redevelopment of Market Hall is repeated below for ease of reference:

"The first proposal is, having accepted BDC want to keep ownership of the Market Hall site, we approach certain "quality end" food retailers and ascertain their interest in the site and follow this up with more formal meetings to explore ideas. If an acceptable proposal is put forward, the District would procure the shell for the food retailer to fit out in return for the retailer entering into a lease for say 20 years paying an open market rent. The Economic Development Officer at BDC is currently progressing these contacts and has been asked to prepare a separate report outlining the proposals for the Market Hall site including how we sustain the business whilst we are developing the site."

- 3.2 The Market Hall was opened in 1995. It replaced an older building on the same site. In the period since the completion of the current market hall the trend has been for indoor markets to enter a period of decline.
- 3.3 This decline has been reflected in the level of income that has been generated from the market hall. Despite considerable improvements in performance in terms of income over the past few years, the market hall remains set for a deficit of a little over £30,000 in the current year.
- 3.4 There has been increasing difficulties in attracting traders. This contrasts with the farmers markets launched as out door provision in the high street in October 2000 which has proved successful both in terms of reputation and income for the Council, albeit modest.
- 3.5 The attractiveness of outdoor markets has been confirmed by a number of the current stall holders in the indoor market and the prospect of an outdoor market finds favour amongst many of the high street businesses.
- 3.6 The market hall occupies a valuable high street position and should be the source of significant income for the Council. The case for redeveloping the site is overwhelming. The current market hall is making a deficit. There appears little future for indoor markets. The facility is difficult to adapt for other purposes and it occupies a prime redevelopment location.
- 3.7 The redevelopment of the market hall site is crucial to the regeneration of the town. The design of the building and the nature of the businesses established will have a key role in setting the tone for the future direction and success of the town centre.



- 3.8 Agreeing the correct approach to redeveloping the market hall site is critical. There would appear to be three principal models for redeveloping the market hall site. The first model is to sell the site (Model 1). The second model is for the Council to act as the developer and design and build the new building (Model 2). The third model is to identify a developer enter into a long lease with the developer and they will design and build the building (Model 3).
- 3.9 Model 1 is arguably the simplest of the options in that it primarily involves selling the site for which the council would receive a capital receipt by way of a one off payment to the Council. As a consequence of this the Council will lose direct control over the site. The development of the site and the recruitment of retailers would be entirely left to the developers. It is anticipated that this model would take the least time to enact.
- 3.10 Model 2 would probably give the Council its greatest return in terms of income, but also carries the greatest risk. This would involve the Council essentially acting as developer. The responsibilities would include master planning of the site and the building, carrying out all the legal work associated with identifying architects and builders, contracts, leases and management agreements. It will mean the Council would have responsibility for borrowing to finance the architects and the construction. The Council would have sole responsibility for procurement of architects and builders. The Council would have long term responsibility for ensuring the occupancy of the building, its maintenance and securing its long term commercial viability. The Council would have to go through European Union procurement for both the architects and the builders. On the positive side, the Council would receive all the income from the site and it has already been approached by a retailer who has indicated their willingness to enter into a 25 year leasing agreement with the Council.
- 3.11 Model 3 would involve the Council identifying a developer to redevelop the site on the basis of a long term lease agreement of some 100 years or more. The Council would have to pursue European Union procurement procedures and this would entail drawing up a specification and a lease agreement that meets the Council's expectations. The operational and developmental risks would be met by the developer and they would receive the rental income from the occupants of the building. The Council would probably receive a one off payment for entering into a long term lease and then a more modest ground or rack rent. The Council will lose some control of the site and its income would be more modest than in model 2, but its risk would be significantly mitigated.
- 3.12 There is a variation on Model 3 that would involve direct negotiations with a retailer for the lease of the site. The Council has already been approached by a retailer expressing an interest in leasing the site directly from the Council. The European Union procurement directives are concerned only if they cover procurement. Therefore, if the Council is not paying a developer

either in terms of cash or in kind (i.e. provision of land in return for a service) then the procurement directive does not apply. Consequently, the Council can enter into direct negotiation with the retailer following their unsolicited representation to the Council.

- 3.13 The Council are seeking independent advice on land value in order to inform discussions regarding lease discussions. The advice sought will relate to the value of the land, the amount of income that can be anticipated from a lease agreement and the form in which a lease agreement can be expected. In other words, whether there would be a one off payment or a payment dispersed over a period of years.
- 3.14 It would be beneficial for adjoining sites to be incorporated into the proposed development. These would provide for a larger development footprint, improved visibility of the development from the High Street and potential increased income to the District Council. The development brief will provide for the successful developer to negotiate with the owners of the adjoining sites to acquire their interests. However the situation could be more complicated by the owners of the building adjoining the market hall indicating they would be interested in a joint redevelopment arrangement whereby their building and the market hall would be the basis of redevelopment. The challenge is that the owners of the adjoining building are developers and are unlikely to want to engage another development company in the redevelopment.
- 3.15 If negotiations to purchase the adjoining sites fail, the District Council has previously approved using Compulsory Purchase powers when available for land assembly purposes. It is suggested this course of action is pursued if it is proved necessary. In this event the Market Hall site will be developed as a first phase to be followed by the re-development of the adjoining sites as a second and possibly third phase once acquired.
- 3.16 It is suggested that Model 1 and Model 2 are the least attractive in that they lead to either complete loss of control of the site or carry too much risk. Therefore, Model 3 or its variation is being recommended with the caveat that further discussions take place with the owners of the adjoining building to determine the feasibility of entering into a joint agreement. It is proposed that Executive Cabinet recommend to Council the release of £90,000 from capital receipts in 2007/08 to fund taking the Market Hall to market.
- 3.17 In pursuit of Model 3 it is proposed that the consultants CBRE, who were engaged in 2004 to prepare a development brief for the market hall be re-engaged to refresh that brief. CBRE are presently working with the Council preparing a town centre Area Action Plan (AAP). They have indicated that they can refresh the development brief and can assist the Council bring the site to market. The indications are that this can be undertaken quickly and the process of marketing the market hall site can be undertaken early in 2008.

- 3.18 The guidance that would be given to the consultants would be to ensure that the site was devoted to retail development and they would be instructed to ensure the nature of the retail development would be of a kind that reflects the districts retail needs. This would in effect mean a retailer of national repute that appeals to that aspect of the market that is significantly represented in Bromsgrove district. Bromsgrove is the most affluent district in Worcestershire which is one of the most affluent counties in the country, yet the current town centre retail offer does not reflect this economic sector and consequently income is lost from the town centre. The proposed retail development will aim to redress that imbalance and attract retail purchasing to the high street.
- 3.19 The current site includes a ground level car park and it would be proposed that car parking arrangements would be considered in any developers brief.
- 3.20 The process of taking the market hall to market is that the brief would be produced along with supporting documentation. Expressions of interest would be invited from developers. These expressions of interest would be assessed. A number of the developers would be invited to submit fuller proposals and these would be considered and consulted upon with the public.
- 3.21 Following this process a developer would be chosen and invited to draw up a full specification and project proposal. It is expected that this entire process from drawing up the brief to work commencing on site will take up to 15 months.
- 3.22 It is suggested that the market hall would close in early Autumn 2008. At this point a developer would have been identified and a project plan including a time line produced. The Council wants to ensure the market hall remains open and operating until such time that work on the building has been programmed. The challenges of another boarded up building and its impact on residents perception could be significant.
- 3.23 The closure and redevelopment of the Market Hall site will necessitate either ceasing the provision of a market or undertaking its relocation. It has already been indicated that indoor markets are in overall decline. Therefore, it is proposed that relocation would be to an out door venue and the site for this would be the high street. Discussions would need to take place with the County Council regarding relocating the market in the high street as the County Council are the owners of the street.
- 3.24 It is being proposed that an out door market be established on Tuesdays and Saturdays in Bromsgrove High Street. It is anticipated that some twenty traders can be attracted and accommodated in attractive gazebo style units. It is recommended that £30,000 is included within the capital programme for 2007/08 to facilitate this.

- 3.25 Exploratory discussions have taken place with traders about transfer to the high street and visits have been made to other out door markets to obtain information on their management and organisation. However, the Council has experience of operating out door markets in that it has been organising a farmers' market on the high street for seven years.
- 3.26 The Council has been holding informal discussion with high street shopkeepers who appear to largely support the proposal of the market moving to the high street. Similarly, although some of the current market hall traders have expressed reservations about the transition to an out door market others have recognised the advantages.
- 3.27 The process of managing the transition will be undertaken in an agreed time period that links with the plans for redevelopment. Actions would be taken to ensure consultation with the Council's employees at the market hall and the market traders will be given adequate notice of termination of the indoor market. It is acknowledged that it is important that the market hall does not remain unoccupied for a prolonged period as management of an empty building has a large number of implications.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The current budget for the Market Hall is:

Expenditure	£140,096
Income	£109,597
(Net cost)	£30,499

- 4.2 The main expenditure items are as follows:

Salaries and wages	£51,460
Support Service recharges	£30,392
Business rates	£20,374
Depreciation	£17,550
General operating expenses	£20,320
TOTAL	<b>£140,096</b>

- 4.3 The cost of the work in preparing the brief and marketing documentation would cost £50,000. There will be legal costs in addition to the costs associated with marketing the site. The legal costs have not been identified, but are likely to be in the region of £40,000. Subject to approval it is proposed that further discussions take place with CBRE regarding their fees. In order that the project can progress it is proposed that Executive Cabinet recommend to full Council the release of £90,000 from Capital Receipts in 2007/8 in order that the work can progress.
- 4.4 The closure of the market will involve consultation regarding Council employees involved in operating the market and there could be implications for redundancy and pension payments that have as yet to be quantified.

- 4.5 The transfer of the indoor market will have to be accompanied by the purchase of outdoor stalls and it is recommended that £30,000 be included in the capital programme for 2008/09 as part of the review of the medium term financial plan.
- 4.6 The closure of the market will result in a loss of income from the rent paid by stall holders, although this will be compensated for by the hire of stalls in the high street. A scheme of charges for the hire of stalls in the high street is to be determined. During the period of construction there will be a partial or total loss of income from the car park. Currently the car park generates close to £200,000 each year. The loss of some or all of this income will need to be mitigated or other actions taken to account for the loss. If it proves necessary to close the car park for a prolonged period (more than 3 months) during the development stage there is a potential for significant loss or reduction of income. It would currently appear that this will create substantial disruption as there may not be sufficient places in other car parks that will accommodate the transferred vehicles.
- 4.7 It is vital that we furnish the new market in the high street to a higher standard than previously provided at the market hall. This is to ensure that we attract really professional traders and that we make a good public impression from the outset.

New stalls : 20 X £500 each =	£10,000
Advertising :	3,000
Launch event :	2,000
Site works	2,000
Contingency	<u>2,000</u>
	<b>£19,000</b>

- 4.8 The issue of movement and storage of market stalls need to be considered. It will be necessary to purchase a purpose built trailer to transport the stalls. The stalls and trailer can be stored at the Depot.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Planning permission will be required for the re-development of the market hall. The Bromsgrove District Local Plan identifies this part of the town centre as being suitable for retail use. However, the normal planning procedures would have to be followed, and there may be additional planning considerations in relation to the abutting conservation area.
- 5.2 It should be noted that the District Council does not own the High Street; the land owner is the County Council. The District Council will have to enter into negotiations with the County Council to secure the transfer of the market stalls to the proposed new outdoor site on the High Street.

5.3 Leading on from 5.2 above, the relocation of the market stalls to the High Street is also likely to necessitate a new pedestrian order for the High Street and changes to the current Byelaws.

5.4 There are also possible employment law implications arising out of the possible redundancy or redeployment of the current market hall staff.

## **6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

6.1 This project forms a central element of one of the Council's priorities which is the regeneration of the town centre. This work would be amongst the initial actions pursued to regenerate the town centre. Furthermore it will improve the quality of services to the community and increase services to the residents of the district.

## **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 The main risks associated with this proposal are:

- Loss of income in the short term: Extensive consultation has taken place with experienced traders and comparisons are being made with markets (best practice) in other towns. The Council's experience with Bromsgrove Farmers' Market and other high street events over the last 7 years has given us the necessary expertise to evaluate and run this venture successfully. It is expected that in the longer term the Council will receive improved revenue via increased rentals and business rates.)
- Opposition from shopkeepers: The Council is regularly in touch with the town centre shopkeepers and has received support both for the redevelopment of the market hall site and for the relocation of the market into the high street.
- Opposition from Market traders: This has already been expressed and is unlikely to find further sympathy with the local public or the local press.
- The Council will lose income from the closure of part or all of the car park.
- The Council will encounter various risks depending on the marketing model pursued. These are contained in the main body of the report, but depending on the model pursued actions to mitigate the risks will have to be agreed. If model 2 is selected it will be critical that appropriate technical and legal over views are taken. It will also be important that the project management of the construction work is placed with a company that the Council is convinced have the competence, capacity and financial cover to undertake the work.
- Decisions will need to be taken regarding the closure of the market hall and giving the traders notice. It is crucial that residents and traders can see evidence of action and closure of the market hall will be a clear signal of change. However, it is critical that this is linked to the developer commencing work. The wrong signals will be sent out if

the market hall is closed and is boarded up for a prolonged period of time. Maintaining an empty building is a demanding managerial process. Furthermore, keeping traders informed of deadlines is important so that sufficient notice is given, but the work of the market continues until a date for closure is set.

**8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 It is believed that there is ample evidence to demonstrate customer benefits from the proposal and customer enthusiasm for the proposal. When completed the facilities will offer more retail choice and services in an improved environment. In due course commercial marketing / advertising will replace this. Staff will be briefed internally on the purpose, scope and progress of the project.
- 8.2 All indications are that this will be a popular venture with the general public and the town shopkeepers and will bring more shoppers into the town. This is the experience from the Farmers’ Market, now in its eighth year.

**9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 None immediately apparent.

**10. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Procurement Issues. The preferred solution recommended is one of engaging with a blue chip retailer in keeping with the proposals contained in the variation Model 3 above. If this variation is pursued there will not be a requirement to adopt the OJEU procurement procedures.
Personnel Implications. Loss of one post which will be managed in accordance with the Council’s policy.
Governance/Performance Management: None immediately apparent
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998: Liaison with CS and Police essential to “design out crime”
Policy : None immediately apparent
Environmental: Appropriate attention to relevant policies at time of planning application. Spadesbourne Brook runs beside development

**11. OTHERS TO BE CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	<b>Yes</b>
Chief Executive	<b>Yes</b>
Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects)	<b>Yes</b>
Assistant Chief Executive	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Planning & Environment Services	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Financial Services	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Legal & Democratic Services	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Organisational Development & HR	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Procurement Team	<b>Yes</b>

**12. APPENDICES**

None

**13. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Bromsgrove Town Centre report – 7<sup>th</sup> November 2007

**CONTACT OFFICER**

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## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### CABINET

8<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2008

### LONGBRIDGE AREA ACTION PLAN - SUBMISSION

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Cllr J Dyer
Responsible Head of Service	Dave Hammond

#### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Longbridge Area Action Plan (AAP) has been prepared in conjunction with Birmingham City Council, Worcestershire County Council and key stakeholders, including the landowners St Modwen Properties PLC. This report details the final version of the AAP which on approval will be submitted to the Secretary of State and undergo an Examination in Public.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That members approve the Longbridge Area Action Plan and accompanying Sustainability Appraisal for submission to the Secretary of State, subject to the Executive Director for Partnerships and Projects being given delegated authority to approve minor textual changes.

#### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The sudden closure of the MG Rover plant at Longbridge in April 2005 had a major impact on the local community in South Birmingham and North Worcestershire as well as the local and regional economy. The Longbridge Area Action Plan has been prepared to secure the comprehensive regeneration of the area. The Plan is the outcome of extensive work with a wide range of stakeholders and all elements of the local community through an innovative range of community consultation which has resulted in a large degree of support for the proposals.
- 3.2 This is probably the biggest regeneration scheme in the West Midlands and one of the largest in the country with over 140 hectares/350 acres of development land. The Plan proposes an exciting and highly sustainable employment led mixed-use development, that will deliver many benefits for the not only the immediate area around the former plant, but the wider West Midlands region beyond. These include around 10,000 jobs, over 1400 new dwellings, a new local centre to provide a real heart to Longbridge, three new parks and other major improvements to the environment. The development will also address many strategic and regional needs including the provision of a Regional Investment Site that will assist in restructuring the economy as well as a strategic park and ride facility and quality transport interchange. The Plan also identifies the need for a range of high quality public transport facilities and services, including improved bus networks and rail infrastructure.
- 3.3 As members will be aware over the last 2 years officers from both Bromsgrove, Birmingham and Worcestershire have been working in

partnership with the major landowners on the AAP. The Local Development Framework Working Party have been involved in the production of the plan throughout, and a number of reports have been presented at the following stages,

- Stage 1-Public consultation to identify key issues and objectives for the Plan in Spring 2006;
- Stage 2- Approval of an Issues and Options Report in October 2006. This report set out 4 possible options for the redevelopment of the former MG Rover site. Subsequent public consultation revealed most support for mixed-use options
- Stage 3- Approval of a Preferred Options Report in February 2007. This set out an employment led mixed-use option that included a target of securing 10,000 jobs, a Regional Investment Site, a new local centre, and about 1400 new dwellings. It also set out more detailed options for public transport. Subsequent public consultation confirmed support for this “preferred option”.

3.4 The Plan sets out policies to create a sustainable community and showcase the highest standards of design. The aim is deliver a mixed-use development with sustainable jobs in new technology based businesses, a high quality built environment, a leading edge approach to creating a mixed use local centre, well designed open spaces and river corridors and to break new ground in helping tackle climate change.

3.5 The plan has been developed for the site as whole but for clarity in this report the proposed development in Birmingham on North Works (19.43ha) West Works (34.35ha) and Nanjing Automotive Corporation (NAC) Site (43.44ha) are as follows

- A 25ha Regional Investment Site, for high technology businesses with some offices and supporting services,
- A new Local Centre including the following:
  - A retail quarter with up to 13,500 sq.m. Gross retail floorspace for convenience and comparison goods. Offices and residential uses on upper floors.
  - A learning quarter comprising a new college facility.
  - A mixed-use quarter with offices, service uses, an Austin Heritage centre, residential and other uses.
- An employment zone adjacent to the boundary with Nanjing comprising industrial and warehousing uses with some live/work units.
- Nanjing Automotive site to be retained for car manufacturing but with encouragement that should any of the site become surplus to requirements it be made available for other employment uses and uses which fit within the overall aims of the AAP and adjoining land uses
- Residential development with associated open space comprising around 350 dwellings adjacent to the Regional Investment site

3.6 The Bromsgrove section of the site is made up of the Cofton Centre and East works, the uses identified for these sites is outlined below;

### 3.7 **East Works (20.86 ha)**

Residential - minimum 700 dwellings with a range of house types, styles, and tenures including 35%affordable. The River Arrow will be opened up through the site to provide green links to the open countryside and Public Open Space

Within the east works site small scale local facilities will be provided including small scale retail with new community centre and library.

The main accesses to the site will be from Groveley Lane with a secondary route from the existing access point in Parsonage Drive. No access will be permitted from Cofton Church Lane.

### 3.8 **Cofton Centre (17.84ha)**

Employment (Use Class B1, B2 and B8 uses) suitable uses include light industry, general industry, warehousing, and Green Technology developments.

As the Cofton Centre abuts the Green Belt, the opportunity to improve pedestrian and green links to the countryside will be investigated at the detailed design stage, the screening around the site will be protected, and enhanced where possible.

3.9 The above proposals are supported by a Movement Strategy, and an Environment, Open Space and Landscape Strategy. The key elements are as follows:

#### 3.10 **Movement Strategy-**

- Strategic Park and Ride facility with improved rail station and public transport interchange at Longbridge.
- A quality bus network to link Longbridge to the wider area including Frankley
- Improvements to rail facilities and services in the wider area.
- Improvements to Longbridge Lane and other off site highway improvements including the motorway junctions.
- Improvement of A38 Bristol Road South through the LAAP area.
- A network of local access roads and walking/cycle links

#### 3.11 **Environment, Landscape and open space strategy-**

- River Rea enhanced across West Works and a new open course across most of North Works. Designed to incorporate flood prevention measures.
- River Arrow opened up and enhanced across East Works
- Other open space, play, recreational and community facilities.
- A new public square / public open space on North Works.
- A new park adjacent to the River Rea on west works.
- Improvements to Cofton Park including new and improved recreational facilities.

3.12 The Plan also contains a set of measures and an implementation programme for securing the delivery of the proposals. In particular it proposes a 'community infrastructure levy' approach to the Section 106 legal agreement in line with latest government thinking.

- 3.13 Sustainability Appraisal and detailed technical baseline studies including retail and transport studies, viability studies and an Equalities Needs Impact Assessment have informed the above stages and the proposals in the attached Submission Document.

#### 4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no immediate financial implications of submitting the AAP to the Secretary of State, although in future the ability to secure Housing and Planning Delivery Grant will be enhanced by submitting the AAP inline with the timetable identified in the Local Development Scheme. In the longer term the regeneration of the sites in Bromsgrove will generate funds from planning applications associated with the development, and Council Tax and business rates once complete.

#### 5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Plan is a statutory document and has been prepared under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. The Plan has been prepared jointly with Birmingham City Council. Other partners involved are Worcestershire County Council and the main landowners: St Modwen and Advantage West Midlands.

#### 6. **COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

- 6.1 The ability of the council to deliver its objectives is affected by the status of the Local Development Framework (LDF).
- 6.2 The ability to implement the Longbridge high level action plan of the Bromsgrove Sustainable Community Strategy is also highly dependant on the formal adoption of the AAP.

<b>Council Objective (CO)</b>	Regeneration (CO1)	<b>Council Priority (CP)</b>	A thriving market town (CP1)
<b>Impacts</b>			
<p>Whilst the regeneration at Longbridge will not have any immediate effects on creating a thriving market town, an opportunity exists for the town centre to be developed with regard to those developments at Longbridge, potentially attracting people using Longbridge to also visit Bromsgrove where we may be able to offer a different physical environment, and range of opportunities for retail and leisure.</p> <p>The redevelopment of this site will have substantial regenerative effects on South Birmingham and North Bromsgrove</p>			

<b>Council Objective (CO)</b>	Improvement (CO2)	<b>Council Priority (CP)</b>	Customer service (CP2)
<b>Impacts</b>			
No impact			

<b>Council Objective (CO)</b>	Sense of Community and Well Being (CO3)	<b>Council Priority (CP)</b>	Sense of community (CP3)
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**Impacts**  
The developments at Longbridge will provide new local community facilities for those people who currently live in close proximity to the site, as well as much needed affordable housing units.

<b>Council Objective (CO)</b>	Environment (CO4)	<b>Council Priority (CP)</b>	Housing (CP4)  Clean streets and recycling (CP5)
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**Impacts**  
The environmental impacts of a residential use on this site will be considerably less than that of a fully functioning car production plant; any future development will have to be developed inline with the most recent standards in sustainable building and design techniques.  
  
A minimum requirement of 35% has been set across the whole site for affordable housing provision, the strategic housing and planning sections are working to ensure that nomination rights to those affordable housing units are available to Bromsgrove residents.

7. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:

The final AAP is found to be unsound by the Planning Inspectorate.

7.2 The risks will be managed as follows:

Risk Register: Planning and Environment  
Key Objective Ref No: 6  
Key Objective: Effective, efficient, and legally compliant Strategic planning Service

8. **CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 Once approved and submitted the AAP will be out to public consultation for a period of 6 weeks. The Document and supporting information will be advertised in the Local press as well as being placed for viewing on the websites of both councils, in all libraries across the district as well as the customer service centre.

9. **EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 An Equalities Impact Needs Assessment has been carried out on the Longbridge AAP, in order to assess the potential Equalities and Diversity impacts of the development proposals.

10. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Procurement Issues	None
Personnel Implications	None
Governance/Performance Management	None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998	None
Policy	The Final version of the AAP will create the policy framework for the redevelopment of the Former MG Rover site.
Environmental	The Final AAP will have a section outlining the measures we will expect of site to mitigate for any adverse environmental impact.

