



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 5TH MARCH 2008 AT 6.00 P.M.

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 6th February 2008 (Pages 1 - 6)
4. To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 5th February 2008 (Pages 7 - 12)
5. To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 19th February 2008 (Pages 13 - 16)
6. Air Quality Scrutiny Report - Recommendation 1 (Pages 17 - 24)
7. Public Transport (Buses) Scrutiny Report (Pages 25 - 98)
8. Dedication of Cycleway (Pages 99 - 104)
9. Council Plan 2008-2011 Part 2 (Pages 105 - 176)
10. Improvement Plan Exception Report (December 2007) (Pages 177 - 194)
11. December (Quarter 3) Performance Reporting (Pages 195 - 248)
12. Capital Strategy 2008-2011 (Pages 249 - 316)

13. Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2008-09 to 2010-11 (Pages 317 - 336)
14. Fees and Charges 2008-09 (Pages 337 - 352)
15. Local Housing Allowance (LHA) Policy (Pages 353 - 362)
16. Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Policy (Pages 363 - 374)
17. 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
18. To consider, and if considered appropriate, to pass the following resolution to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of item(s) of business containing exempt information:-

"RESOLVED: that under Section 100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act, as amended, the relevant paragraph of that part, in each case, being as set out below, and that it is in the public interest to do so:-

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Paragraph(s)</u>	
19	1 and 3	"

19. Write Off - Sundry Debt (Pages 375 - 380)

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

The Council House
Burcot Lane
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B60 1AA

25th February 2008

Agenda Item 3

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 6TH FEBRUARY 2008 AT 6.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths (Deputy Leader, in the Chair), Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP, G. N. Denaro, Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E. (during Minute No's. 135/07 to 140/07), R. D. Smith (during Minute No's.135/07 to 140/07) , Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP, M. J. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

Also in attendance: Mr. N. Potter, Housing Enabler Officer for Worcestershire (during Minute No. 135/07)

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

130/07 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor R. Hollingworth (Leader).

131/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E. declared a personal interest in agenda items 7 and 8 (Variation to Car Parking Order and Homelessness Grant Funding), as a holder of a current parking permit and a Trustee of the Bromsgrove Youth Homelessness Forum.

Councillor R. D. Smith declared a personal interest in agenda item 6 (Notice of Motion - Allocation Policy), as an employee of a housing association.

132/07 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 9th January 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record, subject to the correction of Minute No. 123/07(Medium Term Financial Plan 2008/09 to 2010/11) - Recommendation (d) to state Appendix C rather than Appendix G.

133/07 SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD

The minutes of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 8th January 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

134/07 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The minutes of the Performance Management Board held on 22nd January 2008 were submitted.

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

135/07 **MOTION - ALLOCATION POLICY**

Further to the referral by full Council on 16th January 2008, consideration was given to the following motion submitted by Councillor Mrs. C. M. McDonald, together with the supporting officer report:

"The Council's Allocation Policy for the letting and allocation of rural affordable housing developed under "Exception Site" policy cannot be supported by its own Equality and Diversity Policy. In the light of this the Council no longer supports such a policy."

Mr. N. Potter, Rural Housing Enabler Officer for Worcestershire, was in attendance for this for this item. He advised that the aim of the Policy was to redress the balance for those people brought up in rural communities who would not otherwise have the opportunity to remain within the community. It was noted from the Officer's Conclusion at 9.6 of the report that the Worcestershire County Housing Enabling Officers Group intended to review the rural lettings criteria of a number of authorities in the County, with a view to developing a uniform countywide policy for adoption by the authorities concerned, and that it would be appropriate for the Group to consider the issue of potentially over restrictive residency restrictions in developing a draft countywide policy.

Councillor Mrs. McDonald spoke on the motion and following the Cabinet's consideration of this and the officer report, was given a further opportunity to respond to the issues raised.

RESOLVED: that the Cabinet supports the Council's Criteria and Allocations Policy for the Letting and Allocation of Rural Affordable Housing Developed under 'Exception Site' Policy, whilst recognising the need for the officers of the Council to work within the Worcestershire County Housing Enabling Officers Group to ensure that their proposals embrace the Commission for Racial Equality Code of Practice and best practice principles when reporting back to the Cabinet with policy updates.

136/07 **VARIATION TO CAR PARKING ORDER**

The Cabinet considered a report which sought authority to make changes to the District of Bromsgrove (Off-Street Parking Places) Order, which were required in order to implement increases in fees, the increase in excess

charges and the removal of concessionary passes agreed by the Council on 16th January 2008.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the proposed amended Schedules to the District of Bromsgrove (Off-Street Parking Places) Order be approved; and
- (b) that the Head of Street Scene and Waste Management be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Street Scene and Recycling, to consider any objections received and to make the Variation Order.

137/07 **HOMELESSNESS GRANT FUNDING**

Consideration was given to a report on homelessness grant funding for 2007/08 and performance and proposed use of grant for homelessness preventative schemes for 2008/09 - 2010/11.