11. **OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director - Partnerships & Projects	Yes
Assistant Chief Executive	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

12. **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1- Longbridge Area Action Plan-Proposals Map  
 Appendix 2- Longbridge Area Action Plan- Submission Document  
 Appendix 3- Longbridge Area Action Plan- Sustainability Appraisal- Non Technical Summary

13. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Please contact Strategic Planning Manager for copies

**Local Development Framework Working Party Reports**

3<sup>rd</sup> August 2006 - Progress Report  
 25<sup>th</sup> September 2006 - Issues and Options Report  
 6<sup>th</sup> February 2007 - Preferred Options Report

**Executive Cabinet and Full Council Reports**

6<sup>th</sup> September 2006 - Progress Report - Executive Cabinet

16<sup>th</sup> January 2007 - Joint Resolution to prepare DPD - Full Council

**Previous AAP documents and Technical Studies**

Longbridge Area Action Plan - Issues and Options Report

Longbridge Area Action Plan - Preferred Options Document

Longbridge Area Action Plan - Submission Document – Supporting baseline studies

- Sustainability Appraisal,
- Equalities Impact Needs Assessment
- Community Needs,
- Cultural Heritage,
- Built Form,
- Design and Environment,
- Ecology,
- Employment Land,
- Socio economic,
- Sport and Recreation
- Geo Environmental,
- Housing,
- River Rea,
- Existing Services Utilities and Infrastructure,
- Retail Assessment,
- Transport Assessments and
- Delivery and Viability Report

**CONTACT OFFICER**

Name: Mike Dunphy

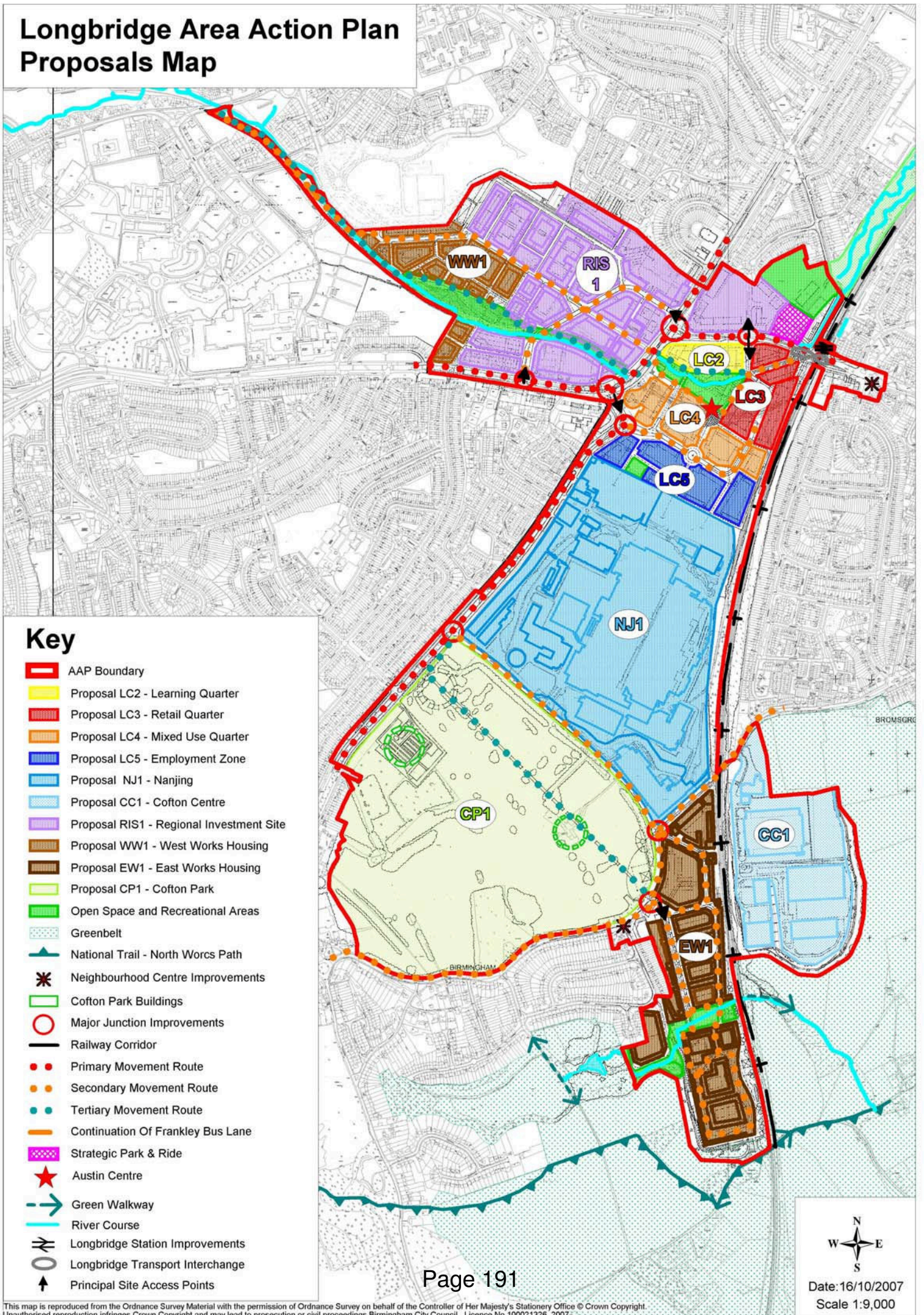
email: [m.dunphy@bromsgrove.gov.uk](mailto:m.dunphy@bromsgrove.gov.uk)

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# Longbridge Area Action Plan Proposals Map



## Key

- AAP Boundary
- Proposal LC2 - Learning Quarter
- Proposal LC3 - Retail Quarter
- Proposal LC4 - Mixed Use Quarter
- Proposal LC5 - Employment Zone
- Proposal NJ1 - Nanjing
- Proposal CC1 - Cofton Centre
- Proposal RIS1 - Regional Investment Site
- Proposal WW1 - West Works Housing
- Proposal EW1 - East Works Housing
- Proposal CP1 - Cofton Park
- Open Space and Recreational Areas
- Greenbelt
- National Trail - North Worcs Path
- Neighbourhood Centre Improvements
- Cofton Park Buildings
- Major Junction Improvements
- Railway Corridor
- Primary Movement Route
- Secondary Movement Route
- Tertiary Movement Route
- Continuation Of Frankley Bus Lane
- Strategic Park & Ride
- Austin Centre
- Green Walkway
- River Course
- Longbridge Station Improvements
- Longbridge Transport Interchange
- Principal Site Access Points



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## Foreword

### Longbridge – A New Chapter

It has been claimed that the 'Longbridge Works' was both physically and emotionally the true heart of Britain's motor industry. From its inception as a car factory in 1905, the site dominated the working and social life of the area for t 100 years.

The plant and its workers helped pioneer mass car manufacturing in the UK producing one of the first cars during the 1920's (Austin Seven) to make motoring truly affordable for the middle classes and, of course, several classic icons of British design, including the Mini of which over 3 million rolled off the production line at Longbridge. At the height of its operation the plant employed around xx people.

On the closure of MG Rover on 8 April 2005, the works was employing 6500 highly skilled men and women, resourcing a supply chain employing 27,000 people, sourcing from over 500 suppliers worldwide and spending an annual material budget of £1.2 billion. The loss almost overnight of the Longbridge Works was a devastating blow for the West Midland's economy and local people.

The economy of the West Midlands has always been a product of innovation, enterprise, hard work and intuition. For some it's a place for 'acting upon imagination, realising possibilities and bringing into being expectations...a place of hoppers and doers' (1). For others it's now a growing dynamic and diverse place, positioned at the centre of the global economic stage securing investment and international trade.

This plan is the start of a new chapter in the history of Longbridge. It aims not only to deliver tomorrow's jobs today, through a major new high technology focused Regional Investment Site, but also to break new ground to help Birmingham prepare for climate change and embed sustainability, with high quality built environments, an integrated waste management and recycling strategic approach, well designed open spaces and corridors and a leading edge approach to creating mixed-use places, diverse communities and carbon neutral developments.

It is fair to say that this plan would not have been possible without the active involvement, interest and passion of a wide range of local people and organisations in making a real difference to the future of Longbridge. We hope it fully delivers their aspirations for the development of a ???fantastic place, in which to live, work and invest.

(Leaders Signatories – BCC / BDC)

(1) quote source

### **Next Steps**

This submission document has been formally endorsed by Birmingham City Council and Bromsgrove District Council and will act as a material consideration in determining planning applications for the Longbridge Area Action Plan area (AAP).

The involvement of the general public and stakeholders has been a central feature in the development of the AAP, to ensure that the plan created is sound. You may give your views on the content of the Plan with reference to nine prescribed tests of soundness, which are detailed in Appendix xx of this publication. Your comments will be considered by an independent Planning Inspector who will examine the document and make any changes necessary so it can be formally adopted.

The period for making comments is from Monday 28 January 2008 – 10 March 2008. A copy of the form available to make comments is available on the web sites and locations detailed in Appendix XX.

Once the AAP is adopted, it will be a formal Development Plan Document (DPD) and form the basis for all planning decisions for the AAP area. It will naturally be used to stimulate and guide the overall regeneration of the area.

## **Contents Page**

Foreword

### Section A Introduction

- The Area Action Plan
- The challenge and opportunity
- Location
- How the area action plan has been prepared

### Section B Vision, themes and Objectives- Delivering the Transformation of Longbridge

- Vision
- Transformational themes
- Objectives

### Section C Longbridge site plans and proposals

- Introduction
- Sustainability Strategy
- Design strategy
- Land use strategy
- Movement framework
- Open space/environment and landscape framework

### Section D Delivery and Implementation

- Understanding Viability
- Ensuring a Sustainable development
- Development phasing
- Planning applications
- Physical and community infrastructure requirements
- Partnerships and co-ordination
- Implementation programme
- Monitoring

### Maps and Plans

- Context plan (s)
- Proposals Map
- Movement framework
- Open space/environment framework

Appendices- to follow

1. Policy context
2. Car parking standards
3. Monitoring Framework
4. Glossary of terms

## Part A – Longbridge: An Introduction

(Community Quote to insert)

The sudden closure of the MG Rover plant at Longbridge in April 2005 had a major impact on the local and regional economy and on the community in south Birmingham. This Area Action Plan has been prepared to secure the comprehensive regeneration of the area. It sets out a series of proposals through which it is intended to create a highly sustainable and accessible new community offering jobs, homes and a new local centre and opportunities for recreation and leisure.

Our shared aim has been to develop an imaginative and deliverable AAP with strong support and involvement from key stakeholders and the local community. Birmingham City Council and Bromsgrove District Council have jointly prepared the Submission AAP with input from other partners including Worcestershire County Council, Advantage West Midlands and St. Modwen Properties PLC (the major landowners). The approach to developing the AAP has been very much in the spirit of partnership, which will be carried forward through to the implementation and delivery of the plan.

The AAP is a Development Plan Document (DPD) that forms part of both Birmingham and Bromsgrove's Local Development Frameworks. The relationship of the AAP to other plans and strategies including Regional Spatial Strategy, the Birmingham Unitary Development Plan and Bromsgrove District Local Plan is explained in Appendix x. .

The AAP has been developed with a strong focus upon spatial planning. This has meant going beyond the traditional boundaries of land use planning to pull together proposals, which draw from a number of policy areas to establish effective and sustainable development opportunities. It also means that plan and its proposals are rooted within a wider geographical context than its immediate area. The AAP in its entirety consists of text, plans, appendices and referenced baseline / technical material. It is both a policy and implementation tool, which includes information on development phasing, delivery organisations and funding. Once adopted the plan will cover the period 2006-2026 (check).

### The Challenge and Opportunity

The regeneration challenge and opportunity is simply immense:

- The biggest regeneration scheme in the West Midlands and one of the largest in the country
- Over 140 hectares/350 acres of development land
- A major role in supporting and restructuring the West Midlands economy through securing technology based businesses linked to the Central Technology Belt (CTB) and traditional employment
- A desire to create 10,000 jobs in a variety of sectors
- Contributing to Birmingham's growth agenda by providing quality new housing

- The desire for the very best in sustainable development with communities, buildings, green spaces and transport systems that have a strong focus upon minimising carbon footprints and addressing the challenges of climate change.
- Assisting the delivery of both Birmingham and Bromsgrove's Community Strategies including priorities focusing upon quality place-making, economic competitiveness, sustainable communities and developing the knowledge economy
- Meeting local needs and aspirations for facilities and services for local people as well as local training opportunities, and jobs
- Creating a distinctive interesting and well designed place with an improved environment and attractive open spaces
- Addressing the specific challenges of this site including the reopening of two major river corridors through the site, meeting strategic transport infrastructure needs for park and ride and improved access to Frankley.

## **Location**

The Longbridge AAP area straddles the boundary between Birmingham and Bromsgrove. It includes the former MG Rover plant, which extends to almost 140ha of land, xx ha Cofton Park, the Austin Sports and Social Club and its playing pitches and several other smaller sites. Plan xx. Although the majority of the former MG Rover site is now vacant Nanjing Automotive Corporation occupy part of the site and in May/June 2007 the first phase of the Technology Park opened.

The River Rea traverses the AAP area, parts of which are designated as a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation and part of the Millennium Cycle Route. The River is also a key wildlife corridor and forms part of Birmingham's strategic open space network. The River Arrow also crosses part of the southern section of the AAP area.

The A38 Bristol Road South runs through the AAP area and is one of Birmingham's principal arterial and key strategic highway routes, linking the city centre (7 miles to the north) to Junction 4 of the M5 (4 miles to the south west). Several main bus routes and Longbridge rail station also serve the area. The rail line forms part of the main Midlands-South West line, and is an important cross-city commuter route.

The Longbridge AAP area is also situated within the A38 Central Technology Belt (CTB), which stretches from Malvern in the South to the City Centre in the North. The overall aim of the CTB is to foster the development of high technology and high growth businesses. Within the wider South Birmingham area, Longbridge forms part of a portfolio of high profile major regeneration sites, including, the re-development of Frankley and Northfield centres and major new mixed-use development around Selly Oak Centre, including Europe's largest new Hospital by the University Hospital Trust.

The AAP area is located within a highly attractive edge of city location bordered with attractive countryside towards the South including the nearby Lickey Hills. The area immediately to the north and west of the site is predominately residential, but also includes significant areas of open space.



Analysis of population statistics and issues raised during consultation shows the area around the AAP site faces a number of significant issues need to be addressed or considered in drawing up the AAP:

- The area has a higher proportion of people in semi-skilled, unskilled and unemployed / on state benefit categories than national averages. The claimant count rate for the Longbridge area as well as the wider area has historically been greater than the national average. Some of the most employment-deprived communities in England are located within Longbridge and its wider area.
- Nearly one third of the economically active population in the immediate catchment of Longbridge and the wider area has no formal qualification. This is almost three times higher than the national average.
- The economic base of the area has changed in particular the manufacturing sector has been declining faster than the national average
- Crime and disorder statistics are relatively higher in most parts of the Longbridge area than national statistics.
- There are also particular health issues in the area associated with low life expectancy as well as higher than average rates of teenage conception, overall mortality, and death through circulatory disease.
- Issues raised in the consultation about quality of local services including retailing and some other community services in the area

### **Spatial Strategy**

The size of the development opportunity at Longbridge and the role it has to play in helping address strategic and regional needs are significant. The proposals, therefore, have been drawn up and considered within a wider spatial context than the immediate area. The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and Regional Economic Strategy (RES) have provided solid foundations, as has the Local Transport Plan.

In seeking the comprehensive redevelopment and regeneration of Longbridge our driving aim has been to address the Government's overriding planning goal (set out in Planning Policy Statement 1 – PPS1) of delivering sustainable development. The overall strategy is to deliver a mixed use employment led self sufficient community in which the need to travel has been minimised. Although not on the scale of the Government's recently announced Eco towns, the AAP does attend the opportunity to share the same higher sustainability standards and values to create an urban eco-centre delivering 10,000 jobs, 1400 new houses, new education facilities, retailing, leisure, community and recreation uses underpinned by quality public transport facilities.

Other key spatial drivers include the need to create new job opportunities, attract new investment and help diversify the local and regional economy. Two particular requirements have been the need to support the A38 Central Technology Corridor – a regional designation that seeks to capture inward investment in the higher technology business and innovation sector, and to identify a Regional Investment Site (RIS) of 25 ha to support this. Attracting high value jobs and offering the opportunity to retain more graduate jobs within the region, improving the quality of and access to training and educational opportunities are other aims of the RES that Longbridge can help address.

With regard to housing demand, the AAP can make a significant contribution to helping meet RSS housing targets, particularly on Brownfield land; as well as addressing the emerging City Regions aim of delivering real population and housing growth. The AAP aims to deliver a minimum of 1400 new dwellings, 35% of which will meet the Government's Affordability criteria.

With regard to transportation, lowering congestion, improving access to and improving the quality and frequency of public transport facilities – both bus and rail, delivering a Strategic Park and Ride facility and improving the links between Frankley and the City Centre all help to meet regional transportation needs whilst linking Longbridge to a wider geographical catchments area.

Another aspect of the Spatial Strategy is to ensure the proposed development sits within and has good connectivity to the neighbouring areas. Opening up the Rivers Rea and Arrow and using them as 'green corridors' providing walkways, cycle ways and new parks and open spaces will allow easy movement in and out and through the area. Both river corridors will be designed to minimise and manage flood risk allowing for sustainable drainage and maximise the opportunity for ecological gain and habitat creation.

A final key component of the Spatial Strategy is to give a heart and focus for the new development – are of overriding wishes of the local community. This will be done through the creation of a local centre which will provide a major new educational facility, significant new retail outlets, a mix of commercial, leisure, cultural and community uses and a new public transport interchange. Not only will this help the overall development to provide for its own needs and help become self sufficient, it will provide for the needs of a wider catchment thereby offering choice.

The above Spatial Strategy should enable Longbridge to become a prime location for investment attractive to international, national and regional investors as well as a place that provides for the needs of local people, businesses and visitors. It will require a 15-year regeneration programme at an estimated cost of £500 million and the joint working of landowners, the local councils, Regional Development Agency, CTB, the local community and other key stakeholders to achieve this regeneration.

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### **How the AAP has been prepared**

The AAP is also the result of wide-ranging public participation with local residents, community organisations and other stakeholders. This has helped create a high degree of consensus on the final strategy adopted.

Preparation this AAP commenced in April 2006 with wide consultation to find out what issues people would like to see addressed and what options for development they would like to be considered. Following this, in October consultation took place on a draft vision and objectives for the AAP and 4 alternative land use options for development. This led to the selection of a Preferred Option, which was published for consultation in February 2007. The Preferred option has now been worked up into a detailed set of proposals and these are set out in this Submission Document.

Throughout this process the aim has been to reach as many as people as possible and ensure that they have a real opportunity to comment and influence the proposals in the emerging AAP. Over 25,000 residents, businesses and other stakeholders have been informed of the plan and a wide variety of techniques used to ensure that as many people and organisations as possible can make their views known. These have also helped to gain views from those who might normally feel excluded or not normally get involved in this type of consultation exercise.. The methods used have included a telephone survey, newsletters, telephone help line, website, exhibitions and a Future Forum ( a dedicated Focus Group of representative local people set up to explore options and issues in some detail) and an Equalities Needs Impact Group. Details of these are set out in the consultation statement which can be viewed at [www.birmingham.gov.uk/longbridgeaap](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/longbridgeaap) and xxxxxx.

In order to provide a robust evidence base for the AAP a suite of baseline and technical studies has been prepared. These are listed in Appendix B and can be viewed at [www.birmingham.gov.uk/longbridgeaap](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/longbridgeaap) and xxxxxx.

A Sustainability Appraisal has also been prepared in order to assess the extent to which the AAP contributes to sustainable development. This appraisal also meets the requirements of the SEA Directive. A Scoping Report was issued for consultation in xxxx and a draft SA was issued for consultation in February 2007 at the same time as the Preferred Options report. The final SA accompanies this Submission Document and can be viewed at [www.birmihgham.gov.uk/longbridgeaap](http://www.birmihgham.gov.uk/longbridgeaap) and xxxxxx.

**?????Key Opportunity Sites- Plan or Aerial photo needed**

## **Part B: Vision, Themes and Objectives - Delivering the Transformation of Longbridge**

1 vision, 5 themes, 15 objectives – delivering the transformation of Longbridge

Flow chart

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'Make local people proud to say, "I live in Longbridge."' (Local resident)

very keen to get a human, cultural identity to Longbridge

'The area feels depressed (since) losing the Rover plant. With generations of my family working there we were proud of it. We need to build an area to be proud of.'  
(Former car worker)

'We need jobs to offer a future for the area ... prospects and training for the younger generation are desperately needed.' (Local resident)

Ensure there are high quality facilities to give the local population something to do as well as attracting outside business and thus raising the economy of the area, whilst preserving the historic beauty of the environment"

### **Vision**

The Longbridge car plant was once the heart of a vibrant community employing up to xxxx skilled men and women in its peak. It is clear from the range of comments and depth of feeling expressed by local people that many would like Longbridge to once again form the heart of the local community.

This community aspiration is captured in the shared vision for Longbridge.:

**Longbridge will undergo major transformational change redeveloping the former car plant and surrounding area into an exemplar sustainable, employment led mixed use development for the benefit of the local community, Birmingham, Bromsgrove, the region and beyond. It will deliver new jobs, houses, community, leisure and educational facilities as well as providing an identifiable and accessible new heart for the area.**

**All development will embody the principles of sustainability, sustainable communities and inclusiveness. At the heart of the vision is a commitment to high quality design that can create a real sense of place with a strong identity and distinctive character. All of this will make it a place where people will want to live work, visit and invest and which provides a secure and positive future for local people’.**

Following extensive consultation on this vision and how best to achieve it five broad themes and 14 detailed objectives have emerged.

### **Transformational Themes**

The transformational vision for Longbridge is underpinned by five clear themes:

- 1. Sustainable Development** – the creation of an ecocentre with buildings built to excellent sustainability standards, accessible good quality public transport, green spaces and corridors and strong inclusive communities.
- 2. High Quality Places for All** – the development of interesting, exciting and stimulating buildings and public spaces, which make the most of natural features and are well connected to surrounding areas
- 3. Economic transformation** – the development of a range of employment opportunities across the site including protecting existing employment and establishing a Regional Investment Site (RIS), which is attractive to high profile regional, national and international investors, and has a major role to play in attracting high technology businesses.
- 4. A New Heart for Longbridge** – the development of a new mixed use local centre in which people want to live, work and invest.
- 5. Homes for the Future** – the creation well designed sustainable homes and residential areas, which cater for a wide range of households

### **Theme 1: Sustainable Development**

**Objective 1: To establish sustainable communities, which embody the principles of sustainable development and meet social, economic and environmental needs in a balanced and integrated way and meet the needs of existing and future generations.**

The creation of sustainable communities is at the heart of government (Planning Policy Statement 1-Delivering Sustainable Development) and regional (Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands RPG11) and local policy including Birmingham and Bromsgrove’s Community Strategies. Sustainable development is about ensuring that communities possess certain features, which people value and perpetuate for the benefit of future generations. It is about creating a place where

people want to live with the right balance and mix of uses, an attractive package of amenities and services, networks of attractive green spaces and good quality transport. It is also about ensuring places are well designed, safe and secure, with tolerance, respect and a sense of community identity and belonging, helping to deliver Birmingham's commitment to a low carbon economy. This objective is at the heart of all the AAP proposals.

**Objective 2: To be at the forefront of sustainable development with commercial buildings, community facilities and housing which showcase excellence in all aspects of environmental sustainability. A key aim is to achieve carbon neutral standards within the lifespan of the scheme.**

This objective addresses key requirements of the Regional Spatial Strategy, Birmingham's Climate Change Strategy, and Community Strategies UDP etc. It seeks to ensure that development meets the highest possible sustainability standards and in particular that :

- Development reduces the impact of climate change by ensuring buildings use less energy and release less carbon,
- Buildings and their surrounds are adaptable to changing environmental conditions,
- Buildings are flexibly designed and adaptable to a variety of uses. Waste is minimised, with provision of integrated waste management and recycling facilities. and
- Sustainable materials and construction techniques are used.

**Objective 3: To establish a rich tapestry of quality connected open spaces, and river corridors across the Longbridge development, which provide for visual amenity, recreational use, nature conservation and address flood risk requirements across the plan area, and to protect and enhance the historic environment.**

Quality open spaces can significantly enhance the natural and built environment and attractiveness of the area and help areas adapt to climate change. This objective recognises the opportunity to open up the Rivers Rea and Arrow through the AAP area and address flooding issues. It also recognises the need to enhance existing open spaces and provide new spaces which make the most of natural features, have nature conservation value and are well connected to surrounding areas. This objective also seeks to increase, protect and enhance the existing ecological and landscape assets within and around the AAP area and to recognise the historic and archaeological value of features in the area.

This objective stems from the requirements of the B'ham Unitary Development Plan, Bromsgrove District Local Plan, the Sustainable Management of Urban Rivers and Floodplains SPD and the requirements of PPS25 (Development and Flood Risk). An improved environment and the opening up of the Rivers Rea and Arrow also emerged as priorities in public consultation on the draft AAP.

**Objective 4: To implement an integrated and sustainable transport infrastructure strategy for Longbridge, which secures appropriate investment in key public transport improvements and road infrastructure and supports the effective management of sustainable travel patterns across the site**

This objective recognises the need for the AAP to address the key strategic proposals for improved public transport infrastructure set out in the UDP, and LTP including a Strategic Park and Ride facility and improved connectivity of the site with Birmingham City Centre and Frankley. Longbridge is also an exciting opportunity to create a community, which champions healthy living by avoiding un-necessary car use. The AAP sets ambitious targets to achieve a significantly higher proportion of journeys on foot, by cycle and by public transport and to support this it proposes excellent infrastructure to encourage walking and cycling as well as ease of access to public transport throughout the site and improved public transport to the site. .

**Objective 5- To implement a comprehensive programme of management for the development including a local centre management programme., management of open spaces, and the public realm.**

This objective recognises the role of effective town or local centre management in supporting the development and ensuring economic sustainability of Longbridge Centre as a destination for shopping and leisure.

It also recognises the need for the management of the development as a whole including public open spaces, the public realm and other facilities open to the public within the development to ensure that they remain attractive and safe, secure and well maintained.

**Theme 2. High Quality Places for All**

**Objective 6- to achieve excellence in design through the creation of high quality developments and design that helps create a real sense of place with buildings, streets, spaces, features and facilities of which people are justifiably proud**

This objective stems from the requirements in Birmingham UDP, and ?? Community Strategy. It was also a key finding of the consultation- local people wanted to see new development and investment in which they could be justifiably proud.

Good design with an emphasis on place-making has measurable values and benefits. Places that are safe, comfortable, distinctive, stimulating, varied and attractive attract people and investment into the area. Mixed-use developments reduce opportunities for crime and vandalism and meet a variety of demands from the widest possible range of users, amenities and social groups. Attractive and safe open spaces encourage leisure activities and contribute to healthy lifestyles. Developments that have networks of streets and that have good physical connections with surrounding areas encourage walking, cycling and access to public transport. Place-making is therefore central to the vision for Longbridge. The AAP proposes the application of fresh design and creative approaches to the built form, public open spaces, landscaping, natural features and movement options

**Theme 3. Economic transformation**

**Objective 7: To support the continued development of Longbridge as a regional investment location for industry and employment, securing economic diversification and business growth, providing 10,000 jobs, protecting existing employment and providing a long-term sustainable job environment.**

This objective supports the policy in the RSS, UDP and Regional Economic Strategy of securing diversification of the region's economy, maintaining employment land and supporting the A38 Central Technology Corridor. The creation of jobs and the target of 10,000 jobs was also strongly supported during the public consultation on the plan.

The Longbridge site is critical to the success of the city's and region's economic growth and investment agenda. There is a need for a variety of employment opportunities ranging from technology and business uses to diversify the economy, through to the protection and promotion of existing industrial operations (e.g. Nanjing and Cofton Centre) and the development of a vibrant new mixed-use local centre with a wide range of employment opportunities in retail, leisure, and education uses. The potential of micro and home-based businesses to the economy of the West Midlands should also be recognised.

**Objective 8: to support the protection of land for general industrial uses including the Nanjing Automotive Corporation site and Cofton Centre.**

Nanjing Automotive Corporation (NAC) has a long lease on a 44 hectare site and has resumed production of the MG TF sports car.

During consultation on the emerging AAP the Corporation said it is keen to make full use of the prominent research and development and specialised automotive skills to be found in the West Midlands Region, as well as being part of the wider revitalised Longbridge community. It also wanted to ensure that the continued use of the site for car assembly and manufacturing is supported and that uses adjoining their boundary are compatible with their operations. NAC did however recognise that some land may become surplus to their requirements in the short to medium term.

**Objective 9: The development of a 25ha Regional Investment Site (RIS) which is attractive to high profile regional, national and international investors as well as a major location for high technology businesses**

This objective is in line with policy in the Regional Spatial Strategy to provide a RIS in the A38 High Technology corridor. The RIS has a major medium and long-term role to play in the restructuring of the West Midlands economy, helping create a more flexible and competitive economy, employing higher skilled and paid people.

Longbridge presents a unique opportunity in the West Midlands for a quality RIS development in a sustainable location within the urban area close to public transport (rail and bus) and with access to a wide range of shops and services in the new local centre and proximity to a large workforce.

**Objective 10: To ensure that employment opportunities are accessible to all and assist in securing the provision of employment and training opportunities for local residents, with no investment being lost for the lack of suitably qualified and skilled people**

In parts of Birmingham and Bromsgrove, people face barriers to employment, such as limited childcare, low skills or lack of work experience. Local employers have reported various skills gaps (particularly in certain sectors) and the effects on business can include higher costs or more limited output and growth.

It was also clear from consultation with the local community that re-skilling, training and linking suitable skilled local people to jobs opportunities were important priorities.



It is therefore important that a range of measures are put in place to enable local people to successfully compete for the new employment opportunities.

**Objective 11: To support a local culture of enterprise, entrepreneurial activity, innovation and sustainable business growth and development**

Small business and enterprise activity are often viable and sustainable routes out of unemployment and underemployment. Local small businesses and self-employed people support wealth creation and help retain wealth within an area. An accessible business advice service, premises for start-ups and small businesses and a viable trading environment are important factors in helping small businesses.

The Longbridge development has already made a positive step in supporting young and new technology based businesses through the development of an Innovation Centre but there is a need for further measures to develop and support local enterprise.

**Theme 4: A New Heart for Longbridge**

**Objective 12: To create a sustainable mixed-use centre for Longbridge, which meets local needs by providing a range of quality retail, commercial, leisure, education and residential uses and establishes a distinctive sense of place and heart for the community.**

The consultation with the local community showed that establishment of a new local centre at Longbridge is a critical step in breathing new life into the area. This centre is also a rare opportunity to build in the best of the past in terms of community, culture, heritage and enterprise.

Developing flourishing neighbourhoods where local people have easy access to shops and services is a key strand of the B'ham Community Strategy. There is a need to meet a gap in retail provision in this part of the city and serve new employment sites including the RIS.

A new local centre could provide a wide range of uses and a real focal point for living, shopping and access to local services and facilities in a sustainable way. Of particular importance are:

- A new educational facility that can act as an accessible place of learning.
- High quality retail facilities, with a rich diversity of shopping opportunities for local people, and
- A balanced mix of other uses and a quality environment for living, working and visiting. Considerable community interest has been expressed in marking the history and heritage of the area through a new multi- purpose civic building which celebrates the enterprise, people and history of the Longbridge plant, but also makes the most of creating new contemporary spaces for community use, health outreach services, and local events.

**Theme 5: Homes for the Future**

**Objective 13: To deliver a minimum of 1,400 new dwellings to help meet existing and future housing needs and to create a sustainable mixed-use community**

Although a significant proportion of the Longbridge site falls within Bromsgrove District, however in terms of housing, the whole site is viewed as functionally part of the Regional Spatial Strategy's major urban area and Birmingham City. One of the key visions for Birmingham is the continued development of a Growing Global City. Regional Spatial Strategy also sets out targets for population growth. This population increase will also be matched with increased investment and new economic opportunities. The Longbridge site presents a significant opportunity to contribute towards this economic and population vision.

The AAP area has the potential to provide a minimum of 1400 units on a variety of sites each with significant potential to develop real communities and places of distinction. This means paying particular attention to high quality sustainable building design, open space, pedestrian and cycle and public transport and integrated community facilities and infrastructure (including health, educational and leisure facilities).

**Objective 14: New homes will provide a mix of type, size and tenure including affordable housing, high density layout appropriate to the location of the site and be designed to highest standards. The aim is to achieve carbon neutral standards within the lifespan of the scheme, and where appropriate, to achieve lifetime homes standards.**

This objective is in line with policies government policies and community strategies.

The provision of new homes at Longbridge will aim for diversity rather than uniformity, with proposals for an inclusive mix and range of housing types (including family and young persons accommodation, and provision for senior housing, incorporating where possible extra care facilities) and tenures (including open market, social rented and shared equity properties). The provision of affordable housing has a key role to play at Longbridge through:

- Retaining local people and attracting new people to the area
- Enabling a wide range of people to break into the housing market who are unable to afford market priced housing
- Improving the overall affordable housing stock, and
- Providing a mix of housing tenure that will assist in creating more balanced communities.

The AAP area is suitable for high-density development in line with its location close to public transport and the objectives of securing a quality mixed use development. It also provides the potential for improved design of homes with high sustainability standards (including efficient use of resources such as building materials energy and water) and Lifetime Homes Standard, (allowing homes to be accessible for all including young, old, single or in families, non-disabled or disabled).

# Part C: Longbridge Site Plans Policies and Proposals

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Part C of the AAP translates and applies the vision, themes and objectives of the previous section into distinct **land use proposals and policies**. These have emerged following appraisal of the issues and opportunities within the area, widespread consultation on options and through the Sustainability Appraisal.

To assist in the interpretation, application and implementation of the proposals they are supported by:

- **An area wide sustainability strategy that sets out the standards and principles to be achieved.**
- **An area wide design strategy that sets out design principles for the area.**
- **A Movement Strategy which sets out the key transport infrastructure routes, proposals and network improvements (both onsite and offsite)**
- **An Environment, Open Space and Landscape Strategy comprising a network of open and green space improvements and new provision**

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The key land use and movement proposals are illustrated on the following plans:

- Land Use Proposals Map
- Movement Strategy Plan
- Environment/ Open Space and Landscape Strategy Plan

The AAP should also be read in conjunction with the relevant national, regional and local planning documents.

## 2. SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

Longbridge will become an “eco-centre” – an exemplar quality sustainable development in an urban setting. It will embrace economic, and social needs, have a real sense of place or local identity and provide a high quality of life for residents with minimal environmental impact.

As sustainable development is at the heart of the Area Action Plan, each proposal will be required to adhere to a set of sustainability requirements These are as follows:

- Building standards
- Site wide strategies to address Energy, Water, Biodiversity, Waste etc.
- Other requirements will be dealt with through proposals elsewhere in this Area Action Plan and section 106/planning tariff.

### Building standards

**Proposal S1 -All developments are to be accompanied by a sustainability statement demonstrating how the building standards set out below will be achieved.**

<b>Building</b>	<b>All residential development will meet the following</b>
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<b>Standards</b>	<p>standards as set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level 4 on adoption of the Area Action Plan</li> <li>- A target of Level 5 by 2012</li> <li>- A target of Level 6 by 2016- i.e. zero carbon</li> </ul> <p>Non- residential development will meet a target of BREEAM Excellent standards.</p> <p>Any proposals for developments that do not meet these standards and targets will need to be accompanied by a robust justification.</p>
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**Supporting Strategies**

**Proposal S2- Site wide strategies will be submitted with the first outline application for development on the site to address the requirements below.**

<p><b>Energy and Climate change</b></p> <p><b>AWAITNG REVISED WORDS FROM DAVE WARD TO CLARIFY</b></p>	<p><b>A site wide Climate Change and Energy strategy to address energy and climate change issues including</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Minimisation of energy consumption,</b></li> <li>- <b>Efficient Supply of energy and the use of energy from renewable sources. This should ensure that development proposals promote energy efficient measures in buildings and employ renewable and micro energy generation projects, including where feasible decentralised energy systems based on renewable low carbon energy e.g. combined heat and power / district heating and the use of locally sourced bio-fuels including biomass as well as solar and other techniques.</b></li> <li>- <b>The strategy should also address how to minimise carbon emissions to achieve an integrated site wide low carbon development.</b></li> <li>- <b>In addition to proposals to minimise the use of energy this Strategy will include for example proposals to maximise the proportion of energy used from renewable sources, an energy statement and data on expected CO2 emissions generated by new and existing developments and ongoing management and monitoring arrangements. Renewable energy should meet a target of 15% of energy demand from the AAP area.</b></li> <li>- <b>Proposals to adapt to changing climate including buildings designed to withstand storms of greater intensity.</b></li> <li>- <b>Monitoring- the monitoring framework needs to establish a framework or identifying and managing the carbon footprint of the whole development</b></li> </ul>
<b>Water</b>	<p><b>A site wide strategy to address water and flooding issues including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>measures to ensure new buildings incorporate water efficiency measures, e.g. grey water systems</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Provision of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).</b></li> <li>- <b>Measures to prevent flooding and a comprehensive strategy for flood compensation.</b></li> <li>- <b>Measures to ensure that development complies with the Supplementary Planning Document- Sustainable Management of Urban Rivers and Floodplains</b></li> </ul>
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b>	<p><b>A site wide strategy to address Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna issues including the protection, management and enhancement of the quality, coverage and biodiversity value of wildlife habitats and protection of important species within and adjoining the plan area and provision of opportunities where appropriate to create and enhance corridors and improve accessibility. It should be related to the site wide landscape strategy.</b></p>
<b>Waste</b>	<p><b>A site wide strategy for waste management to address storage, collection, and recycling of waste from homes and businesses. This will also deal with proposals to reduce the wastage of materials during construction. It will include targets and measures to ensure that development can exceed the City's recycling and composting performance targets and reduce the growth rate of household waste, promote re use schemes and establish a commercial recycling scheme for businesses. It will include commercial recycling facilities in the local centre</b></p>
<b>Materials</b>	<p><b>A site wide strategy to promote the use of secondary aggregates, local and sustainable sources of materials and the use of sustainable construction techniques</b></p>

This AAP addresses a wide range of other social, economic and environmental sustainability requirements through its the land use allocations, movement proposals, environment and open space proposals and section 106 requirements. These include the following:

- Provision of a broad range of employment and business and retail opportunities including measures to support local enterprise- (see Local centre proposals and tariff requirements etc)
- Provision of a network of green spaces, buildings and spaces around buildings that are of landscape, amenity and biodiversity value, and are linked to river corridors and the wider countryside,- (see Environment Strategy )
- Provision of a range of facilities and services to support both the existing and proposed new communities including education, community cultural and other facilities.
- Help foster healthy communities and cultivate community involvement and strong citizenship.
- Measures to ensure that opportunities are available for local people to access training, skills development and employment

- Improvements to transport particularly cycling, walking and the public transport network and reduce dependence on private car use, including a requirement for a site wide Travel co-ordinator

### **AT A GLANCE**

Summary- a set of requirements to ensure that all development meets high sustainability standards.

**AAP Objectives-** Supports all AAP Objectives but particularly objectives 1,2,3,4,

### **Policy context and Justification**

- **Regional Spatial Strategy-** policies EN1 - Energy Generation, Policy EN2 - Energy Conservation
- **Bromsgrove Community Strategy-** supports priorities of a) reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to impacts of climate change and b) to reduce waste, increase recycling and ensure green cleaner and safe public spaces
- **Birmingham Community strategy** – supports strategic theme- a Green City
- **Worcestershire Community Strategy**
- **Sustainability Appraisal for AAP-** notes that this strategy will have a positive impact on sustainability.
- Other relevant strategies include- Birmingham Climate change strategy,

## **3. DESIGN STRATEGY**

A set of design principles will apply across the AAP area. The purpose of these principles is to achieve high quality in the layout, scale and massing of buildings, architecture, mix and disposition of land uses and the relationship between built and open spaces. The quality of the design will be a common theme running through the whole development, this will be coupled with the creation of distinctive places to add character and interest.

Different parts of Longbridge will be distinct from one another by virtue of their design requirements, land uses and the level of activity experienced. The local centre will be different from the Regional Investment Site, which in turn will be different to the residential areas.

Design quality and distinctiveness will enhance the legibility of Longbridge as a place, allow it to make a statement and be recognisable as a significant neighbourhood and community in the wider City context.

**Policy S3 Design Principles for all development – Development will be required to comply with the following design principles:**

**Overall principles**

- Sites to be laid out with a network of integrated, connected, walkable and cycleable streets and public spaces. This should create a hierarchy of principal and secondary streets to make up a linked network of routes to create high levels of permeability
- All development to be laid out around high-density perimeter blocks that positively address all road and other public spaces and frontages including the River Rea and public parks and spaces. Buildings should normally be located at the back of the footway.
- A high degree of legibility to enable easy recognition of and access to key places and buildings within the local centre, such as the public transport interchange, Austin Heritage Centre and public parks
- The vertical and horizontal integration of uses to provide a mix of uses within buildings as well as within streets

**Access hierarchy, parking and servicing**

- The layout of internal streets will be designed to minimise the impact of vehicular traffic, give priority to pedestrians and cyclists and prevent inappropriate traffic through the site.
- The majority of car and motorcycle parking in the local centre and Regional Investment site will be in multi storey and decked car parks with other parking contained within internal landscaped courtyards.
- Servicing will normally be to the rear of buildings, contained within internal courtyards, and screened from residential uses.

**Building design and massing**

- Development will recognise gateway locations and create corner features in key locations
- In the local centre and Regional Investment site development will be a minimum of three storeys in height with elements of 4 to 5 storeys on Bristol Road South frontages. At gateway locations additional storey heights of up to 7 storeys will be appropriate.
- In the housing sites on east works and west works development should be 2-3 storeys with elements of 4 storeys where appropriate.
- Building frontages will normally be located at the back of the footway and include active uses on the ground floor. Ground floor residential uses may be set back up to 2 metres to afford privacy to residents. Buildings will frame the streets and public spaces and be designed to overlook them and provide natural surveillance.
- Large floorplate buildings where inactive frontages are likely (eg supermarkets, car parks, leisure uses etc) will be 'wrapped' with smaller scale active frontage uses, particularly on the ground floor to provide activity and surveillance of the public realm.
- Development to recognise key views of site and the need to mitigate impacts on views and integrate development into the landscape character of the wider area.
- Development to address the effective consideration of micro-climate issues and maximise natural light within new buildings

and public areas.

#### **Public realm and landscape**

- **Public art** – proposals OS xx requires a public art strategy to ensure that art will be part of the design of detailed elements of the public realm and some buildings.
- **Hard and soft landscaping and open spaces** throughout the development and on adjacent roads (including street trees) should create landscape structure/setting. Proposal Osxx requires a landscape strategy
- **Existing open spaces** should be retained and existing areas of wildlife habitat enhanced wherever possible. New open spaces should be created and designed for biodiversity, with appropriate maintenance and access. This is addressed in Proposals xxx
- **Measures to maximise safety and perception of safety** including good natural surveillance on all public routes, CCTV,
- **The management of the public realm and landscape and open spaces** should be considered in all developments- see Proposal OSxx

**Any proposals for developments that do not meet these principles will need to be accompanied with robust justification.**

#### **At a glance**

**Summary-** a set of design principles to ensure a high quality distinctive design throughout the development

**AAP objectives-** Objectives 5 and 6

#### **Justification**

- **Regional Spatial Strategy-** policies QE1 Conserving and Enhancing the environment, QE2 Restoring degraded areas and managing and creating new high quality environments, and QE3 Creating a high quality built environment for all.
- **Birmingham Community strategy-** supports strategic themes – Safe City and A Green City
- **Birmingham UDP-**
- **Sustainability Appraisal for AAP-** notes that these design principles will have a positive impact on sustainability.
- Other relevant strategies include Places for Living, Places for All,

## **4. A LAND USE PROPOSALS AND POLICIES**

### **PROPOSALS LC1 to LC4- A NEW MIXED USE LOCAL CENTRE**

#### **Overview**

A new local centre is proposed on the former North Works site. This presents a major opportunity to develop a real focus and heart for Longbridge and



create a new place in which people will want to live, work and invest. Place making is central to the vision for the centre. The aim is to create a high quality award winning development that will demonstrate the very best in design and sustainable development of a new suburban centre. It is a significant opportunity to:

- **Create** a sustainable mixed-use centre, which meets local needs by providing a range of retail, commercial, service, leisure, education and residential uses and a distinctive place, with buildings, spaces, features and facilities of which residents, workers and visitors are justifiably proud
- **Innovate** through the application of fresh design and creative approaches to built form, public open spaces, landscaping, natural features and movement.
- **Integrate** land uses, natural assets, transportation and provide facilities that will also benefit surrounding communities.
- **Stimulate** the development of a diverse economy, which supports the Regional Investment Site and new business areas by providing a range of services and facilities.

The centre will contain a wide range of uses. These will be structured into distinct but connected quarters, that weave together different building forms, and uses in a way that contributes to the distinctiveness and vibrancy of the whole area. The local centre quarters are:

- A **learning quarter** – focused around the development of a new college development
- A **retail quarter** – focussed on a range of shop and service units including a new supermarket
- A **mixed-use quarter** – establishing a broad range of uses appropriate to a suburban centre

Each of these distinct quarters within the local centre should be stimulating, enjoyable and convenient places, which meet the demands of the wide range of users. Although each quarter will have a dominant use, each of the quarters will allow for a variety of uses to create a degree of synergy and critical massing within the local centre and thus add to the vitality of the area.

### **Community and Stakeholder Priorities**

#### **What people said about the local centre**

To be completed

A key feature of the centre will be a local heritage and mixed-use community building – ‘The Austin’ – celebrating the history of manufacturing in Longbridge and providing a significant visitor attraction.

A high quality environment is essential and the centre will have a new urban park providing space for informal recreation and the opening up of the River Rea across much of the local centre.

The centre will also be a focus for high quality public transport including a new public transport interchange, bus priority measures, as well as attractive pedestrian and cycle routes. This will allow people the opportunity to transfer between different modes of transport and contribute towards more sustainable patterns of movement. The high quality design of the transport infrastructure and integration of transport uses into the layout of the centre is crucial to the success of the transport strategy for the AAP area.

## **Site Proposals**

Proposal LC1 sets out proposals for the whole centre provides details of land uses and floorspace limits (where appropriate), overall transport and environmental requirements for the whole centre. This policy will apply to all proposals within the centre. More detailed proposals for each quarter are set out in Proposals LC2-4.

**Proposal LC1- A new local centre will be developed on north works site. The existing neighbourhood facilities at Sunbury Road/Longbridge Lane will be protected and enhanced.**

### **Land uses**

The new local centre will comprise the following uses –

- **Retail (Class A1) of up to 13,500 sq.m. gross comprising:**
  - **A superstore of up to 7,500 sq.m. gross (comprising up to 5,000 sq.m. convenience and up to 2,500 sq.m. comparison).**
  - **Additional comparison retailing of up to 6,000 sq.m. gross****Non superstore units shall be of a mix of sizes including a minimum of 1500 sq.m. of smaller retail units (up to 200 sq.m.) of which up to 250 sq.m. should be convenience.**
- **Services comprising:**
  - **Financial and professional services including banks, building societies, estate agencies and other services (Class A2)**
  - **Restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments, hot food-take aways (Class A3, A4, A5**
  - **Other services such as dentists and betting offices for visiting members of the public**
- **Leisure uses of up to 5000 sq.m. (Class D2 )**
- **A college/education facility of up to 24,000 sq.m.**
- **‘The Austin’ – a heritage and mixed use community building (including space for heritage, healthcare and community uses and local social enterprises)**
- **A range of residential units (approximately 400 dwellings) to include 35% affordable housing. New homes will also be encouraged to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard, allowing homes to be accessible for all including young, old, single or in families, non-disabled or disabled.**
- **Live/work units based on a 50/50 floorspace split in addition to the 400 residential dwellings to host start up and micro businesses**
- **Office uses (Class B1a) of up to 10,000 sq.m.**
- **Other appropriate uses are small-scale commercial (e.g. hotel), health centre/care, crèche, religious and cultural uses and residential institutions.**

**Measures to support local enterprises should also be included. These**

could be:

- The provision of flexible lease or rent small office units and incubator and/or and grow-on business premises.
- Space within the Austin building for local social enterprises

The distribution of all of these uses across the site in various local centre quarters will be in accordance with proposals LC2, LC3, and LC4.