In relation to paragraph 8.2 of the report and the work to be undertaken by the temporary Under Occupation Officer post within the Strategic Housing Team, Members requested that an assistance scheme, similar to that currently in place in Wychavon, to support elderly people who wished to move to more appropriate accommodation but who felt unable to cope with the practicalities of doing so, be investigated.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the update on the homelessness preventative and support schemes funded through Communities and Local Government (CLG) Homelessness Grant during 2007/08 be noted;
- (b) that the increased level of CLG Homelessness Grant funding and three year allocation process for the period 2008/09 – 2010/11 be noted;
- (c) that the Council's performance in halving the use of temporary accommodation two years in advance of the Government's target date be noted;
- (d) that the submissions for the funding of schemes recommended by the Bromsgrove Homelessness Steering Group set out at Section 7 of the report to receive funding from the 2008/09 – 2010/11 allocation of homelessness grant be approved;
- (e) that the additional bids for funding of schemes submitted since the announcement of additional grant funding set out at Section 7.3 of the report be refused;
- (f) that the surplus additional grant funding be allocated to the temporary employment of an Under Occupation Officer to identify and develop opportunities to make better use of existing housing stock in the District; and
- (g) that the Head of Planning & Environment Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing, be granted delegated authority to re-allocate any under spend or make further adjustments necessary to ensure full utilisation of the grant allocation for 2008/09 in support of existing or new schemes.

138/07 **RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON DRAFT SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY FOR WORCESTERSHIRE 2008-2013**

The Cabinet considered the Council's response to the draft Sustainable Community Strategy for Worcestershire 2008-2013.

RECOMMENDED that the response to the draft Sustainable Community Strategy for Worcestershire 2008-2013, as detailed in both the report and Appendix 2 to the report and with particular focus on: geographic focus around Bromsgrove town centre, Longbridge and the Bromsgrove railway station relocation; community cohesion; children and young people; and older people, be approved for submission to the Worcestershire Partnership, subject to the following changes:

- (a) Question 7 - Threats of the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis - Affordable housing: insertion of the gross figure of 2,100 houses to be built on Bromsgrove over the next 20 years, rather than the nett figure of 1,400 houses; and
- (b) Question 16 - Opportunities - Longbridge regeneration: insertion of a reference to the Technology Belt.

139/07 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT (NOVEMBER 2007)**

Consideration was given to the updated Improvement Plan Exception Report for November 2007, together with the corrective action being taken.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exceptions report and the corrective action being taken be noted and approved; and
- (b) that it be noted that of the 159 actions highlighted within the Plan for November 2007, 86.9% of the Plan was on target (green), 7% was one month behind (amber) and 3.1% was over one month behind (red). 3.1% of actions had been rescheduled or suspended with approval.

140/07 **CUSTOMER FIRST STRATEGY REVIEW**

The Cabinet considered a report which provided a review of the Council's customer performance since the Customer First Strategy was agreed in March 2006, together with a review of the strategic action plan and an updated action plan for the following three years.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the improving customer performance of the Council, as detailed at paragraph 3.4 of the report and Section 4 of Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;
- (b) that it be recognised that whilst the Council had made significant progress since the approval of the Customer First Strategy in March 2006, much still remained to be done to deliver excellent customer service; and

- (c) that the Strategy's priorities for the year ahead be agreed and the detailed action plan to support the delivery of the priorities be approved, as detailed in Section 8 of Appendix 1.

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm

Chairman

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD

TUESDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY 2008 AT 6.00 PM

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

Observers: Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., Councillor S. P. Shannon and Councillor M. J. A. Webb

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

78/07 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

79/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest or whipping arrangements were made.

80/07 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 8th January 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that, subject to the amendment to minute number 72/07 to include "(f) that Councillor Duddy be nominated as this Council's reserve representative on the joint countywide flooding scrutiny group", the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record.

81/07 CABINET RESPONSE TO THE AIR QUALITY SCRUTINY REPORT

As the Portfolio Holder for Planning (which included Climate Change), Councillor Mrs. Dyer presented the Cabinet's response to the Air Quality Scrutiny Report. It was explained that the Cabinet had considered the report at its last meeting held on 9th January 2008 where the work of the Task Group, together with the excellent quality of the final scrutiny report, had been acknowledged.

Responses to each recommendation were taken one by one and it was noted that the majority of recommendations put forward had been approved.

With regard to the first recommendation relating to Low Emission Zones, part of the Cabinet's response was that the impact on the surrounding road

network as a result of motorists attempting to avoid the Low Emission Zones could make the situation worse. However, the Chairman questioned how the Cabinet could come to that conclusion with no supporting evidence. A discussion ensued.

It was confirmed that in relation to recommendation 4, Scrutiny Members were correct in stating that Worcestershire County Council (as the Highways Authority) were responsible for the particular set of traffic signals referred to in the recommendation and therefore, the County Council was the appropriate authority.

Councillor Mrs. Dyer was thanked for her attendance.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Cabinet be requested to reconsider its response to recommendation 1, as it appeared it had no supporting evidence; and
- (b) that the Cabinet's response to all other recommendations contained within the Air Quality Scrutiny Report be noted.

82/07 **PUBLIC TRANSPORT (BUSES) SCRUTINY REPORT**

Councillor Lewis presented the Scrutiny Report as Chairman of the Public Transport (Buses) Task Group. There was a brief discussion on the report, including its format.

The Task Group Chairman stated that he wished to be involved in ensuring the approved recommendations were implemented. Mr. Street, the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects, informed the Board that there was already a Joint County and District Town Centre Steering Group and to ensure proper coordination, it was suggested that Councillor Lewis might wish to join that Group.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the following recommendation be included in the report: "Councillor Lewis be invited to sit on the Joint County and District Town Centre Steering Group to assist the Council in ensuring any approved recommendations contained within the scrutiny report are implemented";
- (b) that, subject to (a) above being included, the Public Transport (Buses) Scrutiny Report containing recommendations be approved.

RECOMMENDED that the Public Transport (Buses) Scrutiny Report, as agreed by the Scrutiny Steering Board, be placed on the next available Agenda for Cabinet's consideration and all recommendations contained with the report be approved.

83/07 **UPDATE ON REFUSE AND RECYCLING SCRUTINY TASK GROUP**

Councillor Scurrall, Chairman of the Refuse and Recycling Task Group, provided a brief update which was read out to the Board.

Members were informed that at the Task Group Meeting held on 28th January 2008, the suggestion of investigating value for money was considered. It was agreed that as the current scrutiny investigation had now concluded, the Task Group would not delay its Scrutiny Report and the proposals it contained. However, the Task Group were of the opinion that the Scrutiny Steering Board should consider examining this issue as a separate scrutiny exercise.

It was confirmed that the Refuse and Recycling Scrutiny Report with recommendations would be on the next agenda for consideration by the Scrutiny Steering Board and the Task Group Chairman would be in attendance to present the report.

RESOLVED that the update given on the progress of the Refuse and Recycling Task Group be noted.

84/07 **UPDATE ON JOINT FLOODING SCRUTINY**

The Chairman of this Board, as the nominated representative on the Joint Countywide Task Group looking at flooding, stated that unfortunately, he had been unable to attend the meeting held at County Hall the previous evening.

However, he had received an update from Worcestershire County Council's officers and therefore could inform the Board that Councillor King from Wychavon District Council had been appointed Chairman. It was stated that the Task Group was intending to invite all agencies involved to future meetings to discuss the impact of recent flooding, the lessons learnt and ways all agencies could work better together in the future.

RESOLVED that the update provided by the Chairman be noted.

85/07 **CALLS FOR ACTION - CLG CONSULTATION**

The Board considered the report on Calls for Action as set out in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

Members were informed of the consultation exercise currently being carried out by the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) and were urged to put forward recommendations to full Council, via the Monitoring Officer, in response to the consultation paper.

There was a discussion on the Calls for Action process and various points were raised, such as the possible timescales for Councillors to respond and the impact certain timescales might have on single Member wards. There was also a concern over how letters to Councillors from the public would be monitored and it was suggested that perhaps they could be sent via officers.

It was reported that due to the limited information available from the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG), a further report on the matter would be submitted later in the year when guidance had been issued. (It was stated that if any Member had any comments relating to Local Petitions they should direct them to the Monitoring Officer after the meeting.)

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

RECOMMENDED that full Council include the following concerns of the Scrutiny Steering Board in response to the CLG consultation exercise on Calls for Action:

- (a) what would be the timescales for Councillors to respond to public requests and how could it be ensured single Member Wards would not be disadvantaged by those timescales; and
- (b) what procedure could be put in place to ensure requests from the public were monitored and recorded.

86/07 **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.

Members were reminded that the Cabinet's Forward Plan would be developed and improved in the near future to make it more meaningful to the Scrutiny Steering Board. It was explained that Heads of Service would be expected to incorporate information required for the Forward Plan into Business Plans and that through the constitution review a 'key decision' would be defined and agreed by full Council in March 2008. It was anticipated that the newly developed Forward Plan would be available to the public and the Scrutiny Steering Board by June 2008.

The Board was informed that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman had invited Councillor Webb (Portfolio Holder for Customer Care and Customer Service, and Revenue Generation) to attend to explain why the report relating to the Customer Panel 2 Results (item number 7 on the Forward Plan) had been delayed by a month by officers.