The enhancement and redevelopment of the existing neighbourhood facilities at Sunbury Road/Longbridge Lane for small scale retail and service uses with residential will be permitted

#### **Movement**

The development will provide a bus priority route through the centre (Proposal T), public transport interchange (Proposal T), pedestrian and cycle routes (Proposal T) a network of internal streets (Proposal T) improvements to the A38 Bristol Road South and Longbridge Lane (Proposal T) site access (Proposal T) and a multi storey car park (Proposal T). Other relevant proposals and policies in the Movement Strategy will also apply.

#### **Environment open space and landscape**

The development will provide the re-opening of the River Rea across the majority of the site (Proposal OS), a new urban park (Proposal OS), other open space and recreational facilities to serve the development on or off site (Proposal OS), Environmental enhancements within existing centre at Sunbury Road/Longbridge Lane (Proposal OS), Other relevant proposals and policies in the Environment open space and landscape Strategy will also apply.

#### **Design**

All development to comply with the principles in policy S3

#### **Sustainability**

All development to comply with the sustainability requirements in policy S1 and S2.

#### **Planning process, scheme implementation and management**

Requirements for planning applications and planning obligations including a tariff that will apply to the development are set out in the implementation section D. To support the development the planning tariff includes funding for a number of social economic and other measures such as town centre management, and support for skills, training and business development programmes.

### **Learning Quarter – Additional Proposals**

The new local centre presents an opportunity to develop a new college or other educational facility, which will act as a seat of learning and hub for the local community. Current proposals are for a new facility for Bournville College. This will be developed on a collaborative basis between Bournville

College and North East Worcestershire College, and serve a wide catchment of students across South Birmingham and North Worcestershire.

The college development will deliver:

- Education and learning for 16-18 year olds
- Facilities for adult vocational skills and local workforce development
- An integrated business school
- Specialist facilities for automotive and construction skills
- Library and open learning facilities
- Sports hall and recreational facilities

The building will be a high quality sustainable contemporary college to form a key entrance building to the local centre, developed to a high building standard, but allowing internal building flexibility to deliver different types of learning. It will front onto Longbridge Lane and the new urban park.

The local skills profile suggests that nearly one third of the economically active population has no formal qualifications, which is approximately three times higher than the national average. The college will have a major role to play in attempting to address this challenge

The development of a new high quality college facility which acts as a hub for students, employers and local people is a major step towards fostering an inclusive culture of learning and skills development. An important feature of the college will be its 'open doors' approach to learning where opportunities and facilities (including library and recreational facilities) are accessible to the general public. The college presents a major opportunity to make a lasting and significant contribution to local communities and businesses. This includes:

- Building relationships with local schools and other learning facilities and organisations
- Establishing a range of business responsive programmes for local companies and enterprises
- Maximising the engagement of local young people and adult learners
- Targeting harder to reach groups and excluded groups

**What people said about skills and learning**

Local people valued and supported the inclusion of a new learning facility within the local centre. It was generally perceived that this facility would bring a wide range of people (particularly younger people) into the local centre to use its facilities and services.

The need to improve the skills of local people to enable individuals to take-up a wider range of employment opportunities across the site and elsewhere was seen as a priority. The college development is perceived to have a major role in delivering this aspiration.

Local people felt that the college should be part of the wider community and provide an accessible range of facilities for local people, including library and recreational resources.

The detailed site proposals for the learning quarter are detailed in below in Proposal LC2.

### **Proposal LC2: Learning Quarter**

**A landmark college facility is proposed within the floorspace limits of 24,000sq.m.**

**The building will be of the highest quality design and materials to mark the entrance to the local centre. It will have active frontages on all sides and allow for activities within to be viewed from the surrounding routes. It will include facilities accessible to the general public including a library and recreational resources. Parking in accordance with policy Tx**

### **Retail Quarter – Additional Proposals**

A new shopping area will help form a new heart and focal point for the community and meet local needs by providing, improved retail and associated services. The centre will provide a range of shopping facilities in an attractive environment. This will include retail space suitable for independents as well as major high street names. There are also opportunities to provide services such as dentists, pharmacies, building societies, and banks that are currently limited in the Longbridge area.

The retail quarter will be structured around a high street in an attractive environment. This is not about the development of bland shopping precincts or standardised shop formats, but the establishment of high quality retailing environment with the right mixed retail offer, social integration, walkability and accessibility. The AAP sets out requirements for a creative approach to establishing the right shopping ambience for the local centre. The AAP recognises the need to ensure that the scale and nature of uses must complement and not threaten the viability of other local centres (e.g. Northfield, Rubery an Frankley) and neighbourhood parades.

The AAP also recognises the role of an effective local centre management scheme in increasing the vitality and viability of the centre and maintaining its key role as the heart of its community. This will be a locally developed initiative working with a variety of partners and retailers on such activities as crime prevention, the management of the public realm and events / activity programmes. –see implementation chapter

### **What people said about shopping facilities**

Local people commented on the quality and quantity of shopping facilities need improving. They indicated a need to provide a range of shops, which cater for day-to-day needs as well as clothes shopping and luxury items. There was also interest in creating a more distinctive and interesting shopping environment compared to the standard high street.

Comments were also made about the need to make sure the local centre and key shopping areas were effectively managed and that sufficient attention is paid to cleanliness, public safety and minimising the threat of crime.

Although members of the local community were supportive of a new supermarket development, it was stressed that there is also a need to protect and preserve existing local centres and neighbourhood parades

### **Proposal LC3: Retail Quarter**

**A mixed retail quarter to comprise the following uses within the floorspace limits set in Proposal LC1:**

- **Retail uses including a well-designed supermarket or superstore integrated with smaller units at the ground floor suitable for retail uses**
- **Services including cafes / restaurants (Class A 2,3, 4 and 5)**
- **Residential units and office / leisure uses on the upper floors**
- **An integrated multi-story car park to the rear of the scheme- Proposal Txx.**

### **Mixed Use Quarter – Additional Proposals**

The Longbridge development presents a real opportunity to create a diverse, walkable, compact, vibrant, mixed use quarter with housing, work places, entertainment, civic facilities, public spaces and shops – all of which are essential to the daily lives of local residents

The mixed-use quarter will contain a number of distinct features, including a wide range of residential units, premium office space, leisure uses, restaurants, cafes, which will also support the daytime and evening economy of the local centre, other local facilities and a unique multi-purpose heritage / community building – ‘The Austin’.

The mixed-use area will be focussed on the new urban park and the re-opened River Rea.

### **What people said about the range of uses**

Considerable community interest has been expressed in marking the history and heritage of the area. There was strong support for an Austin heritage facility that celebrates the enterprise, people and history of the Longbridge plant, but also makes the most of creating new contemporary spaces for community hire, health outreach services, events / exhibitions or simply a place to drop-in and meet friends over a coffee.

Local people also supported the need for an urban park within the local centre, which aims to create an oasis of relaxation, recreation and refreshment for residents and visitors alike. Strong interest was also expressed in opening up the River Rea through the local centre, as a corridor for wildlife, walking and cycling.

### **Proposal LC3: Mixed Use Quarter**

**A mixed-use quarter to comprise the following uses within the floorspace limits set in Proposal LC1:**

- **Office uses (Class B1a).**
- **Financial and professional service uses (Class A2).**
- **Dwelling units including a mix of apartments, and town houses, with mews developments where appropriate.**
- **A limited number of restaurants, cafes, bars and public houses, (Class A3,4, and 5) which will support the daytime and evening economy**
- **The Austin- a high quality mixed-use building to accommodate cultural, community, health and public services. This will provide the Austin Heritage Centre as a visitor attraction and associated visitor facilities**
- **Other appropriate uses are hotels, health centre/care, crèche, religious and cultural uses and residential institutions.**

**This area will form a vibrant quarter with a wide mix of uses providing quality environment for living and working and amenities for visitors. Located at the centre of the development area this quarter needs to establish a good relationship with the park including active frontages onto the park and primary and secondary access roads.**

## Local Centre – At a Glance

### Summary

Vibrant mixed-use local centre distinguished by distinct quarters, providing for a range of retail, employment, education, community and residential uses focused around a new urban park and opened up river course and accessible public transport infrastructure.

### AAP Objectives

- Supports Objectives 1-7, 10-14

### Policy Context and Justification

- **Regional Spatial Strategy**-Policies CF1 Housing within the major urban areas, CF3 levels and distribution of housing development, CF4 the reuse of land and buildings for housing, CF 5 Delivering affordable housing and mixed communities and CF6 Managing Housing land provision, PA4 Development related to Higher/Further Education, PA11 Network of Town and City Centres, PA 13 Out of centre retail development, UR3 Enhancing the role of city, district and local centres. **Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Revision** PA11 Network of Town and City Centres, 12B Non-strategic centres, 13A Office Development requirements, PA13B Large scale office development outside strategic centres
- -Birmingham Unitary Development Plan-
- **Birmingham Community Strategy** supports strategic themes – Flourishing neighbourhoods, Prosperous City, Learning City, A well housed City, and City for Sport and Leisure.
- **Sustainability appraisal** notes significant benefits particularly from economic growth and employment, provision of social and cultural facilities, sustainable design measures. AAP includes recommended mitigation measures.
- -Local centre will serve area with a shortage of quality retail facilities. Supported by Retail Baseline study
- Public consultation support for new centre,
- Baseline study on employment –addresses level of offices and mix of employment uses

### Future Options and Contingency

Potential for alternative layout of uses within centre, e.g. college facility could go into mixed-use quarter.

## PROPOSAL EZ1 AN EMPLOYMENT ZONE ADJACENT TO THE CENTRE

Between the local centre and Nanjing is an opportunity to develop a range of property for the small and medium enterprise sector, which has an important role in maintaining business competitiveness and driving forward change in the sectoral composition of the economy.

The physical scale and built form of these more traditional employment spaces will need to be carefully graded to balance with other uses within the local centre and with the Nanjing factory. As part of this 'grading' in height and



massing towards the northern boundary of the quarter live / work units may be included and support business hubs for micro and home based businesses.

#### **What people said about employment uses**

There was a strong feeling within the local community that Longbridge needs to provide space for a range of employment opportunities, including more 'traditional' employment space. It is also apparent that there is a latent demand for general employment space for small businesses and micro-businesses, which are not necessarily high technology sector related.

#### **Proposal EZ1: Employment Zone**

**The development of an employment quarter between the local centre and Nanjing**

##### **Land uses**

The employment quarter will comprise the following uses:

- General and light industrial and warehousing uses (Use Class B1b and c, B2 and B8)- including space for small businesses
- Live/work units based on a 50/50 floorspace split to host start up and micro businesses on the northern boundary of the quarter.
- Biomass plant or other sustainable energy facility.
- Recycling facility.

##### **Design**

All development on frontage to Lickey Road and main internal access road to comply with design principles in policy S3. However, there is greater flexibility of design adjacent to Nanjing boundary and adjacent to railway to allow for a range of industrial units. The layout of the development should allow for future vehicular and pedestrian access into the Nanjing site.

##### **Sustainability**

All development to comply with the sustainability requirements detailed in policy S1 and S2.

**Movement**- the development will include a network of internal streets, pedestrian and cycle routes. Other relevant proposals in the Movement Strategy will also apply.

##### **Environment open space and landscape**

Relevant proposals and policies in the Environment open space and landscape Strategy will also apply.

##### **Planning process, Scheme implementation and management**

Requirements for planning applications and planning obligations including a tariff that will apply to the development are set out in the implementation section D. To support the development the planning tariff includes funding for a number of social economic and other measures such as support for skills, training and business development programmes. This also includes requirements for educational facilities, to serve the development.



## **At a glance**

### **Summary**

Employment area adjacent to Nanjing to provide buffer between local centre and general industrial uses and a mix of employment opportunities in small and medium sized enterprises.

### **AAP Objectives**

Supports objectives 1-6, 7,8,10, and 11

### **Policy Context and Justification**

- **Regional Spatial Strategy**- Policy PA1 Prosperity for All and PA5 Portfolio of Employment Land
- **Birmingham Unitary Development Plan**-
- **Birmingham Community Strategy**- supports strategic theme of Prosperous City
- Public consultation support for a range of employment uses to contribute to jobs target.
- **Sustainability Appraisal** shows significant benefits for local economy and employment and environmental benefits of sustainable energy site. AAP includes appropriate mitigation measures
- AAP employment land study sets out justification employment land

### **Other options/contingency**

Early release of land within the Nanjing site (EZ 2) for redevelopment for employment uses would allow for a greater mix of uses within site EZ1- in particular increased residential use.

## **PROPOSAL RIS 1-LONGBRIDGE REGIONAL INVESTMENT SITE**

### **Overview**

A 25ha Regional Investment Site (RIS) is proposed on part of the former West Works, Bristol Road South and North Works car park. This site includes the existing Technology Park.

The RIS will contribute to the portfolio of employment opportunities in the West Midlands and support diversification of the regional economy. This development is an essential part of the long-term strategic vision for the economy. It has an important role to play in the restructuring of the West

Midlands economy, helping create a more flexible and competitive economy, employing higher skilled people who contribute more to the local economy and meeting the goals of economic, social and environmental sustainability.

The aim is to provide a development, which is attractive to high profile regional, national and international investors. Longbridge will become a prime location for technology led businesses and related investment.

Longbridge represents a unique opportunity to develop and explore the RIS concept in an urban setting. Unlike most RIS, which are located in the greenbelt, this one affords the opportunity for appropriate development to be embedded in an established urban community. Longbridge therefore offers an unparalleled set of opportunities to maximise brownfield development, construct to higher densities and link to the surrounding urban infrastructure and workforce. To help ensure the right balance of development and to make certain that regeneration is of the scale and nature required to deliver a thriving economy, a range of uses and appropriate levels of floorspace has been identified. This mix is both deliverable and viable and with appropriate monitoring should ensure a highly attractive comprehensive redevelopment of the site.

The design, layout and building density will surpass contemporary, technology, science and business, parks and provide a model for other urban RIS's in the region and possibly across the UK. It will build on the success of the existing technology park and will create a distinct flagship development. A high quality environment with high-density layout and an attractive public realm will be required to reflect the overall Longbridge design principles. .

The site will provide a variety of employment opportunities in support of the High Technology Corridor, including manufacturing activities, studios and laboratories. Flagship technology and science research facilities and headquarter offices will be particularly welcomed. The policy also allows for some other offices and supporting services and ancillary uses including training, conference and meeting facilities and a small hotel.

The RIS will also promote and facilitate links with the college in the local centre and provide its own training and learning opportunities to benefit the local workforce to benefit

Based upon the experience of other technology sites in the UK, a key factor in attracting occupiers is the establishment of clear delivery strategy and mechanism (involving a range of key partners) to stimulate technological innovation and attract new businesses.

**What people said about the RIS**

Feedback from the Central Technology Belt Board suggests that there is considerable latent demand for technology space within the West Midlands with market take-up driven by:

- The quality of transport infrastructure (road and rail)
- The provision of shared services (e.g. from secretarial support in business incubators through to shared intranets between companies)
- The proximity to local services and shops
- Quality landscaping and treatment of open space
- The development of 'whole day' on site services – allowing employees to access childcare, convenience shopping and leisure / recreational opportunities in one place
- A comprehensive approach to site marketing, promotion and business support providing investor confidence.

Consultation with various stakeholders has reinforced the importance of the RIS over the medium and long term in assisting in the restructuring of the local and regional economy - providing jobs for now and for the future. However, consultation feedback has also indicated the need to be pragmatic about the types of uses, which can be developed on the RIS in the short- term and exact mix of business and industrial uses.

**Proposal RIS1: Regional Investment Site (RIS) - on north works car park and majority of west works.**

### Land uses

The RIS will comprise the following:

- A minimum area of 25 ha gross, (The existing technology park is included in this site).
- A floorspace and use class breakdown for new development of:
  - A technology park of at least 15ha to provide minimum of 100,000 sq m of B1b (research and development) / B1c (light industry) and B2 (general industrial), high quality high technology uses which support the objectives of the RIS. Also subject to:
    - B1b (research and development) and B1c (light industrial uses) should be at a minimum build density of 7,500 sq.m. per hectare.
    - B2 uses should be located towards the rear of the site adjacent to Great Park and where a satisfactory relationship to nearby residential can be achieved.
  - A maximum of 25,000 sq m of B1a (office) for firms that support the high technology sector and the objectives of the RIS. Subject to:
    - B1a uses should mainly occupy sites located on the Bristol Road South frontage, south of the internal spine road for the RIS.
    - B1a uses should be at a minimum build density of 7,500 sq.m. per hectare.
  - A maximum total of 10,000 sq m of floorspace for a limited number of small-scale services and amenities primarily for use of staff and businesses and integrated into the development i.e. meeting and conference facilities, cafes, sandwich shops and newsagents, crèche, small gym and small hotel.

### Movement

The development will provide a bus priority route through the site linking the to the new centre and Rubery Lane (Proposal T ), pedestrian and cycle routes (Proposal T ) a network of internal streets (Proposal T ) improvements to the A38 Bristol Road South (Proposal T ) site access (Proposal T ), the majority of parking in multi-storey, decked and undercroft car parks (Proposal T). Other relevant proposals and policies in the Movement Strategy will also apply.

### Environment open space and landscape

The development will provide enhancement of the River Rea (Proposal OS ), flood storage measures (Proposal OS ),loner open space walkway along the river(Proposal OS) other open space to serve the development (Proposal OS ), Other relevant proposals and policies in the Environment open space and landscape Strategy will also apply.

### Design requirements

This will be a high quality with buildings in a landscaped environment to create distinctive and unique identity and environment. Development to

comply with the other design principles in policy S3.

**Sustainability requirements**

All development to comply with the sustainability requirements detailed in policy S1 and S2.

**Planning Process, Site Implementation and Delivery**

Requirements for planning applications and planning obligations including a tariff that will apply to the development are set out in the implementation section D. The planning tariff includes funding for a number of social economic and other measures such as support for skills, training and business development programmes.

In order to ensure the effective delivery of the RIS a scheme of delivery and management shall be prepared by the site owner in consultation with, Advantage West Midlands, CTB Birmingham City Council and other relevant stakeholders e.g. the University. The scheme of delivery and management shall be submitted for approval of the Local Planning Authority on or before submission of the first application for building on the RIS. The scheme will cover the following;

- Planning and phasing
- Development of a business plan for the site including a scheme of management
- Monitoring of take-up rates and sector compositions
- Site identity and marketing to provide a unique and positive image for the site that will attract high quality investment
- Occupier and business support services (including measures to ensure good access to supporting facilities for the workforce such as shops and leisure uses),
- Support for business innovation and technology development
- Measures to ensure that work opportunities are available to all sectors of the community including links with training providers and provision of training programmes for those living in areas of need.
- Asset management including ongoing waste, energy, water and pollution audits
- Public realm and landscape management
- Site security and staff training

The scheme shall ensure that the site is used for purposes that meet the RIS objectives of attracting high quality technology related investment to diversify the economy. It will set out the measures to be established to provide effective control of uses.

The monitoring information collected on floorspace and site take-up will form part of the annual monitoring framework for the AAP.

## **Regional Investment Site – At a Glance**

### **Summary**

Establishment of a high quality 25ha employment site, which is attractive to inward investors and provides a range of space for technology sector firms assisting in the long term restructuring of the local and regional economy.

### **AAP Objectives**

Supports objectives 1-7, 9-11

### **Policy Context and Justification**

- **Regional Spatial Strategy-** Policies PA1 Prosperity for all, PA3- High Technology Corridors, PA6 Portfolio of employment land, PA7 Regional Investment sites also RSS Review Preferred Option PA7- Regional Investment sites, and Policy PA13B and para 7.34 and 7.35
- Birmingham Unitary Development Plan- para 4.31 and 4.32A to 4.32C
- **Birmingham City Community Strategy-** supports strategic themes of Prosperous City and National and International City
- Birmingham City Economic Strategy,
- **West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy** supports business objectives
- **Sustainability appraisal** notes significant economic regeneration benefits. AAP includes recommended mitigation measures.
- Public consultation support for employment led approach with 25ha RIS
- Existing planning consent for a 15ha technology park and B2 uses establishes principle of this use
- AAP background study on employment land sets out justification for floorspace limits and mix of uses in the RIS.

### **Future Options and Contingency**

The scheme of management will be used to monitor land use and floorspace make-up. This information will also form part of the annual AAP monitoring framework / review and will be utilised to inform future decisions about the composition of land uses and floorspace take-up within the RIS and the degree of flexibility required to attract new occupiers.

## **PROPOSAL H1- HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO THE RIS**

### **Overview**

The land to the rear of the RIS at west works and partly fronting Bristol Road South is proposed for housing.

The West Works site presents an opportunity to contribute towards the growth of the city's population and provide a range of housing, which reflects projected demand including a minimum of 35% affordable housing.

This site will provide a high-density residential scheme in an attractive environment with a new neighbourhood on the River Rea corridor providing a focal point for the development. The site will benefit from its highly desirable location with easy access to services in the new local centre and to adjoining employment opportunities and to high quality public local transport. The development will adopt the highest sustainability standards, demonstrating best practice in sustainable housing design and quality open space.

### **What people said about housing**

Local people were supportive of the need to provide a mix of housing types including affordable and market level housing. Comments were also made about the need to build flexible housing, which adapts to changes in user requirements.

There was also an interest expressed in providing a suitable level of open space and social services / facilities including school places to support new housing schemes.

### **Proposal**

Specific details on the housing proposal are detailed below.



## **Proposal H1: Residential and associated uses adjacent to the RIS**

### **Land Uses**

The site xx ha will be developed for approximately 350 dwelling houses (Class C3) comprising a mix of sizes, types and tenures. It will include 35% affordable housing and a mix of types and sizes across the site. Density to be in the region of 50-60 dwellings per hectare. New homes will also be encouraged to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard, allowing homes to be accessible for all including young, old, single or in families, non-disabled or disabled.

Other appropriate uses will be:

- Residential institutions e.g. nursing home, residential care home (Class C3)
- Live work units based on a floorspace split of 50% residential and 50% workspace

### **Movement**

The development will provide a dedicated bus route through the site linking to the new centre and Rubery Lane (Proposal T), pedestrian and cycle routes (Proposal T) a network of internal streets (Proposal T). Other relevant proposals and policies in the Movement Framework will also apply.

### **Environment open space and landscape**

The development will provide enhancement of the River Rea (Proposal OS), flood storage measures (Proposal OS), a new neighbourhood park (Proposal OS) linear open space walkway along the river (Proposal OS) other open space to serve the development (Proposal OS). Other relevant proposals and policies in the Environment open space and landscape Framework will also apply.

### **Design requirements**

All development to comply with the design principles set out in policy S3

### **Sustainability requirements**

All development to comply with the sustainability requirements detailed in policy S1 and S2.

### **Planning Process**

Requirements for planning applications and planning obligations including a tariff that will apply to the development are set out in the implementation section D. This also includes requirements for educational facilities, to serve the development.