Councillor Webb responded that the delay had been due to the time taken to compile suitable questions. It was believed that it was important that questions within the survey covered all necessary areas in a clear and concise way, as it was believed that the quality of feedback was linked with the quality of questions. Councillor Webb informed the Board that he had a meeting scheduled with the Assistant Chief Executive the following week and would be discussing: (i) the progress of the report; and (ii) ensuring further delays would be avoided.

More information was requested on item number 15 which related to a write-off. However, it was believed that this was a confidential item and officers might not be able to provide any further information. It was also stated that it was unlikely to be a key decision.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services be requested to provide either further details in relation to item number 15 on the Forward Plan or an explanation as to why more information could not be disclosed, including details on the relevant legislation.

- (b) that the comments received from Councillor Webb (Portfolio Holder for Customer Care and Customer Service, and Revenue Generation) in relation to item number 7 on the Forward Plan be noted; and
- (c) that the Cabinet's Forward Plan be noted.

87/07 **SCRUTINY PROPOSALS**

Members considered the three scrutiny proposals received and there was a discussion on which should be added to the Board's work programme and the priority order. During that discussion it was pointed out that the spatial strategy, which one of the scrutiny proposals related to, was already on the work programme of the Performance Management Board.

The suggestion made by the Refuse and Recycling Task Group regarding scrutinising Value for Money in relation to Street Scene and Waste Management was also considered.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that a Task Group scrutinising Anti-Social Behaviour be established but that the appointment of Chairman be deferred until the next meeting of the Board;
- (b) that a Task Group scrutinising issues surrounding Alcohol Free Zones (AFZ) be established and Councillor Duddy be appointed as Chairman;
- (c) that letters be sent out to non-Cabinet Members requesting them to complete a membership form if they wish to join one of the Task Groups; and
- (d) that the topic of Value for Money in relation to Street Scene and Waste Management be considered by the Board at its next meeting.

88/07 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The work programme of the Scrutiny Steering Board was considered.

RESOLVED that the full work programme be noted.

89/07 **MEMBER TRAINING**

(The Chairman agreed to the consideration of this item as a matter of urgency as a decision was required thereon before the next ordinary meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board.)

Mrs. Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, informed the Board that at a recent Modern Councillor Steering Group Meeting, scrutiny training which had been provided in 2007/08 was discussed. Members were requested to put forward their views on the training to Mrs. Felton to assist officers in developing the training programme for 2008/09. It was explained that Members' views on training content was of particular interest.

It was requested that school holidays, industrial shut downs and other Member meetings should be avoided where possible. With regard to content, it was stated that training on Value for Money would be useful.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that officers consider the suggestion of incorporating Value for Money training into the training programme for 2008/09; and
- (b) that any other suggestions/comments be directed to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services.

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD

TUESDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY 2008, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors J. T. Duddy (Chairman), C. B. Taylor (Vice-Chairman),
A. N. Blagg, Mrs. M. Bunker, S. R. Colella and Mrs. C. M. McDonald

Observers: Councillors Dr. D. W. P. Booth J. P., G. N. Denaro and R. D. Smith (Portfolio Holders)

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mr. T. Beirne, Mr. H. Bennett, Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. J. Pitman, Ms. D. Poole and Ms. R. Cole.

75/07 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs. A. E. Doyle

76/07 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

77/07 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 22nd January 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

78/07 **SPATIAL STRATEGY REVIEW**

The Executive Director - Services gave a brief presentation on the Spatial Strategy Review. The presentation re-iterated the background to the Spatial Project and the benefits it would provide. In addition the Board was updated on the current satisfactory position regarding the introduction of various elements of the Project.

A number of questions from members were answered and the Executive Director - Services undertook to circulate a copy of the presentation to all members of the Council, together with estimated details of the alternative IT costs which would still have been incurred in order to maintain and improve Council services if the Spatial Project had not gone ahead.

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

79/07 **INTEGRATED FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT (QUARTER 3 DECEMBER 2007)**

The Board considered a quarterly integrated finance and performance report on the position as at 31st December 2007.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that it be noted that 55% of indicators are improving or stable compared to 83% at quarter 2;
- (b) that it be noted that 73% of indicators are achieving their year to date target compared to 72% at quarter 2;
- (c) that it be noted that 75% of indicators are predicted to met their target at year end compared to 79% at quarter 2 ;
- (d) that the quarter 2 revenue and capital underspends of £198,000 and £840,000 respectively be noted; and
- (e) that consideration be given to ways of improving the level of attendance by members at organised training events

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the Cabinet be requested to approve the carry forward of the estimated underspent capital budgets of £2.25 million from 2007/08 to 2008/09 as set out in Appendix 5 to the report;
- (b) that in the light of the outcome of a recent legal case involving the refuse collection service at Coventry City Council, the Portfolio Holder for Street Scene and Recycling be requested to hold discussions with the Head of Street Scene and Waste Management as a matter of priority to determine whether there are any implications for this Authority which need to be addressed following the introduction of two man working on the majority of refuse rounds in Bromsgrove.

80/07 **SICKNESS ABSENCE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The Board considered a report on the Council's Sickness Absence Management Policy together with the accompanying documentation which supported the policy, including management guidance on implementation and summary documents on procedures to be followed. There was a detailed discussion on the operation of the policy which had been introduced in January 2007 and the relationship to the provisions of the National Conditions of Service. Possible methods of improving performance and reducing levels of sickness absence were considered.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that in view of the relatively short period since the introduction of the new policy and the improvements which had been achieved so far, the Sickness Absence Management Policy together with the accompanying documents be noted: and
- (b) that the Board continue to monitor sickness absence levels and that the Sickness Absence Policy be revisited if the current downward trend is not maintained.

81/07 **DATA QUALITY STRATEGY REVIEW**

The Board gave consideration to the progress report regarding the implementation of the Data Quality Strategy Action Plan and in particular noted the significant improvement to 2 out of 4 for the Council's Data Quality.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and the Board continue to receive progress reports on a six monthly basis.

82/07 **CUSTOMER FIRST STRATEGY REVIEW**

Consideration was given to the report reviewing the Council's customer performance since the approval of the Customer First Strategy in March 2006, together with a review of the strategic action plan and an updated action plan covering the next three years.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the improving customer performance of the Council as set out in section 3.4 of the report be noted;
- (b) that it be acknowledged that whilst significant progress has been made since the approval of the strategy in March 2006, further improvements are required in order to deliver excellent customer service; and
- (c) that the priorities for the year ahead together with the detailed action plan supporting the delivery of those priorities, as set out in sections 8 and 10 of the strategy, be approved.

83/07 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT (DECEMBER 2007)**

Consideration was given to the Improvement Plan Exception report for December 2007, together with the corrective action being taken as set out in the appendix to the report.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception report together with the corrective action being taken, be noted;
- (b) that it be noted that for the 147 actions highlighted for December within the plan 82.3% were on target (green), 11.6% were one month behind (amber) and 2% were over one month behind (red). 4.1% of actions had been rescheduled (or suspended) with approval.

84/07 **PMB RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER**

Consideration was given to the report tracking progress on recommendations and decisions made by the Board from April to December 2007.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that further information be sought regarding any progress on item 50/07 relating to the possibility of North East Worcestershire College setting up a service level agreement with the Artrix; and
- (b) that the remainder of the report be noted.

85/07 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the report on the Board's updated work programme for 2007/08.

RESOLVED that subject to the inclusion of (i) Council Plan 2008-2010 and (ii) Employee Stress Survey in the work programme for the March meeting, the report be approved.

The meeting closed at 7.55 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5TH MARCH 2008

AIR QUALITY SCRUTINY REPORT – RECOMMENDATION 1

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 The Scrutiny Steering Board considered the Cabinet's response to the Air Quality Scrutiny Report at its meeting on 5th February 2008. It was noted that the majority of the 21 recommendations had been approved. However, a question was raised in relation to the Cabinet's response to the first recommendation.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are requested to reconsider the response given to the first recommendation contained within the Air Quality Scrutiny Report, particularly in relation to the last sentence of the Cabinet's response (as highlighted in *italics* in paragraph 3.4 of this report).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At the Cabinet Meeting on 9th January 2008, Members considered the Air Quality Scrutiny Report which was presented by Councillor McDonald as the Chairman of the Scrutiny Steering Board and Chairman of the Air Quality Task Group.
- 3.2 At the Scrutiny Steering Board Meeting on 5th February 2008, Councillor Mrs. Dyer (as the relevant Portfolio Holder), presented the Cabinet's written response to the Air Quality Scrutiny Report and the responses to all 21 recommendations were considered one by one by the Scrutiny Steering Board.
- 3.3 The first recommendation related to Low Emission Zones and was as follows:

"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 NO₂ 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”

3.4 The Cabinet’s response to this recommendation was:

“The Cabinet resolved that this recommendation be deferred until further information is available regarding the results of the scheme which is shortly to be introduced in London. The Cabinet felt they did not have enough information regarding how such a scheme would operate in practice and how the results would be monitored. *In addition it was felt that the impact on the surrounding road network as a result of motorists attempting to avoid the Low Emission Zones could make the situation worse.*”

3.5 With regard to the last sentence of the Cabinet’s response (highlighted in *italics* in the above paragraph) the Scrutiny Steering Board Chairman questioned how the Cabinet could come to such a conclusion with no evidence and this was discussed with the Portfolio Holder. It was pointed out that the Cabinet would criticise the Scrutiny Steering Board if, as part of a scrutiny report, there was no supporting evidence and therefore it was requested that Cabinet should follow the same rules.

3.6 Although it was understood that the Cabinet had resolved that recommendation 1 would be deferred until further information was available regarding the results of the scheme in London, clarification was sought regarding what information the Cabinet would require, who would obtain the information and by when.