## **West Works Housing - At a Glance**

### **Summary**

Mixed housing area which maximises opportunities for sustainable development and quality building design and layout

### **AAP objectives-**

Supports objectives: 1-6,13 and 14

### **Policy context and Justification**

- **Regional Spatial Strategy** Policy CF1 Housing within the Major Urban Area, CF3 Levels and distribution of housing development,- CF 4 the re-use of land and buildings for housing- CF 5 Delivering affordable housing and mixed communities and CF6 Managing Housing land provision
- Birmingham Unitary Development Plan
- **Birmingham Community Strategy**-Supports strategic theme of securing a well housed city.
- **Sustainability appraisal** support for new housing as it delivers benefits in terms of helping to renew the local housing market, providing additional affordable homes in a sustainable location. Mitigation measures include in AAP.
- **Public consultation** support for mixed use employment led option including housing on this part of west works site
- **AAP Housing report** and Employment Report set out justification for housing use and loss of industrial/employment land

### **Other options / contingency**

- The use of part or the entire site as an employment site could help provide an increased number of jobs .

## **PROPOSAL H2- RESIDENTIAL AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT ON THE FORMER EAST WORKS SITE**

### **Overview**

4.31 The land formerly known as East Works to the south of Groveley lane is allocated for new residential development. This 19ha site will provide a mixed density residential scheme in a highly attractive rural environment adjacent to the green belt and with new local facilities, public open space and enhanced River Arrow.

4.32 The site presents an opportunity to provide a range of housing, which reflects projected demand including a minimum of 35% affordable housing.

4.33 The existing neighbourhood centre and public transport facilities will be improved and enhanced to serve the development and new shops, services and community facilities provided.

4.34 The development will also adopt high sustainability standards, demonstrating the best practice in sustainable housing design and quality open space.

**Proposal H2 Residential and associated community and local retail uses on east works, and the adjoining neighbourhood centre at Groveley Lane. .**

#### **Land Uses**

The site will be developed for the following uses:

- Dwelling houses (Class C3) a minimum of 700 dwellings with a mix of sizes types and tenures across the site. 35% dwellings to be affordable. Density to be a minimum of 40 dwellings per hectare across whole site. New homes will also be encouraged to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard, allowing homes to be accessible for all including young, old, single or in families, non-disabled or disabled.
- Expanded neighbourhood centre to provide essential local services, including small scale shopping facilities. Land on Groveley Lane reserved for, new library, community centre and public meeting rooms.

Other appropriate uses will be:

- Residential institutions e.g. Nursing Homes, Extra Care Village/Extra Care Housing (Class C3)
- Health centre, day nursery, place of worship (Class D2) to be located at northern end of site

#### **Movement**

The development will provide, pedestrian and cycle routes (Proposal T ) a network of internal streets with provision for local buses (Proposal T ). Other relevant proposals and policies in the Movement Strategy will also apply.

#### **Environment open space and landscape**

The development will provide for opening up the River Arrow through the site (Proposal OS) a new neighbourhood park adjacent to the River Arrow with any necessary flood storage measures (Proposal OS ), other open space to serve the development (Proposal OS ), protection of the green belt and landscape buffer (Proposals OS xx and xx). Other relevant proposals and policies in the Environment open space and landscape Strategy will also apply.

#### **Design requirements**

All development to comply with the design principles set out in policy S3. Additional design Principles for the east works housing site:

- The northern section of the site to be developed to higher densities
- Southern section of the site to be developed at lower densities in order to protect the visual amenity of the surrounding Green Belt and Landscape Protection Areas. Visibility of site from

surrounding areas to be addressed.

- **Development to be two and three storeys in the northern section with two storey developments to the south.**

**Sustainability requirements-**

**All development to comply with the sustainability requirements detailed in policy S1 and s2.**

**Planning Process**

**Requirements for planning applications and planning obligations including a tariff that will apply to the development are set out in the implementation section D. This includes requirements for educational facilities, community facility with community room/library and health facilities.**

**At a glance**

**Summary-** a well designed quality mix of housing in a highly attractive setting supported by local services and facilities.

**AAP objectives-**

Supports objectives 1-6, 13 and 14

**Policy context and Justification**

- **Regional Spatial Strategy** Policies CF1 Housing within the major urban areas, CF3 levels and distribution of housing development, CF4 the reuse of land and buildings for housing, CF 5 Delivering affordable housing and mixed communities and CF6 Managing Housing land provision. In line with RSS policies of focussing new housing within Major Urban Areas and will contribute to meeting Birmingham's population growth needs. Site is being treated as functionally part of the MUA. RSS Review Preferred Option Para 6.13
- **Bromsgrove District Local Plan (BDLP)- S7 New Dwellings Outside the Green Belt**
- **SPG1 Bromsgrove Residential Design Guide SPG11 Outdoor Play Space in the District of Bromsgrove.**
- **Bromsgrove Draft Sustainable Community Strategy-** The regeneration of the former MG rover Sites is one of the key aims of the Strategy.
  - **Worcestershire community strategy**
  - **Sustainability appraisal** - support for new housing as it delivers benefits in terms of helping to renew the local housing market, providing additional affordable homes in a sustainable location. Mitigation measures include in AAP.
  -
- **Public consultation** support for residential scheme on former east works site
- **AAP Housing report** and Employment Report set out justification for housing use and loss of industrial/employment land
  - **AAP Community needs study** identifies requirements for community, education and other facilities to serve the development

**PROPOSAL EZ 2 NANJING**

Nanjing Automotive Company has potential to make a significant contribution to the city and region's economy. NAC has indicated that they wish to continue car manufacturing and to ensure that the land uses adjacent to their boundary do not restrict their core manufacturing business. The continued occupation of the site by NAC is therefore supported. Proposals for further car production and other related manufacturing activities will be encouraged, including activities that intensify production and increase jobs to make more efficient use of the landholding.

NAC's current lease allows land to be handed back to St Modwen where surplus to operational requirements. At the current time this could include land located at the northern end of the site adjacent to the local centre and on the Lickey road frontage. The Area Action Plan supports the continued allocation of employment uses on potential surplus sites subject to compatibility with NAC's operations and other nearby land uses.

## **Proposal EZ2 Nanjiing**

### **Land uses**

**The site is allocated for employment uses within Class B1b) and c), Class B2 and Class B8.**

**Should surplus land within the site become available, future uses will be considered within the context of the overall aims of the AAP and the adjoining land uses**

### **Design and environmental requirements**

- **Due to site topography existing and new buildings will be visible over long distances. Unless otherwise agreed for arboricultural reasons existing trees should be retained and new development should include proposals for tree planting to screen development. The choice and quality of materials and elevational treatment must minimise visual impact of the development.**
- **New development on the Lickey Road and Groveley Lane frontages must provide a strong frontage and must be of an appropriate scale - around 4 storeys.**
- **New development should integrate with the development on site EZ1.**

### **Movement**

**Access to be from Lickey Road and car parking to be provided within the site. Relevant proposals and policies in the Movement Strategy will also apply. Linkages through the site will also be considered as opportunities arise including a pedestrian route adjacent to the railway to link site H2 to the local centre, station and transport interchange**

### **Sustainability requirements-**

**All development to comply with the sustainability requirements detailed in policy S1 and S2.**

### **Planning process**

**Requirements for planning applications and planning obligations including a tariff that will apply to the development are set out in the implementation section D.**

<b>At a glance</b>
<b>AAP objectives</b> , -supports objectives 7,8 and 10
Policy context and Justification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regional Spatial Strategy</b>- policy PA1 Prosperity for all, PA5 Employment areas in need of regeneration</li> <li>• <b>Sustainability Appraisal</b> –notes benefits for local employment.</li> <li>• <b>Birmingham Community Strategy</b>- supports strategic theme Prosperous City</li> <li>• <b>Birmingham UDP</b> – industrial land- protection of industrial land in line with policies.</li> </ul>

**PROPOSAL EZ3 EMPLOYMENT USES ON THE COFTON CENTRE SITE**

The Cofton centre site has potential for early development to provide a range of new employment opportunities for general and light industry and warehousing through re-use of the existing Cofton Centre building and new development on the areas formerly used for open storage.

<p><b>Proposal EZ3: Cofton Centre</b></p> <p><u>Land Uses</u> The site will be developed for uses within Class B1(b) and (c) B2 and B8.</p> <p><u>Movement</u> The development will provide for the retention of the road improvement line (proposal T). Other relevant proposals and policies in the Movement Framework will also apply</p> <p><u>Environment open space and landscape</u> The development will provide for protection of the green belt and landscape buffer (Proposals OS xx and xx). Other relevant proposals and policies in the Environment open space and landscape Strategy will also apply.</p> <p><u>Sustainability requirements-</u> All development to comply with the sustainability requirements detailed in policy S1 and s2.</p> <p><u>Planning process</u> Requirements for planning applications and planning obligations including a tariff that will apply to the development are set out in the implementation section D.</p>
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<b><u>At a glance</u></b>
<b><u>AAP objectives-</u></b>

Meets objectives 7,9, and 10

#### **Policy context and Justification**

- **Regional Spatial Strategy- policy PA1 Prosperity for all and PA6 Portfolio of Employment land**
- **Bromsgrove District Local Plan (BDLP)** retention of industrial land in accordance with policies in BDLP.
- S7 New Dwellings Outside the Green Belt**
- **Bromsgrove Draft Sustainable Community Strategy.**-The regeneration of the former MG Rover Sites is one of the key aims of the Strategy.
- Worcestershire community strategy
- **Public consultation** support for employment used on cofton centre site
- **Sustainability appraisal** support for new employment. Mitigation measures incorporated in AAP.
- **AAP employment land** study sets out justification employment land
- Planning permission granted for industrial and warehousing uses

## **5 MOVEMENT STRATEGY**

### **Overview**

As part of delivering a sustainable eco-centre the Longbridge AAP sets ambitious targets to achieve a significantly higher proportion of all journeys on foot, by cycle and via public transport than comparable developments. In order to achieve this objective, the scheme will need to be supported by excellent sustainable transport / movement infrastructure.

A detailed travel demand model and a highway model underpins the movement analysis. This has helped to establish key road and junction improvements and public transport improvements required to support the development and cater for additional trips and vehicle movement

The AAP also recognises the importance of various strategic transport proposals and drivers, including:

- The opportunity to develop a Strategic Park and Ride site serving commuters and visitors in the Longbridge and North Worcestershire areas
- The relationship of the AAP site to surrounding villages and neighbourhoods (including Frankley, Cofton Hackett and beyond)
- The location of the site within the A38 High Technology Corridor.

The approach to developing a movement framework has been to consider best practice in delivering sustainable communities and applying this to the methodology for addressing transport requirements for the AAP and the surrounding area.

A comparison has been made of current modal share of journeys against potential approaches in similar edge of city developments where a sustainable approach has been achieved. Targets for achieving much higher levels of access by sustainable modes including internal and external trips have been set at challenging levels - this requires a step change in the practices of residents and businesses.

To assist in achieving modal shift and improved access requires improvements to public transport services, infrastructure provision, restrictions on levels of parking and travel promotion. The following background reports have been prepared to help achieve these changes - Bus Strategy, Rail Strategy, Travel Management Strategy, and a Highways Infrastructure and Planning Strategy. These strategies identify measures that will help address the 10-12,000 trips in the peak hours that the developments will generate. They have been prepared with the involvement of highway authorities, transport operators and planning bodies.

### **Community and Stakeholders Priorities**

#### **What people said about transportation**

Community feedback on transportation matters was varied and often divided. However, it is possible to identify several key headlines:

- Ensuring that Longbridge is well connected with public transport allowing people the opportunity to access facilities / service with ease within the scheme and also providing a high degree of accessibility to / from other locations.
- Providing a higher priority to pedestrian and cyclist routes within new developments.
- Ensuring that the development does not cause unreasonable levels of congestion on surrounding roads and avoids high levels of 'overflow' car parking, particularly within residential areas
- Need to be progressive in transportation proposals – identifying opportunities for the better integration of transport modes

### **Site Proposals**

The background reports referred to above have resulted in the following key movement proposals. these are illustrated in the Movement Strategy Plan.



## **Proposals- Movement Strategy**

**T1 – A network of accessible pedestrian and cycle routes - through the whole development including routes shown on the Movement Framework plan (routes along and across the River Rea (as part of National Cycle Network Route 5), and River Arrow, a north south route through east works linking to Cofton Church Lane). These include routes along the primary, secondary and tertiary movement routes. Higher levels of pedestrian and cycle segregation will be needed on primary routes with more shared arrangements on tertiary. Pedestrian and cycle routes are also to be well linked into the wider area including Frankley, Egghill, and Cofton Hackett and public rights of way. The Strategic cycle route along A38 and Lickey Road will be retained improved.**

**Cycle and pedestrian facilities including cycle parking, storage and associated facilities, seating within public places and other appropriate locations.**

**T2- Bristol Road South (A38) and Longbridge Lane retained as part of strategic highway network. The primary and secondary movement routes on the Movement Framework Plan will be recognised.**

**T3 -Network of streets within the site organised into an access hierarchy comprising primary and secondary streets broadly illustrated on the Movement Framework and Land Use Proposals Map. All routes to provide for pedestrians and cyclists. This network will also include:**

- A dedicated bus route or bus priority street route through site linking Frankley with the public transport interchange. To incorporate a bus priority across the A38.**
- A shopping street in the retail quarter linking the urban park with the public transport interchange and Longbridge station which is designed to meet the following principles:**

- Priority given to pedestrians, cyclists and (where appropriate) buses on the main shopping street and in and restricting and reducing the dominance of road traffic throughout the local centre
- Shared surfaces and investing in the public realm and spaces
- Coordinated public transport and well designed pedestrian routes
- Enabling street spaces to be used for different functions at different times of the day
- A De-cluttered simple street layout

**T4- Improved network of bus routes, connections and services including**

- Extensive quality local rapid services within site,
- Improved radial service to city centre
- Re-routed city / Bromsgrove services, access to long distance
- Improved access to services through new transport interchange
- High quality local network including improvements to serve Frankley.

**T5- Public transport interchange - this will comprise a high public transport interchange facility on Longbridge Lane and in the new centre. It should provide easy, safe and convenient transfer between bus and rail and the proposed park and ride facility and a safe, and pleasant waiting environment. This will be designed in accordance with the following principles/ to incorporate the following:**

- Bus stopping facilities with quality shelters, bus turning facilities, real time/electronic passenger information
- Attractive, direct and safe pedestrian routes from the interchange into the new centre, into the station, along Longbridge Lane and into existing residential areas.

**T6- Improvements to Longbridge Station – including improved pedestrian access to and within station and upgraded passenger facilities and facilities to accommodate additional services. Feasibility work will continue to consider whether in the longer term there will be a case for moving the station south of Longbridge Lane and providing park and ride facilities south of Longbridge Lane. (This could involve reconfiguration of the proposed multi storey car park south of Longbridge Lane)**

**T7 Strategic Park and Ride north of Longbridge Lane - this will be designed in accordance with the following principles:**

- A minimum of 850 spaces for park and ride users only
- An attractive direct, safe pedestrian link into the station and access to the public transport interchange
- An attractive well designed building with high quality elevational treatment and an active ground floor frontage e.g. small retail units
- Arrangements for parking to serve the Sports and Social Club and Nursery

**T8- Highway improvements and site access – Highway and/or junction improvements on the A38 Bristol Road South and at Tessall Lane, Lickey Road, Lowhill Lane, Longbridge Lane and Groveley Lane. These measures include widening, signal controlled junctions, bus priority measures, access points, bridge work, (including an improved bridge on Groveley Lane) and access into the local centre from Longbridge Lane and an improved Lickey Road junction at the points shown on the Movement Framework. The A38 to be designed to create a tree-lined boulevard with attractive pedestrian and cycle facilities.**

**T9– Car parking – A multi storey car park is proposed to serve the local centre. The majority of parking spaces for RIS to be located in multi storey or decked car parks. There will be no site extensive surface car parking and parking should not be visible from the public realm. Car parking standards are set out in Appendix xx. BCC’s Car Park Design Guide will apply. Car park management plans to be prepared to promote shared use of car parking.**

**T10 – Access points – the main road access points into the new development are shown on the Movement Strategy Plan and will be constructed to an appropriate standard. An adoption regime will be agreed.**

**T11- A package of measures to encourage sustainable travel including a Travel coordinator to achieve targeted modal share by public transport, walking and cycling.**

**T12– Offsite Improvements to the local rail network - comprising improvements to services, Bromsgrove Station and Redditch Station in accordance with the Rail strategy.**

**T13- Off site improvements to Longbridge Lane comprising improved junctions with distributor roads, the A441 and minor improvements to alignment. These improvements to be the subject of further public consultation.**

**T14 – Offsite improvements to Strategic Road Network – including turning and junction improvements to Junction 4 M5 and where necessary M42 junctions.**

**T15 Off site traffic management measures and residents parking zones needed as a result of the development including traffic management in Hopwood, on residential roads around the Plan area and roads off Longbridge Lane.**

<b>At a glance</b>
Policy Context
Justification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AAP background studies on Bus Strategy, Rail Strategy, etc</li><li>• UDP policies</li><li>• RSS policies –Policies T1 to T8 but particularly T2 - Reducing the need to</li></ul>

travel, T3 - Walking and Cycling, T6 Strategic Park and ride, T7 - Car Parking Standards and Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worcestershire Community Strategy</li> <li>• Birmingham Community Strategy- supports strategic themes – Prosperous City, Connected City</li> </ul>

**ENVIRONMENT, OPEN SPACE AND LANDSCAPE STRATEGY**

**Overview**

Open spaces are one of the fundamental building blocks of new developments. They sit alongside building form and movement frameworks as a key component in place-making.

The environment, open space and landscape strategy seeks to enhance the network of open spaces, and open up the River Rea and River Arrow across the site.

It also recognises the importance of Cofton Park as a valued, versatile and well-used amenity area, which continues to play an important role in the local community. This xx ha site is one of the largest parks in Birmingham and was first opened to the public in 1936. The park is primarily grassland, but includes the following important physical features and facilities:

- A Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC)
- A range of football and cricket pitches
- The former Lowhill Farm dwelling and outbuildings
- A green waste recycling centre
- A horticultural centre with associated greenhouses.

The Park is a unique local amenity and has played and continues to play an important role in the economic and social history of the Longbridge area. The park is also been the focal point for a range of events, rallies and gatherings.

**Community and Stakeholders Priorities**

<p><b>What people said about open space</b></p> <p>Members of the community felt very strongly about the need to open-up the River Rea across North Works. They were also keen for the development to establish / re-establish good connections through the development to areas of countryside and green belt.</p> <p>Particularly strong views were also expressed about the need to preserve existing ecology, wildlife and green features. And</p>
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where possible, improve opportunities for bio-diversity and nature conservation.

Members of the local community were also particularly keen to ensure that developments provided good levels of public open space. As noted earlier there was particular support for the urban park in the local centre and the West Works facility.

**What people said about Cofton Park**

The park received a high level of feedback during the consultation exercises. The majority of people did not want to see additional development on the park or to lose the open space character of the landscape. However, there was a wide range of interest in improving facilities in the park including better play pitches, new toilets and improved changing rooms.

There was also an interest expressed in recognising the wider history and community role of the park, but a general feeling that the Austin Heritage Centre would be better located within the new local centre than the park itself.

**Site Proposals**

The key proposals are detailed below and illustrated in the Environment open space and Landscape Strategy.

## **Proposals**

### **OS1 Cofton Park and the adjacent privately owned land at the corner of Lowhill Lane and Lickey Road**

**A comprehensive masterplan, implementation strategy and management plan will be developed for the overall park, which will assist in fine-tuning the priorities identified below. A separate feasibility study will be undertaken looking at the potential use and re-use of existing farm buildings with the park.**

- **The protection and enhancement of the Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation and open spaces, including the effective management of existing vegetation and trees**
- **Improvements to sports and recreational facilities including:**
  - **Upgrading and installing drainage across all sports pitches**
  - **Enhancing and providing protective fencing to all cricket wickets**
  - **The provision of improved changing rooms and accessible toilets**
  - **Improvements to footpaths, seating, planting facilities for informal recreation and the need for additional play and sports facilities to serve the new development.**
- **Improvements to Cofton Nursery, to include the possible refurbishment or rebuild to the middle section of the nursery to include an educational area with small shop function for visitors and a space to house and display national plant collections**
- **Enhancements to the Green Waste Facility to include the possible provision of additional space and services as well as an improved one-way traffic management system**
- **The incorporation of privately owned land at the corner of Lowhill Lane and Lickey Road into the park facility.**

**OS2 – Development of two major linear open spaces/greenways through the site –opening up the River Rea and River Arrow, with associated improvements to wildlife habitats, landscaping and the provision of cycle and pedestrian routes along the walkways and good quality links to the wider area. Proposals should create a recreational resource; contribute positively to bio-diversity and recognise the historic and archaeological value. In detail this includes:**

- **West works- enhancement of the open channel including, improvements to the profile and beds. The Rea through west works will also continue to be protected and enhanced as a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation. A floodwater storage area within the new park to address flood risk associated with the River Rea.. Good quality attractive and safe landscaped/open space walkways and cycle routes to be provided alongside the whole length of the river including the link across the A38 to the local centre. North works – Opening up the majority of the River Rea through the site and provision of Walkway and Cycleway alongside river. This route to continue through the retail quarter to**

**Daffodil Park via Tessell Lane.**

- **This together with improvements in West Works will provide a continuous route from Rubery Lane to Daffodil Park, completing a key missing link in the city's Linear Open space walkway network. This will also allow for the extension of the River Rea Heritage Trail.**
- **Removal of the culverted section of the River Arrow through East Works site, allowing the creation of a natural and continuous river corridor with ecological and landscape features and open space. Laying out of Arrow Valley Walkway comprising an east west route along the River Arrow through the East Works site linking to the public footpath network in the wider area – including re-opening the footpath link under the railway**

**OS3 – The development of a new urban park acting as the focal point for the new local centre. In detail this will include:**

- **A naturalised river course running through the centre of the park, providing space for wildlife**
- **A mix of hard and soft landscaping that is durable and meets the needs for a variety of uses.**
- **Formal waterside landscaped areas**
- **Walkways and cycleways through the park with good links along the River Rea walkway to West Works park and Daffodil Park**
- **Informal recreational areas with seating and art features**
- **Wildlife areas and tree planting**
- **Formal boundary treatment defining the park and urban landscape**

**OS4 – Establishment of two major neighbourhood parks, namely**

- **West Works Neighbourhood Park - A public neighbourhood park either side of River Rea that meets national Green Flag standards of quality. It will include landscaped areas and usable open space that is large enough and suitable for a number of functions:**
  - open space of recreational value incorporating planting, grassed areas, seating, pathways, signage, and play facilities appropriate for young children and teenage age ranges.
  - An improved River Rea –see below- and associated and measures to enhance nature conservation value and address flood risk
  - A walkway with walking and cycling routes along the River Rea
  - Archaeological interpretation incorporating information boards
  
- **East Works local park - A public open space that meets national Green Flag standards of quality that has recreational value incorporating landscaped areas incorporating flowers, shrubs and trees, seating areas, appropriate numbers waste and dog bins, good quality signage, pathways for walkers/dog walkers and cyclists, and if appropriate playing pitches and adventure play facilities appropriate for young children and teenage age ranges appropriate for the following functions:**
  - Formal and informal recreational use
  - Floodwater storage areas.
  - Contribute to the biodiversity of the site by providing green corridors linking the MUA and the River Arrow to the rural land beyond.

**OS5 – Austin Sports and Social Club and its playing field will be protected. Appropriate car parking facilities retained or re-provided.**

**OS6 – A network of small recreational neighbourhood parks and informal recreational areas to serve the development, including where appropriate open space within employment areas to meet the needs of employers and workers.**

**OS 7 -Environmental improvements (tree planting, paving) and traffic management along Grovelley Lane, Lowhill Lane and other areas within vicinity of site e.g. Parsonage Drive. Environmental enhancements within existing centres at Longbridge Lane/Sunbury Road and Grovelley Lane/Parsonage Drive.**

**OS8 –The above open spaces will meet the majority of needs of the development for open space and local play facilities.. However needs for sports facilities/playing fields, multi games and other recreational facilities and open space to meet the standards set out in the B'ham UDP and Bromsgrove District Local Plan will need to be met off site through improvements to existing open space in the vicinity- particularly Cofton Park and Cofton Community Park/Recreation Ground .**

**OS 9 – The following site wide landscape and biodiversity strategies and plans will be prepared:**

- A comprehensive and integrated site wide landscape strategy to



include the network of green spaces, buildings and spaces around buildings that are of landscape, amenity and biodiversity value, and are linked to river corridors and the wider countryside. This will include principles relating to detailed planting schemes, surfaces, lighting and street furniture as well as identifying locations for boulevard planting particularly along roads and the character and landscaping treatment of the River Rea and River Arrow.