3.7 Due to the questions put forward by the Scrutiny Steering Board Chairman, particularly in relation to the comment made by the Cabinet as outlined in paragraph 3.4 of this report highlighted in *italics*, the Scrutiny Steering Board decided that the Cabinet should be requested to reconsider its response to the first recommendation.

3.8 An extract of the Air Quality Scrutiny Report which relates to recommendation 1 is attached as Appendix 1.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications directly related to this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications directly related to this report.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

6.1 The report links to the Council’s Objectives Environment and Improvement.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 There are no risks associated with this report.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no customer implications directly relating to this report.

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. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no Value for Money implications directly relating to this report. However, if the Cabinet decided to approve recommendation 1 then as part of the investigations, consideration would need to be given to Value for Money implications at that time.

11. 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 – the topic “air quality” is environmental so there are environmental implications in relation to the whole of the report.

12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	No – however, is aware that the Scrutiny Steering Board requested this report to be compiled.
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (Partnerships and Projects)	Yes
Executive Director (Services)	Yes
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

13. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards of the District may be affected.

14. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – An extract from the Air Quality Scrutiny Report

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Della McCarthy, Committee Services Officer
E Mail: d.mccarthy@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881407

**Extract from the
Air Quality Scrutiny Report**

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 (NO₂) 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.

Recommendation 1	<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 NO₂ levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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
Financial Implications	<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:

Recommendation 2	<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>
Financial Implications	<p>There are no financial implications relating to this recommendation.</p>

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5TH MARCH 2008

PUBLIC TRANSPORT (BUSES) SCRUTINY REPORT

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey J.P.
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Street Scene and Waste Management Services
Chairman of Scrutiny Task Group	Councillor B. Lewis F. CMI

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 It is a Government requirement that Local Authorities provide a Public Transport Strategy that best meets local needs and provides best value for money, at the same time subsidising services which are considered vital to the public good, thus allowing the community to access social activities, health care and educational amenities.
- 1.2 The role of the Public Transport (Buses) Task Group was to examine the current bus services (or lack of), timetables, bus condition and age, and the general availability and acceptability to current bus users at large within the Bromsgrove District. The attached scrutiny report sets out the findings and recommendations of the Task Group.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are requested to consider and approve the recommendations set out in the attached report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At a meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on the 12th June 2007, it was decided that a Task Group would be established to scrutinise issues relating to public transport in and through the Council's area, with specific reference being made to buses.
- 3.2 The full terms of reference were approved (as amended) 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 "Background and Terms of Reference" in Section 3 of the attached Report.

- 3.4 On 5th February 2008, the Scrutiny Steering Board considered the Scrutiny Report and after discussion with the Task Group Chairman and Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects, the Board agreed to include the following recommendation:

Recommendation 14 - The Task Group Chairman, Councillor B. Lewis F.CMI, be invited to sit on the Joint County and District Town Centre Steering Group to assist the Council in ensuring any approved recommendations contained within this Scrutiny Report are implemented.

- 3.5 At that meeting of Scrutiny Steering Board, subject to recommendation 14 above being included in the final report, the Scrutiny Report, including all recommendations, was approved and it was requested that it be submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The financial implications for the Council are as outlined in the attached report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no significant legal implications, as outlined in the attached report.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 The report links to the Council's Objectives Regeneration and Improvement.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The risk of not approving the recommendations contained within the report is to undermine the Council's commitment to the regeneration of the town centre.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Residents living within the Bromsgrove district will benefit from an improved public transport service if the recommendations contained within the attached scrutiny report are implemented.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Disability Discrimination Act Regulations 2000 govern the provision and minimum standards for various transportation issues, and all buses, regardless of age, must conform to the DDA by 2017. It is hoped, however, that by maintaining a dialogue with the County Council and the various

Operators every effort will be made to achieve such compliance at the earliest opportunity.

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Any projects that are undertaken by the Council as a result of the recommendations contained within this report will be subject to Contract Procedure Rules to ensure value for money in the delivery of services to the community.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues - Possible admin set-up costs connected with the creation of any Partnership Project Team established to plan, fund-raise and implement a new purpose-built town centre bus station for Bromsgrove.
Personnel Implications – Possible implications with the proposed recommendation to liaise with Redditch Borough Council with a view to extending their existing Dial-a-Ride scheme.
Governance/Performance Management -None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 - This report has considered S.17 of the CDA and the duty it imposes, and there are no implications arising from it.
Policy - None
Environmental – If all of the proposals contained within the report are put into place, there should be a marked improvement in public transport arrangements resulting in a better service, and reduced carbon emissions through fewer car journeys.

12. 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
Executive Director (Services)	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	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	No

13. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards of the District are likely to be affected by the contents of the Report.

14. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Public Transport (Buses) Scrutiny Report, including its appendices.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011: Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy
 Passenger Transport Infrastructure Best Practice Report
 Passenger Transport Accessibility Best Practice Report
 Passenger Transport Vehicles & Rolling Stock Best Practice Report
 Traffic Management and Parking for Passengers Best Practice Report
 Passenger Transport Marketing and Information Best Practice Report
 Community Transport Best Practice Report
 Land Use and Development Control for Passenger Transport
 Executive Summaries Best Practice Workshops 6th and 7th Nov. 2007.
 Achieving Disability Equality in the Bromsgrove District
 Local Transport Bill

CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Andy Jessop
 E Mail: andy.jessop@bromsgrove.gov.uk
 Tel: (01527) 881406



Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

SCRUTINY REPORT

PUBLIC TRANSPORT (BUSES) TASK GROUP

—

SCRUTINY REPORT

Completed: January 2008

Committee Services Officer: Andy Jessop

This page is intentionally left blank

TRAVELLING FIRST CLASS?

**SURVEYS, REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC
TRANSPORT (BUSES) TASK GROUP**

OF BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

WORKING WITH OUR PARTNERS TO ACHIEVE:



***A VISION OF A NEW AND PRESTIGIOUS BUS STATION IN THE CENTRE OF
BROMSGROVE***



***MODERN ACCESSIBLE BUSES, SPECIALIST TRANSPORT SERVICES,
BETTER ROUTES, MORE FREQUENT SERVICES, REAL TIME TRAVEL
INFORMATION, BETTER WAITING AREAS, IMPROVED DRIVER TRAINING
AND CUSTOMER SERVICE***

Task Group Members: Councillors B. Lewis F. CMI (Chairman), D. Hancox, Mrs. J.D. Luck, P.M. McDonald and C.R. Scurrell).

18th January 2008

This page is intentionally left blank

CONTENTS

1	Foreword by Task Group Chairman	Page 3
2	Summary of recommendations	Pages 4 – 7
3	Background and terms of reference	Pages 8 – 10
4	Consultation and background research	Pages 11 – 13
5	Making sense of the numbers	Pages 14 – 15
6	A new bus station for Bromsgrove	Pages 16 – 18
7	Improved routes and frequencies	Pages 19 – 22
8	A bus shuttle link from the new railway station	Page 23
9	Improve rolling stock (buses)	Pages 24 – 26
10	Providing new bus shelters	Page 27
11	Transforming Bus Timetable information	Pages 28 – 30
12	Improving Bus Driver skills	Pages 31 – 32
13	List of Appendices	Page 33

This page is intentionally left blank

1 Foreword

I am pleased to present this Scrutiny Report on behalf of the Task Group members, and am indebted to Councillors D. Hancox, Mrs. J. D. Luck, P.M. McDonald and C.R. Scurrrell for their support, assistance and determination in completing this challenging review. I am also very grateful to David McGrath (Facilitator, Link Support Services (UK) Ltd), our Scrutiny Support Officer Andy Jessop, and to Ray Crossland, representing the Bromsgrove Disabled Action Group. Members and officers of Worcestershire County Council Integrated Transport Strategy Group were also very generous in giving their time and co-operation and informing our thinking by attending our Scrutiny meetings.

Our Group carried out two surveys of bus passengers to gather evidence of their experiences and knowledge of bus travel at first hand, and we also invited widespread participation via post and email using the 'Together Bromsgrove' newsletter. Our gratitude is extended to the 257 members of the public who informed us of their experiences, gave us their opinions and forwarded ideas for consideration by the Task Group.

In addition, and to reinforce our Scrutiny, particularly with regards to accessibility and inclusion, the Group appraised the merits of Redditch Borough Council's "Dial-a-Ride" Scheme, and we are particularly grateful to the Peter Rose (Redditch Dial-a-Ride, Shopmobility and Market Manager) for his guidance in this respect. Representatives from the Group also attended a meeting of the Equalities and Diversity Forum, and subsequently considered a report from them entitled "Achieving Disability Equality in the Bromsgrove District" which highlighted (inter-alia) that accessible public transport was needed for disabled people who did not own a car; that transport within the district was poor, and that, accordingly, it was a "number one priority issue."

The review – and this report - has two facets to it:

- (1) it reveals the shortcomings of Bromsgrove Bus Station and its infrastructure, the non-existent bus service to and from the railway station, the general mediocrity of the services currently available and the low level of local public regard; and
- (2) it identifies the potential for Bromsgrove to achieve a new, prestigious station, infrastructure and service that is truly 'fit for purpose' which should inspire current users and entice car owners from their vehicles.

We do not believe that the proposals contained in this report are 'pipe-dreams' or a 'wish list'. We believe that there is an emerging political will and an overwhelming social and environmental case for a radical overhaul of our local transport system within the regional transport context.

Councillor B. Lewis F. CMI,
Chairman, Public Transport (Buses) Task Group,

January 2008.