- A linked biodiversity strategy to address enhancements of existing habitats, new habitats related to the open spaces and buildings etc.
- A landscape and biodiversity management plan

**OS10 – A management plan will be required for all the parks, open space and public areas within the AAP area.**

**OS11- The local culture and history (including archaeology) will be considered in drawing up proposals for the environment and open space. In addition archaeological investigations and recording will be required prior to and during development to enable the study of significant archaeological remains within the site – particularly along River Rea Corridor where there are significant paleoenvironmental remains. Historic interpretation of the site in publicly accessible areas (e.g interpretation boards) will also be required.**

**OS12 A public art strategy will be prepared for approval. This will address the provision of public art to add variety and interest to the visual environment and help to create sense of place. Public art should be an integral part of the public realm and buildings in key locations particularly in the new local centre, in the new parks and at the transport interchange (including street furniture, bridges, art on buildings, lighting, sculpture, surface treatments etc.**

**OS 13- Contamination and site remediation -Initial assessments of land contamination have been carried out for the Area Action Plan. Further full assessments will be required with any development proposal together with appropriate treatment/remediation of the site/sites. Assessment and risk based remediation strategy to return the site to the required quality for new uses.**

**OS 14 Flooding- no development will be permitted on sites LC1-4, RIS1, H1 and EZ1 until measures are in place to prevent flooding associated with the River Rea. No development will be permitted in site H2 until appropriate measures have been put in place for the River Arrow.**

**OS15- Mitigation measures- measures to mitigate the impact of the development on the landscape, open space, recreation and nature conservation value of the area will be required. This will include off site enhancements to River Rea Corridor, enhancement to the Reservoir adjoining the western boundary of site H2, measures to manage increased pressure on the countryside e.g. improvements to paths and pedestrian access, ecological mitigation and enhancements e.g. at Balaams wood, Rubery Hill.**

**OS 16-Impact on green belt- The existing Landscape buffer around the site EZ3 and H2 will be protected. It will be managed and enhanced with native planting to maintain and enhance screening of the site. to ensure that developments protect and enhance the adjoining green belt and adjacent areas of landscape value.**

**OS 17 Green Belt- Existing green belt area at the southern end of site H2 will be maintained as a landscape buffer. No land other than that identified on the proposals map shall be used for new development, encroachment into the green belt will not be permitted, other than for uses identified in PPG2 green belts.**

#### **At a glance**

##### **Justification**

- Regional Spatial strategy policies- QE1 Conserving and enhancing the environment QE2, Restoring Degraded areas and managing and creating high quality new environments, QE3 Creating a high quality environment for all, QE4, Greenery, Urban space and public spaces. QE9 the Water , 2,3,4,9.
- Bromsgrove Draft Sustainable Community Strategy
- Worcestershire Community Strategy
- Birmingham Community Strategy- supports strategic themes –City for culture sport leisure, A green city.
- Birmingham UDP sets out overall policies for protection and enhancement of open space, and identifies network of linear open space walkways including River Rea.
- Baseline study on River Rea examines options and concludes that option in AAP is most appropriate and feasible for this site.
- AAP Background studies – ecology, open space,
- Sustainable Management of Rivers and Floodplains SPD

## **Part D Delivery and Implementation**

It is clear from Government guidance that a key feature of Area Action Plans should be their focus upon implementation. As well as clearly identifying the distribution of land uses and site-specific development proposals, associated infrastructure and other improvements as set out in Part C of this plan the AAP should set a broad timetable for their delivery and implementation.

Accordingly it is important that the proposals within the Longbridge AAP are both deliverable and viable within the timeframe of the AAP. In addition, Area Action Plans should also act as wider 'catalysts for change' and have a strong role to play in stimulating regeneration in its widest sense including focusing the delivery of area based regeneration initiatives and socio-economic programmes.

### **Understanding Viability**

The implementation of the Longbridge AAP will be very dependent upon:

- Commercial interest in the types and mix of land uses proposed
- The levels of onsite constraints and development costs
- Financial returns on re-mediated land and packaged sites

A detailed viability model has been established for the Longbridge AAP, which underpins and supports the proposals established in this document. An 'open book' approach has been taken with the main developer to broadly agree the variables within the model. The model has enabled the local authorities to:

- Establish the principal costs associated with the development and better understand end scheme values and site phasing.
- Take into consideration the development costs of the sustainability standards detailed in Sustainability Strategy
- Build in major infrastructure requirements and mitigation measures
- Balance overall costs against return and identify break even

A summary of the model is provided in Appendix xx and forms part of a technical baseline report on viability and deliverability.

### **Ensuring a Sustainable Development**

The redevelopment of Longbridge will result in 10,000 jobs, over 1400 new dwellings and approximately 3,500 new residents. This creates a need for a range of essential physical and community infrastructure and other measures, without which:

- There will be a detrimental effect on local amenity and the quality of the environment.
- New developments will not be able to operate efficiently
- Opportunities to make a positive contribution towards meeting the day-to-day needs of the population may be lost

In terms of planning obligations, these may require the developer to carry out certain prescribed works to provide the appropriate infrastructure and measures. (e.g. requiring that a certain proportion of housing is affordable); compensate for loss or damage created by the development (e.g. loss of open space) and / or mitigate the negative impacts of a development and to ensure that it makes a positive contribution to the communities within which it is situated (e.g. through increased public transport provision). Many of these types of obligations are identified in the site-specific proposals in Section C of the Plan. This is in line with Planning Obligations Circular 05/05.

The local authorities have agreed a planning contributions model, which consists of both traditionally negotiated s.106 elements, such as affordable housing, and a simple Community

Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in line with the Planning Bill (2007), to support the development of the area.

. This approach has several advantages including:

- Providing clarity and certainty for developers over the scale of planning contribution requirements
- Providing certainty for existing local residents and businesses that new development will make a fair contribution towards minimising the detrimental impact of schemes on local amenity and the quality of the environment
- Providing the opportunity for strategic and joined-up thinking that connects spatial planning with site phasing, delivery plans and business planning
- Providing a range of essential infrastructure at the right time in the implementation of the development.

The planning contributions model also sits alongside a package of s.278 and S38 agreements for the private sector funding of works on local and strategic roads as required by proposals in the Movement Strategy. The s.278 agreements will provide a well-tested financial mechanism for ensuring delivery of mitigation works identified and determined as necessary for planning permission to be granted. Table xx provides information on key s.278 requirements as part of the AAP.

In addition, agreements will be required under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 for roads to be adopted within the development sites. There will be further standard agreements for sewers, footways, structures etc.

Table xx: s.278 scheme requirements

Item	Rationale	Phasing
A38 Road Improvements (between Colmers Farm and The Roundabout)	Requirement has emerged from traffic modelling work. Includes A38 improvement, junction works and street trees.	Links with River Rea Re-profiling: 2009-2011
Longbridge Lane	Requirement has emerged from traffic modelling work. Includes on and off site improvements to Longbridge Lane (including junction improvements, modest widening and improvements to A441 roundabout) and any appropriate traffic management measures on adjacent roads. Also includes environmental enhancements at Sunbury Road centre and street trees.	2010 – 2012.
Groveley Lane	Requirement has emerged from transportation work and includes bridge works, junction improvements, street trees, crossings and lighting. Also includes environmental enhancements in centre at Groveley Lane / Parsonage Drive	2009 – 2010 links to early phase of East Works redevelopment
Tessell Lane	Requirement has emerged from traffic modelling work and includes junction improvements at A38.	2009 – 2011 to tie in with A38
Lickey Road and Lowhill Lane	Requirement has emerged from traffic modelling work. Includes realignment of Lickey Road at A38 junction, junction improvements at Lickey Road/Lowhill Lane, environmental works on Lowhill Lane including street trees	2010 – 2012 links to completion of East Works 1 <sup>st</sup> phase
Parsonage Drive Area	Improvements identified by local residents. Traffic calming and access improvements	2011 – 2012 links to completion of East Works 1 <sup>st</sup> phase
M5 Junction 4 and M42 Jn 1 & 2	Requirements have emerged from traffic modelling work to include junction work and approach roads.	2013 – 2014 links to completion of local centre
A441 Hopwood	Improvements identified by traffic modelling to include traffic management measures, crossings and other works between the M42 and Longbridge Lane.	2010 – 2012 links to completion of East Works 1 <sup>st</sup> phase
Bus station/interchange – Longbridge Lane	Supported in bus strategy, to include quality facilities with new passenger waiting facilities, real time information points, taxi waiting areas, bus turning facilities and strong physical connections to Longbridge Railway Station	2010 – 2012 to tie-in with other Longbridge Lane improvements

## Longbridge Planning Contributions: In Detail

The planning contributions associated with the AAP are split into traditionally negotiated agreements and a supporting CIL, which covers both residential and non-residential elements of the development.

Negotiated elements

The key negotiated elements of the scheme include:

- Establishing 35% affordable housing across the site
- Securing space for community, library, health, recreational and cultural facilities within the overall development, including the provision of The Austin Centre and space within it and provision of a site for Cofton Hackett Library/ Community Centre
- Securing an appropriate level of affordable business space
- Establishing requirements for site specification and phasing of river infrastructure (River Rea and River Arrow)
- Establishing requirements and specification for the urban park and local neighbourhood parks, walkways and cycleways
- Agreements covering design and construction standards for residential and non-residential buildings
- Ensuring that carbon emissions from development are minimised in line with the area wide sustainability strategy
- Agreements on overall site phasing, upfront infrastructure and timing of reserved planning application matters
- Securing 15 year open space and local centre / town centre management agreements
- Triggers for payment of CIL contributions, longstop dates when outstanding payments are due, as well as indexation of levy contributions.

Community Infrastructure Levy

With regard to the CIL, community infrastructure has been defined by the joint charging authorities (Bromsgrove District Council and Birmingham City Council) as 'infrastructure of local and strategic importance to the delivery of sustainable developments'. Table xx below summarises an indicative schedule of community infrastructure requirements, required to support the Longbridge AAP. Further information on the Community Infrastructure requirements including outline costs, information sources and methods of calculation is detailed in Appendix xx.

Table xx: Community Infrastructure Requirements

<b><u>Themes and Components</u></b>	<b><u>Rationale</u></b>	<b><u>Phasing</u></b>
<b>Public Transport</b>		
Longbridge Railway Station	Supported in Rail Strategy to include re-fit and upgrading of existing station and to accommodate additional services	2010 to 2012 to link to Longbridge Lane improvements
Rail service and infrastructure improvements – Longbridge/ Bromsgrove and Redditch	Identified in Rail Strategy. Key focus upon enhanced track capability to allow more stopping services at Longbridge Station and beyond. Also includes enhanced stations and services.	Spring 2013 – Spring 2015 to tie in with completion of local centre and first phase of RIS
Bus Service Improvements	Supported in Bus Strategy to include network of extensive quality local	Introduced for Summer 2011 Timetable to include

	services within the site, the redirection of existing services and improved longer distance services. Bus service improvements also include dedicated infrastructure within the development to serve Frankley.	early trial of Buzz Bus network
<b>Physical Social, Recreational and Ecological Infrastructure</b>		
Education and childcare – Nursery, Creche, Primary and Secondary Schools	Priorities identified in Community Infrastructure Baseline to meet demand / needs of proposed new dwellings to include investment in existing school facilities and new pre-school services.	New Facilities from Spring 2010.
Public Art	Identified in cultural baseline - site wide public art infrastructure with maintenance support.	From Spring 2009 to coincide with highways works
Cofton Park- open space, recreational, community and visitor facilities	Community and various baseline support improvements including enhanced play pitches, multi-use games area, landscape improvements, site drainage, and ecological measures. Other priorities include the re-use of Lowhill Farm for community use with changing facilities and toilets; enhancement of Cofton Green Waste Recycling Centre and Cofton Horticultural Centre with improved customer facilities and greenhouses.	Spring 2009 – 2011 to partly coincide with opening of first release of East Works housing
Other off site open space enhancements, recreational improvements, walking / cycling routes and ecological mitigation	Various baseline identified priorities including: - Improvements to Lickey Hills footpaths, pools, gardens, site interpretation, car parking and visitor centre - Compensatory ecological mitigation and enhancement measures required to include improved access through Balaam's Wood and woodland management, enhancement to reservoir adjacent to east works site - Improved access to and through Rubery Hill together with heathland restoration - Woodland management along River Rea and Callow Brook - Multi-use games area in Allan's Cross - Multi-use games area and children's play area at Barcheston Recreation Ground - Development of a sustainable fishing venue at Rubery Balancing Lake - Development of new enhanced Cofton Community Park - Surface, lighting and access	Spring 2009 – 2012 to partly coincide with opening of fist release of East Works housing.

	<p>improvements to River Rea Walkway and Cycle Route and other strategic cycling / walking routes associated with the Longbridge site.</p> <p>- Measures to mitigate increased pressure on surrounding green belt / countryside including footpaths in the vicinity of Cofton Hackett and Bittell Reservoir</p>	
<b>Social, community, economic and transport measures</b>		
Local Employment and Training Agreements	<p>Strong community priority. Support for the development of Work Based Co-ordinators to assist in securing employment and skills development for local people as part of the construction phases of the development and with end site occupiers. This may also include working with firms on other skills / workforce development initiatives including environmental management systems.</p>	<p>Autumn 2008 linked to approval of first planning applications for construction works.</p>
Enterprise and Business Support	<p>Community and Socio-economic baseline priorities. Support for local business surgeries and coaching as well as social enterprise development. Links to affordable business space, local centre small retail units and RIS.</p>	<p>Spring 2010 linked to start of works on mixed use and employment quarters.</p>
Safer Communities	<p>Community priorities and baseline report priorities. Contribution towards roll out of local crime and disorder projects, fire prevention programmes, community warden network and neighbourhood policing.</p>	<p>To start with Spring 2010 Programme Timetable linked to early residential developments.</p>
Healthy living and sports development	<p>Identified through various baselines and consultation – contribution towards innovative and partnership-led health outreach services and facilities to support healthy living initiatives with local residents and employers. Support for active living and commuting projects as well as sports development programmes connected with Cofton Park.</p>	<p>To start with Spring 2010 Programme Timetable linked outreach work ahead of new centre opening.</p>
Lifelong Learning	<p>Socio-economic Baseline identified issues – support for local learning initiatives focused upon basic skills, family learning, young people, older learners and links to further and higher education and new library services.</p>	<p>To start with Spring 2010 Programme Timetable. Linked to opening of new Cofton Library.</p>
Community Cohesion and Inclusion	<p>Socio-economic and EINA priorities – support for local citizenship programmes and further role out of District Community Plan projects.</p>	<p>To start with Spring 2009 Programme.</p>
Heritage and Culture	<p>Cultural baseline identified issues – support for project officers and programme of directed and informal</p>	<p>To start with Spring 2009 Programme – strong links with development of new</p>



	cultural activities including poetry and live literature events, tours, music programmes, storytelling, exhibitions, arts development, sports clubs, carnivals, festivals and holiday programmes. Strong links to The Austin Centre and Cofton Hackett Library / Community Centre.	library and The Austin building.
Sustainable transport and off-site mitigation	Funding for travel plan co-ordinator. Required to achieve the target modal share. Also green travel plans, car clubs, car-share and individualised travel plan initiatives. Residents' parking schemes also required to minimise street parking in adjoining residential areas.	Co-ordinator to be introduced by 2010. Other improvements as scheme progresses.
S.106 and Community Infrastructure Levy Administration	Administrative costs associated with managing and monitoring s.106 agreement and CIL. Standardised % formula adopted.	Autumn 2008 linked to first approved planning permissions for construction.

A significant number of the Community Infrastructure requirements will need to be delivered upfront and at certain phased intervals in the overall development schedule. This means that the planning contributions model will require a degree of forward funding to support regeneration and development. The role of a 'banker' is essential to fund infrastructure and bridge the cash flow gap between scheme expenditure and income. The income will be obtained through the application of a levy on residential and non-residential development.

The rate established for the CIL is detailed below in Table xx, which covers both residential and non-residential elements of the scheme. A *de minimus* level of 5 dwellings has been set for the residential component of the levy and a minimum of 0.1ha gross for non-residential sites.

Table xx: Community Infrastructure Levy

Residential	£ per dwelling
1 bedroom	
2 bedroom	
3 bedroom	
4 bedroom	
5 bedroom plus	
Non Residential	£ sqm
A1 Supermarket	
A1 Shops (other) – A5	
B1 a Office	
B1 b / c R&D / Light Industry	
B2 Industrial	
B8 Storage & Distribution	
C1 Hotels	
C2 Residential Institutions	
D1 College	
D2 Leisure	
Sui Generis	

All financial contributions will be 'indexed linked' from April 2008, in accordance with the methodology set out in the AAP Glossary. The timing and phasing of levy payments is established below:

#### Residential

- 10% upon implementable planning consent
- 15% on commencement on site
- 75% on a quarterly basis after the first completion is sold

#### Non-Residential

- 25% upon commencement on site
- 25% before the completion of each unit
- 50% prior to the occupation of each unit

### **Development Phasing**

The planning and phasing of the Longbridge development needs to be carefully managed and structured to minimise disruption to local businesses and residents. It also needs to follow the guiding principle that services, facilities and infrastructure will be provided at stages in the development process when the need for them is programmed to arise and not towards the middle or end of a scheme.

#### **Needs to be structured into a clear chart**

The key estimated development phases are detailed below:

#### Site Remediation

- North and West Works Site Remediation: Spring 2008 – Summer 2009
- East Works: Spring 2008 – Summer 2009

#### Highways Works, Transport Infrastructure and River Networks

- A38 Road Improvements and River Rea Profiling: 2009 – 2011
- River Arrow Profiling: Spring 2009 – Spring 2010
- other improvements see above tables

#### Development Construction and Key Physical Community Infrastructure

- North Works Learning Quarter: Spring 2009 – Summer 2011
- North Works Retail Quarter: Spring 2009 – Autumn 2011
- North Works The Austin Building: Summer 2010 – Summer 2011
- North Works Mixed Use Quarter: Summer 2010 – Summer 2014
- North Works Longbridge Health Centre: Summer 2010 – Summer 2011
- North Works Employment Quarter: Spring 2010- Summer 2014
  
- East Works Phase 1 (Residential): Spring 2009 – Spring 2012
- East Works Library / Community Building: Spring 2009 – Spring 2010
- East Works Phase 2: Spring 2012 – Spring 2015
  
- West Works Housing: Spring 2010 – Spring 2014
- West Works RIS Phase 1: Spring 2010 – Spring 2012
- West Works RIS Phase 2: Spring 2012 – Spring 2017

- West Works RIS Phase 3: Spring 2018+
- Cofton Park Improvement: Spring 2009 – 2011
- Other Open Space and Recreational: Spring 2009 – Spring 2012

An outline housing trajectory for the overall development is detailed below in Table xx.

Table xx: Longbridge Housing Trajectory

	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013 / 2014	2014 / 2015
Projected Completions Total	150	400	400	450	400	200
Market Housing	97	260	260	293	260	130
Affordable Housing	53	140	140	157	140	70

## Planning Applications

### Application history – context to input

The Longbridge development is a fairly complex scheme with a number of phased planning application requirements. Broadly the forward process includes:

- Detailed planning applications for site remediation, earth works, servicing, infrastructure River Rea re-profiling, A38 Highways works and site access covering both North and West Works
- Detailed planning application for site remediation, earth works, servicing and infrastructure covering East Works.
- Detailed planning applications for Units 3 and 5 of the existing technology park
- Outline application for North and West Works, supported with detailed masterplan for both areas, with supporting design codes, transport assessment, environmental statement, retail assessment, construction management plan and any other supporting information as required by the planning authority. Reserved matters to be signed-off as the plan progresses..
- Outline application with supporting masterplan for East Works. Six phased detailed applications with supported design codes, transport assessments, construction management plans, sustainability assessment and supporting documentation to follow.

The transport and environmental assessments will need to cover the cumulative impact of all development in the AAP area, including North Works, West Works, East Works, Cofton Centre and the existing technology park.

## Partnerships and Co-ordination

The plan has been developed in partnership with a wide range of local people, organisations and stakeholders over the last 2-3 years.

It is now apparent that as the plan moves forward from production to implementation there is a need to clearly set out the key delivery partnerships. These are briefly outlined below with principal responsibilities:

- Longbridge Implementation Group – day-to-day responsibility for the plan development, delivery plans, implementation and monitoring. Programmed to meet on a monthly basis with membership to include BCC, BDC, WCC, St. Modwen and AWM as well as a range of other stakeholders.

- Longbridge Consultative Group – local stakeholder and resident partnership. Important supporting role in plan implementation and development. Key future role in conjunction with the Future Forum in project implementation. Meets on a bi-monthly basis and ensures links to District LSP and political committees.
- Longbridge Future Forum – local resident group with key role in plan development and project implementation.
- Longbridge Skills and Employment Partnership (LSEP) – cross partnership organisation with no formal legal structure responsible for ensuring the delivery of local employment, training and skills targets, includes representatives from Job Centre +, Learning and Skills Council, BCC, Further and Higher Education and specialised skills training and development organisations.

There are three main Local Strategic Partnerships which cover the AAP area. In addition to topic reporting to various meetings and existing relationships through the various groups detailed above it is intended that the Longbridge Strategy group will provide an annual update to each partnership linked in with the annual monitoring requirements of the plan.

Additionally although not a formal partnership, St. Modwen is also preparing a scheme of delivery and management for the RIS in consultation with AWM, CTB, BCC and other relevant stakeholders including local Universities.

### Implementation, delivery mechanisms and Programme

A summary implementation plan linking proposals to delivery is outlined below. The table also makes reference to risk assessment and scheme phasing as detailed above..

<b>AAP Proposals and Policy</b>	<b>Responsible bodies</b>	<b>Delivery mechanisms</b>	<b>Delivery Funding</b>	<b>Land use and planning issues</b>	<b>Phasing and Timetable</b>	<b>Risk Assessment</b>
Proposal LC1- and LC2 Learning Quarter	Landowner/Bournville College,	Planning applications	-LSC, - Bournville College, AWM, -S106 agreement	Requires integrated approach with other developments in local centre, River Rea enhancements, urban park and provision of access	Start on site 2008 following completion of remediation works. Completion 2010	Lack of co-ordination and focus. Insufficient resources
Proposal LC1- and LC3 Retail, Quarter	Landowner/Private Sector	-Planning applications - Private organisations programmes  - S.106 agreements	-Private sector	Requires integrated approach with other developments in local centre, River Rea enhancements, urban park and provision of access	Start on site 2008 following completion of remediation works. Completion 2011 onwards	Downturn in the economy combined with continued competition from on-line retailers
Proposal LC1 and 4-Mixed use quarter including housing, heritage	Landowner/Private sector	-Planning applications - Private organisations programmes - S.106 agreements	-Private sector - RSL	Requires integrated approach with other developments in local centre, River Rea	Start on site 2008 following completion of remediation works.	Development risk spread across range of land uses.

building, offices				enhancements, urban park and provision of access		
Proposal EZ1	Landowner/Private sector	-Planning applications - S.106 agreements - Business support programmes	- Private sector	Requires integrated approach with developments in local centre, and provision of access	Start on site 2008 following completion of remediation works.	- Downturn in economy - Low take-up of space
Proposal RIS 1	Landowner/Private sector with RIS management and delivery body	-Planning applications - S.106 agreements - Business support programmes	-Private sector - AWM - CTB	Requires integrated approach with River Rea enhancements, flood compensation measures, and provision of access	First phase start on site 2010	- Downturn in economy - RIS competition from other locations - Low take-up of technology space - Ineffective marketing
Proposal H1 – Housing on West works	Private sector/RSL	-Planning applications - S.106 agreements	-Private sector - RSL	Requires integrated approach with, River Rea enhancements, flood compensation measures, provision of neighbourhood park and provision of access	Start on site 2010	Stagnation in market for private sector housing or too much housing coming onto market in area at same time
Proposal EZ2 Nanjing	NAC / Landowner	Planning applications	Private sector	Need to balance employment uses with compatible land uses across the site	Handback of surplus land agreed in 2007	Large proportion of the site dominated by single employer. Stiff competition and potential downturns in automotive industry.
Proposal EZ 3- Cofton Centre	Private sector / landowner	Planning applications	Private sector	Need to provide quality well connected built environments associated more traditional employment uses.	Planning applications approved in 2007. Work ongoing.	Economic downturn.
Proposal	Private	Planning	Private sector	Requires	Start on site	Stagnation

H2- East works housing	sector / RSL	applications including site masterplan s.106 agreements	/ RSL	coordinated integrated approach and attention to River Arrow corridor and community facilities.	2009.	in market for private sector housing or too much housing coming onto market in area at same time
Movement framework	Public / Private Sectors	Planning applications s.106 and s.278 agreements	Private Sector / Local Authorities / Highways Agency / Centro / Network Rail / Funding Programmes	Needs highly co-ordinated approach with appropriate infrastructure provided at the right time to serve the development	Start on site 2008	Poor patronage of public transport. Lack of resources.
Environment Open Space and Landscape Framework	Landowners / Public Sector / Private Sector	Planning applications / s.106 agreements	Private Sector / Local Authorities / Funding Programmes	Needs comprehensive masterplan for Cofton Park and appropriate implementation and management plans	Start 2008 following completion of remediation works	Lack of sufficient resources and maintenance.

## Monitoring

The implementation of the Area Action Plan will be monitored on an annual basis against the plan's objectives detailed in Part B. Table xx sets out a series of indicators against which progress will be monitored.

Also needs to cross reference RSS / SA Outputs

AAP Themes and Objectives	AAP Proposals and Policy	Core outputs	Indicator Cross References	Information Collection Requirements	Lead Responsibility
<b>Sustainable Development</b>					
Obj. 1- Sustainable communities		Percentage of people surveyed who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together  The extent of individuals' a) participation and b) active involvement in voluntary and community activities	Home Office Quality of Life Indicator  Home Office Citizenship Survey	Requires Community Survey  Requires Community Survey	BCC / BDC  BCC / BDC
Obj. 2 – Sustainable buildings		Renewable energy capacity installed by type.  Number of residential units compliant with CSH 4 (2008)  Number of commercial developments compliant with BREEAM	BCC LDF Core Output Indicator 9  AAP Local Indicator  AAP Local Indicator	Needs to be compliant with LDF reporting requirements (BCC / BDC)  Planning applications and building regulation information  Planning applications and building regulation information	BCC / BDC  BCC / BDC  BCC / BDC

		Excellent Standard			
Obj. 3 – Quality connected open spaces		Number of eligible open spaces managed to “green flag award” standard	Links to BCC LDF Core Output Indicator 4c.	Needs to be compliant with LDF reporting requirements (BCC / BDC)	BCC / BDC
		Provision of open space:	BCC LDF Local Indicator 4d.	Needs to be compliant with LDF reporting requirements (BCC / BDC)	BCC / BDC
		(i) Net loss/gain in amount of public open space and public and private playing fields;	BCC LDF Core Output Indicator 8(i)	Needs to be compliant with LDF reporting requirements (BCC / BDC)	BCC / BDC
		(ii) Percentage of new dwelling completions within reasonable walking distance of public open space.	BCC LDF Core Output Indicator 8(ii)	Needs to be compliant with LDF reporting requirements (BCC / BDC)	BCC / BDC
	Change in areas and populations of biodiversity importance, including: change in priority habitats and species (by type)				
	Change in areas and				



		populations of biodiversity importance, including: change in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value including sites of international, national, regional or sub-regional significance			
Obj. 4 – Sustainable Movement	MF	<p>Percentage of completed non-residential development complying with car-parking standards set out in the local development framework.</p> <p>Percentage of trips by public transport into Birmingham City Centre</p> <p>% of trips across all transport modes to / from AAP area: a) walking, b) cycling, c) bus; d) train; e) car</p>	<p>BCC LDF Core Output Indicator 3a.</p> <p>BCC LDF Local Indicator 3c.</p> <p>AAP Local Indicators</p>	<p>Needs to be compliant with LDF reporting requirements (BCC / BDC)</p> <p>Needs to be compliant with LDF reporting requirements (BCC / BDC)</p> <p>Annual travel survey by travel plan co-ordinator</p>	<p>BCC / BDC</p> <p>BCC / BDC</p> <p>Travel Plan Co-ordinator</p>
Obj. 5 – Place management		% of users satisfied / very satisfied with local	<p>AAP Local Indicator</p> <p>AAP Local</p>	Visitor Satisfaction Survey	Local Centre Manager

		centre facilities  % of users satisfied / very satisfied with public spaces	Indicator	Visitor Satisfaction Survey	Local Centre Manager
<b>High Quality Places</b>					
Obj. 6 – Excellence in Design		% of users satisfied / very satisfied with build form	AAP Local Indicator	Visitor Satisfaction Survey supported by CABE review	St. Modwen / BCC / BDC
<b>Economic Transformation</b>					
Obj. 7 – Regional Investment		- Numbers of jobs created or safeguarded	RDA Core Output	Planning application information submission Annual occupier telephone survey	BCC / BDC
Obj. 8 – Protection of employment land		Losses of employment land in development/regeneration areas	BCC LDFCore Output Indicator 1e.	Needs to be compliant with LDF reporting requirements (BCC / BDC)	
Obj. 9 - RIS		Amount of land developed for employment by use type.  RIS a) Number of businesses attracted to RIS and b) Quantity of Floorspace Let  - Number of businesses within region assisted to engage in new collaboration	BCC LDFCore Output Indicator 1b  AAP Local Indicator  RDA Core Output	Needs to be compliant with LDF reporting requirements (BCC / BDC)  RIS partnership group  RIS partnership group	RIS Partnership Group  RIS Partnership Group

		s with the UK knowledge base			
Obj. 10 – Accessible employment and training		- Number of people assisted to get a job	RDA Core Output	Longbridge Skills and Employment Group	LESG
Obj. 11 – Supporting local enterprise		- Number of new businesses created and demonstrating growth after 12 months - Number of businesses attracted to the region	RDA Core Outputs	Annual Business Survey	BCC / BDC
<b>A New Heart for Longbridge</b>					
Obj. 12 – Mixed Use Local Centre		Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development.	BCC LDF Core Output Indicator 4a	Needs to be compliant with LDF reporting requirements (BCC / BDC)	
<b>Homes for the Future</b>					
Obj. 13 – Delivering new homes		Longbridge housing trajectory i ) net additional dwellings since the start of the AAP (ii) net additional dwellings for the current year; (iii) projected net additional dwellings up to the end of the AAP (iv) the annual net additional dwelling and (v) annual average number of net additional dwellings needed to meet overall	BCC LDF Core Output Indicator 2a  BCC LDF Core Output Indicator 2c.	Needs to be compliant with LDF reporting requirements (BCC / BDC)  Needs to be compliant with LDF reporting requirements (BCC / BDC)	BCC / BDC

		<p>housing requirements, having regard to previous years' performances</p> <p>Percentage of new dwellings completed at:  (i) less than 30 dwellings per hectare;  (ii) between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare;  (iii) above 50 dwellings per hectare.</p>			
Obj. 14 – Mixed and affordable housing		Affordable housing completions	BCC LDFCore Output Indicator 2d.	Needs to be compliant with LDF reporting requirements (BCC / BDC)	BCC / BDC

## APPENDIX 1

**Regional Spatial Strategy-** the AAP is being prepared in the context of Regional Spatial Strategy xxxx. It also takes account of the RSS Phase 2 Revision Preferred Option. It is in general conformity with these.

**Core Strategies-** Both Birmingham and Bromsgrove are still preparing their Core Strategies. However in view of the urgent need to secure the regeneration of Longbridge following the collapse of MG Rover, both local authorities agreed to prepare this AAP in advance of their core strategies.

### **Birmingham Unitary Development Plan 2005**

This is the statutory development plan for the whole of Birmingham, including the northern part of the AAP area. This plan has been “saved” xxxxxx plan The Longbridge AAP is in conformity with the policies in the Part 1 of the UDP (with the exception of part of para 6.30). It will however replace the policies and proposals that relate to the MG Rover Plant at Longbridge in part 2 of the UDP.

### **Bromsgrove District Local Plan 2004 and Worcestershire Structure Plan 1996-2011.**

These documents from the statutory development plan for the southern part of the AAP area that lies within Bromsgrove. xxxxxxxx

### **List of UDP policies to be superseded by the Longbridge AAP**

- Para 19.8- second bullet point. Delete “to continued investment in the MG Rover Longbridge Para 19.19B- delete
- Plant, and to the”
- Para 19.9- delete “including the reopening of the line of the old Longbridge to Halesowen railway to serve Rubery and Frankley”
- Para 19.9A- delete “as identified in the Longbridge Framework”
- Para 19.19 – delete
- Para 19.19A- delete
- Para 19.19B- delete
- Para 19.19C- delete
- Para 19.19D- delete
- Para 19.35- delete first sentence
- Chapter 19- List of proposals. Delete “passenger rail services are proposed to be re-introduced to serve Rubery and Frankley, and
- Para 6.30-delete “Rubery and Frankley including park and ride facilities, and”
- Figure 6.1- delete reference to Possible introduction of passenger services between Longbridge and Frankley/Rubery.

### **Other policies/proposals superseded**

### **LTP policies**

- **Longbridge Link Road-**
- **Rail link to Frankley**



# **SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL AND STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE LONGBRIDGE AREA ACTION PLAN SUBMISSION DOCUMENT**

## **Non Technical Summary**

December 2007

**Introduction**

This document is a summary of the Sustainability Report which has been produced as part of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Longbridge Area Action Plan (AAP) Submission Document. A full version of the Sustainability Report is available to download from the Birmingham City’s and Bromsgrove District’s websites:

- [www.birmingham.gov.uk/longbridgeaap](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/longbridgeaap)
- <http://bromsgrove.gov.uk>

**What is a Sustainability Appraisal?**

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a process that looks at the extent to which plans contribute to the achievement of a set of objectives that cover environmental, social and economic considerations.

**What is a Strategic Environmental Assessment?**

The SEA process aims to ensure that likely significant environmental effects arising from plans and programmes are identified, assessed, mitigated, communicated and monitored, and that opportunities for public involvement are provided. It enables plan-making authorities to incorporate environmental considerations into

decision-making at an early stage and in an integrated way.

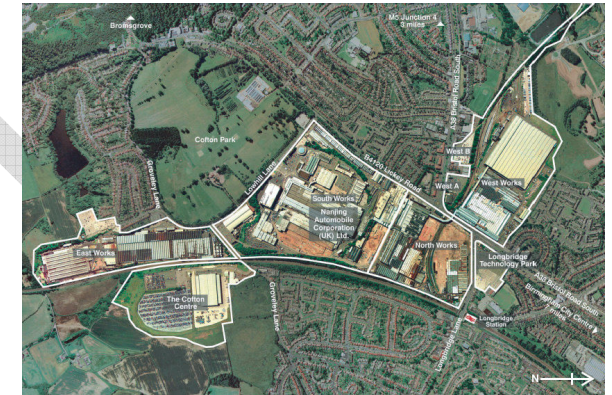
The Longbridge AAP falls within the scope of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) on 'the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment', and the UK SEA Regulations 2004. The SEA Directive is an important advance in planning and environmental law. The objective of the Directive is to: *“Provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development”*.

**What is the Longbridge AAP?**

The Longbridge AAP sets out the detailed planning framework for regeneration of the former MG Rover works in Longbridge. The AAP aims to guide the future development of the area, using the available land in the most effective way. This involves considering the proposed land uses in the previous Longbridge Development Framework (LDF) and other policy documents, consulting with the local community on current needs and priorities and taking advice from technical development specialists about what is possible. Some proposals in the LDF are

already being developed, such as the Longbridge Technology Park.

A plan of the AAP area is shown in Figure 1.



**The SA Process**

The SA process involves five stages, described below: *Table 1: The five stages of SA*

SA stages	
A	Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope.
B	Developing and refining options and assessing effects.
C	Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report.
D	Consulting on the preferred options of the AAP and Sustainability Report.
E	Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the AAP.

A more detailed methodology is presented in the full version of the Sustainability Report.



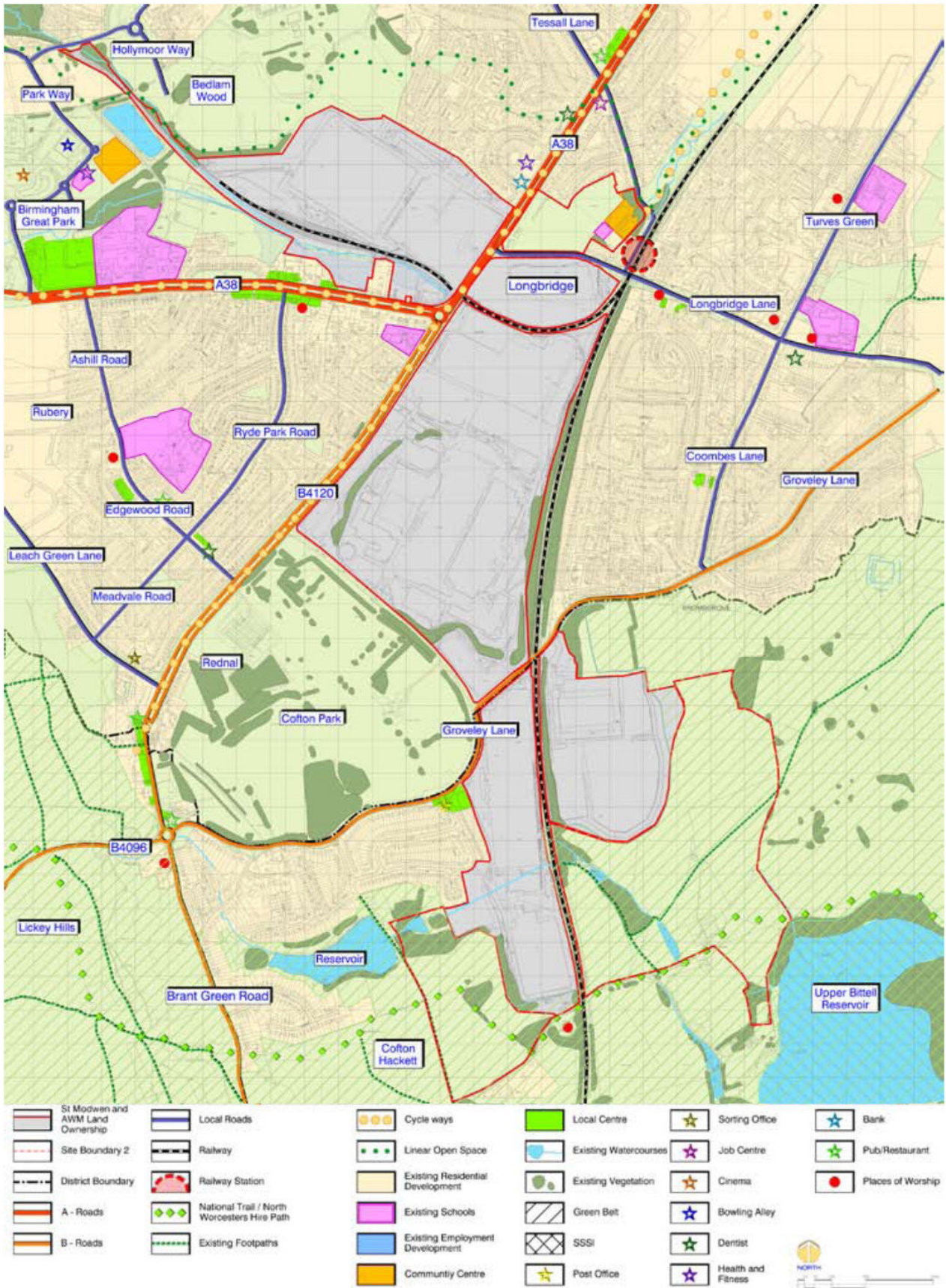


Figure 1: Existing AAP area layout

### SA and the Longbridge AAP

The SA was carried out alongside, and has interacted with, the development of the Longbridge AAP. This approach helps ensure that any potential adverse social, economic and environmental effects that the plan may have are identified and mitigated against, or removed. In some instances it also highlights opportunities for the Longbridge AAP to improve the social, environmental or economic conditions.



### SA Consultation

Public involvement through consultation is a key element of SA and SEA. The SEA Regulations set specific requirements for consultation with the Statutory Consultation Bodies, as well as the public and 'other interested parties'.

In England, the Statutory Consultation Bodies are:

- English Heritage;
- Environment Agency; and
- Natural England (formerly English Nature and the Countryside Agency).

The consultation period for the Sustainability Report will span a six week period from XXX to XXX.

### What does the Sustainability Report Contain?

A key product of the SA process is the Sustainability Report, which contains:

- An outline of the main objectives of the programme and its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes that may influence or be influenced by the Longbridge AAP;
- Baseline information about the environmental, social and economic characteristics of the Longbridge area;
- An appraisal of strategic alternatives (options);
- Any relevant existing social, environmental and economic problems affecting Longbridge;

- The SA objectives and the way the objectives and any social, environmental and economic considerations have been taken into account;
- The likely significant effects on the environment (biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, landscape and the inter-relationship between the above factors);
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant social, environmental or economic adverse effects as a result of the strategy; and
- A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring.

### What does this Non-Technical Summary Contain?

This Non-Technical Summary contains:

- Information about plans and policies relevant to the Longbridge AAP;
- A summary of the key environmental and sustainability issues in the area;
- The main objectives of the AAP;
- The SA objectives used to assess the selected options of the AAP;



- A summary of the likely significant social, environmental and economic effects of the AAP;
- Mitigation measures for aspects of the AAP identified as having significant adverse environmental effects, together with general best practice recommendations;
- Monitoring proposals; and
- Details of the consultation on this Sustainability Report and how to respond with comments and/or questions.

#### Plans and Policies Relevant to the AAP

The Longbridge AAP is influenced by a range of other policies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives. It also needs to be consistent with national guidance, regional policy, strategic and local planning policies. The Sustainability Report contains a review of the relevant policies, plans and programmes.

#### Key Sustainability Issues within Longbridge

Key environmental and sustainability issues in the Longbridge area have been identified and are shown below. The full baseline study is detailed in the Sustainability Report.

- Public transport and the traffic generated by construction and operation of the development;
- Climate change and energy consumption, and the need to significantly reduce carbon emissions consequent of all new development;
- Air quality and local environmental quality, and how they are impacted by construction and operation of the development;
- Incorporating biodiversity within the new development and enhancing the ecological value of the area;
- Water and resource efficiency during construction and operation of the new development;
- Reducing the risk flooding from water courses, as well as surface water flooding, and improving water quality; and
- Reducing waste generated during construction and operation of the development, and increasing the re-use and recycling of waste.



#### AAP Objectives

The objectives identified for the AAP are as follows:

- To establish sustainable communities, which embody the principles of sustainable development and meet social, economic and environmental needs in a balanced and integrated way and meet the needs of existing and future generations.
- To be at the forefront of sustainable development with commercial buildings, community facilities and housing which showcase excellence in all aspects of environmental sustainability. A key aim is to achieve carbon neutral standards within the lifespan of the scheme.

- To establish a rich tapestry of quality connected open spaces, and river corridors across the Longbridge development, which provide for visual amenity, recreational use, nature conservation value and address flood risk requirements across the plan area, and to protect the historic environment.
- To implement an integrated and sustainable transport infrastructure strategy for Longbridge, which secures appropriate investment in key public transport improvements and road infrastructure and supports the effective management of sustainable travel patterns across the site.
- To implement a comprehensive programme of management for the development, including a local centre management plan, management of open spaces and the public realm.
- To achieve excellence in design through the creation of high quality developments and design that helps create a real sense of place with buildings, streets, spaces, features and facilities of which people are justifiably proud.
- To support the continued development of Longbridge as a regional investment location for industry and employment, securing economic diversification and business growth, providing 10,000 jobs, protecting existing employment and providing a long-term sustainable job environment.
- To support the protection of land for general industrial uses including the Nanjing Automotive Corporation (NAC) site and Cofton Centre.
- The development of a 25ha Regional Investment Site (RIS) which is attractive to high profile regional, national and international investors as well as a major location for high technology businesses.
- To ensure that employment opportunities are accessible to all and assist in securing the provision of employment and training opportunities for local residents, with no investment being lost for the lack of suitably qualified and skilled people.
- To support a local culture of enterprise, entrepreneurial activity, innovation and sustainable business growth and development.
- To create a sustainable mixed-use centre for Longbridge, which meets local needs by providing a range of quality retail, commercial, leisure, education and residential uses and establishes a distinctive sense of place and heart for the community.

- To deliver a minimum of 1,400 new dwellings to help meet existing and future housing needs and to create a sustainable mixed-use community.
- New homes will provide a mix of type, size and tenure including affordable housing, high density layout appropriate to the location of the site and be designed to highest standards that aim is to achieve carbon-neutral standards within the lifespan of the scheme and, where appropriate, to achieve lifetime homes standards.

### SA Objectives

SA objectives have been formulated and used as a recognised way of considering the sustainability effects of a plan and comparing alternatives to it.

The SA objectives have been developed taking account of environmental protection and sustainability objectives identified in other plans, programmes and legislation. The results of baseline data collection and identification of opportunities and constraints also feed into the development of objectives.

Eighteen SA objectives (see in Table 2) were developed in consultation with the Statutory Consultees and relevant stakeholders.

Table 2: SA Objectives used to assess the preferred options in the AAP

SA Objective	
1	Reduce poverty and social exclusion, promote a strong community where people feel they have a say in the future, and encourage equitable accessibility to services.
2	Improve health and reduce health inequalities by encouraging and enabling healthy lifestyles and protecting health, as well as providing equitable access to health services and high quality open spaces, sports and recreational facilities.
3	Improve community safety, and reduce crime, antisocial behaviour and the fear of crime.
4	Support the local community by maximising use of local labour and support adaptation to changing employment circumstances. Encourage investment and engagement to support learning and raise levels and diversity of skills.
5	Encourage regeneration and economic growth in and around Longbridge that does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs, and improve equitable access to job opportunities.
6	Promote and support the development of new technologies, particularly those with high value and low impact, to encourage enterprise and innovation with a sense of environmental and social responsibility.
7	Make efficient use of the existing road network and reduce dependence on private vehicular travel. Prioritise modal shift to equitable, accessible, sustainable, and integrated forms of public transport, cycling and walking, and increase the provision of public transport networks and passenger facilities. Avoid adverse impacts on the motorway network by providing access appropriate to the required levels of growth.

SA Objective	
8	Optimise the use of previously developed land and buildings where possible and practical, remediate contaminated land and create high quality built environments that incorporate a network of accessible interconnected sites and green spaces, enhance biodiversity and maximise opportunities for achieving BAP targets, and promote local distinctiveness and sense of place.
9	Provide high quality affordable housing, ensuring that all new buildings are environmentally sound and meet BREEAM standards.
10	Use renewable sources of energy and encourage energy efficiency, use resources prudently, making the most of local availability, and reduce contributions to climate change.
11	Conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the historic, industrial and cultural heritage of Longbridge and the surrounding area.
12	Maintain and enhance the quality and character of landscape and townscape.
13	Reduce air pollution and improve air quality.
14	Protect, enhance and increase the biodiversity of Longbridge and the surrounding area.
15	Protect water resources and improve water quality.
16	Avoid increasing, and take opportunities to reduce flood risk, and prepare for other impacts of climate change.
17	Minimise waste creation and optimise the re-use and recycling of waste.
18	Use local supply sources and support the sustainable extraction, re-use and recycling of minerals and aggregates resources.

### Alternatives

Alternatives are a useful tool when considering different ways of achieving a plan in order that adverse effects are avoided. Alternatives are a

statutory part of the SEA process. The SEA Directive requires that ‘...reasonable alternatives, taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated’ and ‘an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with’ is provided (Article 5.1 and Annex I (h)).

The AAP for Longbridge has been developed with the aid of a wide-ranging public consultation process and has been supported and informed by a series of technical studies (listed at Section 2.2.2 of the Sustainability Report). The output of these activities was summarised and presented in a Issues and Options paper, which was consulted on in October / November 2006.

The Issues and Options paper explained the vision and objectives for Longbridge, and identified a series of five key themes along which action would be directed. These are:

- Employment and economy;
- Housing;
- Retailing and community services;
- Environment; and
- Transport

For each theme a number of issues and potential options for addressing them were discussed. A 'do nothing' option was also identified, whereby the site would be allowed to develop under current land uses and according to prevailing market-driven conditions.

Each option underwent a high-level preliminary assessment against the SA Objectives. The paper concluded by identifying four broad Strategic Spatial Options for Longbridge, together with a land use variation and assorted infrastructure options. These then underwent a more detailed assessment against the SA Framework and baseline (see Appendix E of the Sustainability Report).

Following the Issues and Options consultation and further technical and feasibility studies, the Preferred Options for the Longbridge AAP, together with detailed options for transport and infrastructure proposals, were chosen. These also underwent detailed assessment, revealing that the majority will lead to socioeconomic benefits but may come with environmental costs (see Appendix F). The Preferred Options document was published in February 2007 and consulted on for a period of six weeks. Comments received during this consultation period have been taken into account during the appraisal of the AAP submission document

### Significant Effects Assessment

The results of the detailed assessment of effects of the Selected Option for the AAP, shown in Table 3 below, reveal some major anticipated benefits in environmental, social and economic terms, though in some cases more detail would help to secure maximum gains; for example with regards to biodiversity, flood risk, waste, energy and materials. The detailed assessment matrices are shown in Appendix L of the Sustainability Report, and an assessment of cumulative effects is shown in Chapter 5 and Appendix M. For details regarding recommendations, see Chapter 6 of the Sustainability Report.

Table 3 should be read in conjunction with the AAP submission document which lists the full details of each proposal.

### Recommendations

In order to address the effects identified in the Sustainability Report, to remove or reduce the negative effects and maximise the positive effects, a number of recommendations can be made. Several of the recommendations made during earlier stages of the SA have already been incorporated within the AAP. Other measures that could be pursued during implementation of the Longbridge AAP are listed below.

### Biodiversity

A Nature Conservation Management Plan should be developed to ensure that locally important resources are protected during redevelopment, including the black poplar, a species of conservation concern. The NCMP should also promote the use of indigenous and fruit-bearing species for landscaping, linking up existing green areas, improving wildlife corridors, and promoting bat boxes, bird roosts and green roofs. The aim is to enable tree planting and landscaping to ensure green links such as hedgerows and scrub are incorporated into design to maximise the ecological benefits from green space, creating indigenous habitat to the benefit of BAP species, despite to lack of an unbroken wildlife corridor through the area.

### Consumption and Production

Provision should be made for weekly farmers markets and other activities that promote more sustainable patterns of consumption.

### Education and Training

Ensure that the new college provides appropriate (subsidised) re-training to allow people to adjust to new local job opportunities, run flexible courses (part-time, evenings, weekends, on-job) and offers grant schemes.

Table 3: Summary of Effects of the AAP Preferred Options

Proposal	Summary of Effect (from Appendix L)
<b>Sustainability Strategy</b>	<b>Positive:</b> The sustainability strategy for the Longbridge AAP incorporates many of the recommendations made during earlier phases of sustainability appraisal and as such will provide far greater benefits, in environmental, social and economic terms, than would have otherwise been experienced. Virtually all SA objectives are promoted, with some major benefits anticipated. In some cases more detail would help to secure maximum gains; for example with regards to biodiversity, flood risk, waste, energy and materials a further 'strategy' is proposed but the details are not made clear.
<b>Design Principles</b>	<b>Positive:</b> The design principles for the Longbridge AAP are positive and forward thinking, incorporating some of the recommendations made in earlier phases of sustainability appraisal. Particular advantages relate to a vastly improved quality of townscape and reduced visual impact, improved security and reduced fear of crime, and a greener Longbridge.
<b>Local Centre 1</b>	<b>Mixed:</b> Significant benefits will be achieved through this proposal, particularly given its commitment to sustainable development. Economic growth, employment and provision of social facilities will be major wins, while sustainable design and transport measures will ensure these can be achieved at lowest expense to the environment in terms of carbon emissions, reductions in flood risk, waste and resource management, and biodiversity enhancements. Cultural heritage and landscape/townscape quality objectives will also be advanced. Conversely, some issues remain: the traffic impacts of development - particularly the Park and Ride - are unclear and the Local Centre is expected to be a significant trip generator, while air pollution related to construction and construction traffic, as well as operational buildings and commuters to the development cannot be ruled out.
<b>Local Centre 2</b>	<b>Mixed:</b> Significant direct and indirect positive effects will be experienced as a result of this proposal through raising the skills profile of the local population and helping to re-train people to access the re-structured employment environment associated with other AAP proposals. In addition, the college is an appropriate use of previously developed land that will greatly improve the visual amenity of the area, and its active frontages will help to provide natural surveillance and rectify the safety environment. Air pollution remains a concern: the traffic impacts of development are unclear and the college is expected to be a significant trip generator, while air pollution related to construction and construction traffic, as well as operational buildings and commuters to the development cannot be ruled out. All other environmental issues are addressed through other aspects of the AAP and as a result of recommendations made in earlier phases of sustainability appraisal.
<b>Local Centre 3</b>	<b>Mixed:</b> Minor benefits are associated with this proposal in relation to the provision of relatively small -scale (yet important) employment provision. Significant benefits will be experienced with regards to improving the visual amenity of the area and helping to create a locality that is attractive to new businesses, thereby helping to make the plan as a whole more viable. Air pollution remains a concern: the traffic impacts of development are unclear and the retail quarter is expected to be a significant trip generator, while air pollution related to construction and construction traffic, as well as operational buildings and commuters to the development cannot be ruled out. All other

Proposal	Summary of Effect (from Appendix L)
	environmental issues are addressed through other aspects of the AAP and as a result of recommendations made in earlier phases of sustainability appraisal.
<b>Local Centre 4</b>	<b>Mixed:</b> Significant benefits will be achieved through this proposal, particularly given its commitment to sustainable development. Economic growth, employment and provision of social facilities will be major wins, while sustainable design measures will ensure these can be achieved at lowest expense to the environment in terms of carbon emissions, waste and resource management. Cultural heritage and landscape/townscape quality objectives will also be advanced. Conversely, some issues remain: air pollution and the traffic impacts of development are unclear and the mixed use quarter is expected to be a significant trip generator, while air pollution related to construction and construction traffic, as well as operational buildings and commuters to the development cannot be ruled out.
<b>Employment Zone 1</b>	<b>Mixed:</b> Significant benefits can be achieved through this proposal with regards to the local employment and economic situation through the diverse range of employment uses proposed. Specifically, live/work units and micro-business facilities, combined with support for skills and training and business development programmes will help to renew and enliven the local economy and foster innovative and entrepreneurial activities; this could be further encouraged by proximity to the Technology Park and college. Proximity to public transport links makes this a sustainable location. Significant positive effects are also expected in visual impact terms, and by reducing crime and the fear of crime, as the proposal will contribute to a revived and active urban centre.  Important strategic environmental benefits will be gained by delivering a CHP/biomass plant and a recycling facility; CHP is strongly recommended as it can deliver significant social (in terms of affordable heat and energy) and environmental gains area-wide. Air pollution remains a concern: the traffic impacts of development are unclear and the employment zone is expected to be a significant trip generator, while air pollution related to construction and construction traffic, as well as operational buildings and commuters to the development cannot be ruled out.
<b>Employment Zone 2</b>	<b>Mixed:</b> Benefits can be achieved through this proposal with regards to local employment through continued employment of some automotive professionals. Proximity to public transport links makes this a sustainable location. Redevelopment will make appropriate use of previously developed land, while positive effects may be experienced in landscape and visual impact terms with enhanced screening. Air pollution remains a concern: the traffic impacts of development are unclear and the Nanjing site is expected to be a significant trip generator for both cars and goods vehicles, while air pollution related to operational buildings and commuters to the development cannot be ruled out. There is a risk of further land and surface and ground water contamination when car production resumes.
<b>Employment Zone 3</b>	<b>Mixed:</b> Significant benefits can be achieved through this proposal with regards to local employment through the employment uses proposed. Proximity to public transport links makes this a sustainable location. Redevelopment will make appropriate use of previously developed land, while positive effects are also expected in landscape and visual impact terms with enhanced screening that will also benefit biodiversity. Air pollution remains a concern: the traffic impacts of development are unclear and the Cofton Centre is expected to



Proposal	Summary of Effect (from Appendix L)
	be a significant trip generator for both cars and goods vehicles, while air pollution related to construction and construction traffic, as well as operational buildings and commuters to the development cannot be ruled out.
<b>Regional Investment Site 1</b>	<p><b>Mixed:</b> The Regional Investment Site is the major source of economic regeneration associated with the Longbridge AAP. It meets regional and local economic policy objectives, is an appropriate land use and will secure thousands of new jobs in the area. Many of the significant negative effects potentially associated with the proposal have been successfully removed by adopting recommendations made in earlier phases of sustainability appraisal. Provision of jobs will help to alleviate social deprivation and exclusion in the local community, particularly as measures will be taken to ensure opportunities will be available to all. Active lifestyles are promoted through sustainable travel measures and provision of fitness centre. Significant benefits will be experienced with regards to improving the visual amenity of the area and helping to create a locality that is attractive to new businesses, thereby helping to make the plan as a whole more viable.</p> <p>Buildings standards and other sustainable energy and resource initiatives will help to ensure that these benefits can be delivered at the lowest cost to the environment in terms of carbon emissions, waste and resource management, and biodiversity enhancements. Re-engineering of the River Rea will also deliver significant biodiversity enhancements as well as reducing flood risk and helping to secure water quality improvements. Conversely, some issues remain: the traffic impacts of development are unclear and the RIS is expected to be a significant trip generator, while air pollution related to construction and construction traffic, as well as operational buildings and commuters to the development cannot be ruled out.</p>
<b>Housing 1</b>	<p><b>Mixed:</b> The proposal delivers significant and important benefits in terms of helping to renew the local housing market and providing additional affordable homes in a sustainable location, while ensuring that this can be achieved with minimum cost to the environment by adopting challenging building standards (particularly with regards to energy, water, waste and resources) and achieving a greater provision of open space. In addition, the proposal will help to improve townscape and landscape character, utilising significant areas of previously developed land, while flood risk is effectively managed through engineering modifications to the River Rea, which will also have biodiversity benefits. Care home accommodation will help tend to the needs of an ageing population. Conversely, some issues remain: air pollution and the traffic impacts of development are unclear and the residential area is expected to be a significant trip generator, while air pollution related to construction and construction traffic, as well as operational buildings and commuters to the development cannot be ruled out.</p>
<b>Housing 2</b>	<p><b>Mixed:</b> The proposal delivers significant and important benefits in terms of helping to renew the local housing market and providing additional affordable homes in a sustainable location, while ensuring that this can be achieved with minimum cost to the environment by adopting challenging building standards (particularly with regards to energy, water, waste and resources) and achieving a greater provision of open space with significant improvements for biodiversity. In addition, the proposal will help to improve townscape and landscape character, utilising significant areas of previously developed land and creating landscape buffers. Care home accommodation will help tend to the needs of an ageing population, while new local services including community/library facilities will meet local needs.</p>

Proposal	Summary of Effect (from Appendix L)
	Conversely, some issues remain: air pollution and the traffic impacts of development are unclear and the residential area is expected to be a significant trip generator, while air pollution related to construction and construction traffic, as well as operational buildings and commuters to the development cannot be ruled out.
<b>Transport 1</b>	<b>Positive:</b> the proposal will deliver small-scale but significant benefits to accessibility, health and sustainable transport, with indirect benefits for air quality as a result. No negative effects identified.
<b>Transport 2</b>	<b>Positive:</b> this proposal makes best use of existing road infrastructure in relation to the strategic network. Although no further measures are given to minimise adverse effects, other proposals in the movement framework seek to address these areas.
<b>Transport 3</b>	<b>Positive:</b> a hierarchical network of routes within the area, including a dedicated/priority route to Frankley, will have significant benefits for accessibility and the road network, and support regeneration in general, while provision for pedestrians and cyclists will have indirect health benefits. No adverse effects are identified.
<b>Transport 4</b>	<b>Positive:</b> an improved network of bus routes within the area, including a high quality route to Frankley, will have significant benefits for accessibility and the road network, and support regeneration in general. No adverse effects are identified.
<b>Transport 5</b>	<b>Positive:</b> a new public transport interchange will have significant positive effects for the area as a whole, improving accessibility from, to and within the area, and supporting wider regeneration aims. Less significant indirect effects include minor health benefits due to the longer final walking distances associated with public transport use, and slight improvements in air quality. No adverse effects are identified.
<b>Transport 6</b>	<b>Positive:</b> an improved Longbridge station, will contribute to significant benefits for accessibility and sustainable transport, and support regeneration in general. No adverse effects are identified.
<b>Transport 7</b>	<b>Mixed:</b> in theory a Park and Ride development is a sustainable form of public transport which helps to reduce car use over wide areas of the strategic road network, while improving accessibility, supporting economic regeneration and reducing congestion. However, P&R sites on suburban rail networks can have very intense traffic peaks, which can overload local road networks, reducing the overall effectiveness of the public transport service and increasing air pollution and carbon emissions.
<b>Transport 8</b>	<b>Mixed:</b> local highway improvements can be seen to be benefiting the local area as well as supporting wider regeneration aims of the AAP through increased accessibility. However, highway improvements can also increase the attraction of using the private car with consequent impacts on air quality and carbon emissions.
<b>Transport 9</b>	<b>Mixed:</b> the multi-storey car park can be seen to form an essential part of redevelopment, providing access to the Local Centre, however the centre will be in a high accessible location with trains, buses and a new interchange plus Park and Ride adjacent. As a result the need

Proposal	Summary of Effect (from Appendix L)
	for parking seems low and should be restricted to further encourage the use of sustainable transport modes. In addition, a multi-storey could have significant visual impacts, depending on design and location.
Transport 10	<b>Mixed:</b> the Movement Plan was not available at the time of assessment, but it is unlikely that road access point proposals will have any significant effects.
Transport 11	<b>Positive:</b> sustainable travel measures, together with substantial improvements to public transport, will help to ensure that trips generated by redevelopment become more sustainable and encourage modal shift. The measure will support accessibility, regeneration in general, and contribute to minor improvements in air quality and carbon emissions.
Transport 12	<b>Positive:</b> improved local rail services will help to ensure that trips generated by redevelopment become more sustainable and encourage modal shift. The measure will support accessibility, regeneration in general, and contribute to minor improvements in air quality and carbon emissions.
Transport 13	<b>Mixed:</b> local highway improvements can be seen to be benefiting the local area as well as supporting wider regeneration aims of the AAP through increased accessibility. However, highway improvements can also increase the attraction of using the private car with consequent impacts on air quality and carbon emissions.
Transport 14	<b>Mixed:</b> strategic road network improvements can be seen to be benefiting the local area as well as supporting wider regeneration aims of the AAP through increased accessibility. However, highway improvements can also increase the attraction of using the private car with consequent impacts on air quality and carbon emissions.
Transport 15	<b>Positive:</b> traffic management measures can be seen to be benefiting the local area as well as supporting wider regeneration aims of the AAP through increased accessibility, as well as providing a disincentive for using the private car.
Open Space 1	<b>Positive:</b> Protection of, and improvements to, Cofton Park will lead to only positive effects. Specific benefits will be achieved in relation to human health, biodiversity, landscape, open space provision and waste.
Open Space 2	<b>Positive:</b> re-opening of the water courses and provision of green spaces with biodiversity value produces only positive effects, mainly in terms of environmental quality, but with indirect benefits for socio-economics in providing a positive and welcoming environment for new businesses and communities. There are risks associated with these proposals, including the release of contaminants into surface and ground waters, and the disruption and possible damage to archaeological remains. However, the process of considering options for the rivers has taken land contamination, water quality and cultural heritage issues into account, while other aspects of the AAP secure further protection for these receptors.
Open Space 3	<b>Positive:</b> re-opening of the water course and provision of green spaces with biodiversity value produces only positive effects, mainly in

Proposal	Summary of Effect (from Appendix L)
	terms of environmental quality, but with indirect benefits for socio-economics in providing a positive and welcoming environment for new businesses and communities. There are risks associated with these proposals, including the release of contaminants into surface and ground waters, and the disruption and possible damage to archaeological remains. However, the process of considering options for the river has taken land contamination, water quality and cultural heritage issues into account, while other aspects of the AAP secure further protection for these receptors.
Open Space 4	<b>Positive:</b> re-opening of the water courses and provision of green spaces with biodiversity value produces only positive effects, mainly in terms of environmental quality, but with indirect benefits for socio-economics in providing a positive and welcoming environment for new businesses and communities. There are risks associated with these proposals, including the release of contaminants into surface and ground waters, and the disruption. However, the process of considering options for the rivers has taken land contamination, water quality and cultural heritage issues into account, while other aspects of the AAP secure further protection for these receptors.
Open Space 5	<b>Mixed:</b> this proposal secures important benefits for the local population in ensuring continued provision of sports and recreational facilities, with significant indirect benefits to health. Minor negative effects are possible due to alterations to car parking when the Sports and Social Club is situated in an essentially sustainable position adjacent to public transport services.
Open Space 6	<b>Positive:</b> the proposal will lead to only positive effects being realised, particularly in relation to townscape character, biodiversity and use of previously developed land, but also indirectly to health. A Nature Conservation Management Plan (NCMP) should help to ensure benefits to biodiversity are maximised. No negative effects are identified.
Open Space 7	<b>Positive:</b> the proposal is only expected to generate positive effects, particularly with regard to the quality of townscape. No negative effects are identified.
Open Space 8	<b>Positive:</b> the proposal will lead to only positive effects being realised, particularly in relation to townscape character, biodiversity and indirectly to health. The NCMP should help to ensure benefits to biodiversity are maximised. No negative effects are identified.
Open Space 9	<b>Positive:</b> significant positive effects for landscape / townscape character and biodiversity are expected as a result of this proposal. No negative effects are identified.
Open Space 10	<b>Positive:</b> minor indirect positive effects on townscape character are expected as a result of this proposal. No negative effects are identified.
Open Space 11	<b>Positive:</b> significant positive effects for cultural heritage are expected as a result of this proposal. No negative effects are identified.
Open Space 12	<b>Positive:</b> significant positive effects on townscape character are expected as a result of this proposal. No negative effects are identified.
Open Space 13	<b>Mixed:</b> the proposal will deliver significant and necessary benefits to allow re-development to go ahead, specifically with regard to health

Proposal	Summary of Effect (from Appendix L)
	and the re-use of land, but also for townscape and biodiversity. Significant negative effects are possible if large amounts of material have to be transported off-site and disposed of to landfill. Risks remain regarding the possibility of contaminants entering surface and ground waters during remediation, although the strategy will be designed to minimise this risk.
<b>Open Space 14</b>	<b>Positive:</b> the proposal will deliver significant benefits to flood risk and health and safety. No negative effects identified.
<b>Open Space 15</b>	<b>Positive:</b> the proposal will deliver significant benefits to open space, landscape character and biodiversity. No negative effects identified.
<b>Open Space 16</b>	<b>Positive:</b> the proposal will deliver significant benefits to open space and landscape character. No negative effects identified.
<b>Open Space 17</b>	<b>Positive:</b> the proposal will help preserve open space and landscape character. No negative effects identified.

Ensure there are strong links between local employers, the Technology Park and the campus.

Training in environmental managements systems should also be offered.

Ensure provision of full range of facilities identified in Community Needs Study.

### Equalities

One key issue was found to be of concern; the engagement of young people in the development process. As young people and the facilities on offer to them was found to be of major concern to everybody it could, if not suitably addressed, lead to a worsening situation in the area.

### Health

The provision of new community facilities in the new centre for Longbridge, including a new health centre, will help to improve accessibility to health services. This should be accompanied by a dentist, pharmacy and optician.

### Landscape

Landscape buffer enhancements should follow a masterplanned approach which incorporates structural landscaping of the site both at its edges and internally and that is designed having regard to the site and its context.

### Open Space

The AAP does not seek to provide the level of Local Nature Reserve provision recommended in Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards, instead promoting an urban park, greenways, neighbourhood parks,

pocket parks and informal open space; measures within the AAP could also seek accessibility and quality enhancements at nearby Rubery Cutting and Leach Green Quarries LNR, and/or accessibility, enhancement and expansion opportunities at Balaam's Wood proposed LNR.

### Remediation

The strategy should be risk-based but also incorporate measures to validate and monitor the success of remediation, while use of on-site treatment techniques wherever possible will reduce the amount being transported. Where this is not possible, controlled traffic movements will help to minimise effects on the local area.

Ongoing management of hazardous substances, surface water and effluent will be required to prevent further contamination.

### Site-wide Considerations

Site-wide strategies are promoted in the AAP's sustainability strategy. In some cases more detail would help to secure maximum gains; for example with regards to biodiversity, flood risk, waste, energy and materials.

### Transport

Parking standards are unclear at present - restrictions are required to further discourage unsustainable travel patterns, and ameliorate carbon emissions and air quality. In order to further encourage the use of sustainable transport and disincentivise the use of private cars, opportunities include tight restrictions on parking at employment locations and residences, taking advantage of the good public transport links.

Potential to support the development and uptake of clean transport technologies, for example hydrogen propelled buses. As a minimum, low emissions technology should be used in conjunction with the Park & Ride and Frankley link.

Further benefits could be gained by providing a high quality foot/cyclepath between Cofton Centre and the Local Centre between Nanjing and the rail corridor (which should also serve to enhance the green wildlife corridor).

The multi-storey car park adjacent to the local centre will be designed according to BCC's Design Guide; in addition to this, explore potential to locate some parking levels underground to limit visual impact.

Enhancements to car parking facilities at the sports and social club could focus on environmental quality and safety, or potentially converting a proportion of parking area to playing surfaces, given the levels of parking to be provided elsewhere in the area, most notably on the other side of Longbridge Lane adjacent to the local centre.



### Waste

Recycling facilities should also be provided on new transport infrastructure and in the public realm (for newspapers, magazines, drinks containers, etc.).

Site remediation has the potential to generate significant amounts of ground waste to be

landfilled, but the risk-based remediation strategy should help to minimise this.

### Monitoring

The purpose of monitoring is to measure the social, environmental and economic effects of the AAP, as well as to measure success against the plan's objectives. It is therefore beneficial if the monitoring strategy builds on monitoring systems which are already in place. The proposed monitoring framework focuses on those aspects of the environment that are likely to be negatively impacted upon, or where the impact is uncertain.

The inclusion of the monitoring proposals for consultation in the SA is a useful mechanism for obtaining views and feedback from a range of quarters, including those agencies who will potentially contribute to the monitoring process. Several other indicators could be used and may be added before monitoring commences. Monitoring reports should be published periodically as new information becomes available. The full suggested monitoring framework is given in Appendix J of the Sustainability Report.

### Commenting on the Sustainability Report

The Sustainability Report has been produced alongside the AAP Submission Document so



that comments can be made on the AAP with the benefit of the information presented in the Sustainability Report. These documents will be made available for the public and other interested parties to inspect and comment as they wish at:

Birmingham City Council Council House Victoria Square Birmingham B1 1BB	Bromsgrove District Council The Council House Burcot Lane Bromsgrove B60 1AA
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The Sustainability Report and the separate Non-Technical Summary will also be made available on the Councils' websites:

[www.birmingham.gov.uk/longbridgeaap](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/longbridgeaap)

<http://bromsgrove.gov.uk>

The consultation period of this Sustainability Report will span a period of six weeks, from XXX to XXX.

**Comments relating to the content of this Sustainability Report, and other queries regarding this consultation, should be sent to:**

South Development Planning and Regeneration Team  
17th Floor Alpha Tower  
Suffolk Street  
Queensway  
Birmingham  
B1 1TR



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