This page is intentionally left blank

2 Summary of recommendations

1. Establish a Partnership Project Team to plan, raise funds and implement a new purpose-built town centre bus station for Bromsgrove.
Against the backdrop of increasing traffic volumes and its associated adverse effects on congestion, air quality and carbon emissions, together with the timely prioritising of the regeneration of Bromsgrove town centre, this Council should encourage the establishment of a Partnership Project Team consisting of all relevant stakeholders to achieve the best possible result for a new and improved facility on this existing site.
(Cost: It is not envisaged that this will involve any financial implications, other than perhaps some minor initial set-up costs).
2. The need for a major review of routes and frequencies to provide (a) better links to outlying areas (b) better links to major amenities such as Hospitals and (c) evening and Sunday services.
A major complaint which emerged from the surveys and questionnaire replies was that more frequent services and better links were required to outlying areas, key community amenities (e.g. hospitals) and better evening routes and Sunday services were requested. Accordingly, the Task Group are of the view that the County Council, along with bus operators and Bromsgrove District Council should embark on a major review of routes and frequencies to produce new business cases to provide those services required by the community (e.g. a circular service connecting Bromsgrove, Redditch, Worcester, Kidderminster and returning to Bromsgrove).
(Cost: It is envisaged that the County Council would initiate such a review, possibly with the help and co-operation of the Local Strategic Partnership Transport Theme Group, or externally from someone like the Bus Users UK Group).
3. Introduce a bus shuttle service between the proposed new railway station and the town centre.
The new railway station being built by Network Rail will have a “Park-and-Ride” facility adjacent to it, which will be in accordance with the County Councils “gold” or “silver” standard. The Task Group recommend therefore that this Council should participate to the fullest extent in a new partnership aimed at supporting and advising upon the bus interchange facility to the proposed new rail station, e.g., advising on routes and frequency based on local research.
(Cost: This matter should be referred for discussion by the Railway Station Theme Group).
4. Modern accessible bus fleets through proactive involvement by Bromsgrove District Council and Worcestershire County Council to develop a new ‘vehicle rolling stock’ (buses) strategy and bid for funds.
This should be addressed/achieved via the County Council’s rolling stock renewal strategy. The Task Group recommends that this Council supports moves by the County Council to continue to develop such strategy and invites this Council to become proactive partners in future bids for new rolling stock. The Task Group also requests that the Council submits this report as part of the “evidence” required to support such bids.
(Cost: Nil).

5. Joint feasibility study to introduce 'Dial-a-Ride' and other community transport to Bromsgrove.

The Task Group recommend that, in accordance with best practice, preparatory discussions be commenced with Redditch Borough Council to assess the feasibility of a joint bid (via the County Council) for a co-operated Ring-and-Ride scheme, and also that the Council should investigate with the County the potential to introduce a Community Bus Service to further "infill" gaps in current services.

(Cost: Nil. However, there would be a cost implication should a joint scheme with neighbouring Redditch Borough Council for an extended Dial-a-Ride scheme be implemented).

6. Provide new bus shelters and improve waiting areas.

It was noted that the County Council were to introduce a "Worcestershire Standard" bus shelter/stop, which was commended by the Task Group, as it was felt that there is a need for a uniform standard, and they recommend a period of consultation to establish whether (and where) more pick-up points could be located (see below).

The Task Group also requested that, given the implications for winter bus travellers, urgent action should be taken at a number of sites mentioned in the report to repair damaged/vandalised bus shelters.

(Cost: There would be a cost implication for any repairs carried out to shelters, or for the provision of any new/additional shelters within a non-parished area of the District.

7. Consider other (convenient) pick-up areas.

In addition to the need for more (modern) bus shelters, a number of people responding to the surveys indicated that consideration could also be given to (a) an increased number of pick-up points (to bridge the walking gap especially for those with mobility difficulties); and (b) the flexibility to "flag down" drivers in areas where it is safe to do so.

(Cost: Nil).

8. Improve bus time tables and make them more widely available.

The County Council are currently considering the production of a new strategy to apply a consistent approach to the marketing and delivery of information on passenger transport services in Worcestershire, and, as part of such review, will re-assess all their printed, electronic and face-to-face and marketing information.

Accordingly, the Task Group (a) commends the move towards a "best practice strategy" by the County Council in this regard, and (b) urges Bromsgrove District Council to use a variety of "engagement" methods available to it (e.g. Together Bromsgrove, website, etc.), to consult with the public further to support the County's preparation of a new marketing and information strategy.

(Costs: Nil).

9. Offer Bromsgrove District as a 'pilot' area (to the County Council) for the introduction of Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) at major amenities.

Clearly Bromsgrove should not be left behind in the move towards modernising the information (and methods of providing information) to our bus travellers. There are a range of initiatives being planned or suggested, from a new railway station to a new bus station and town centre redevelopment, which makes this essential. The Task Group therefore recommends that the Council becomes a pilot authority to work with

our County Council partners to develop and implement a local best practice marketing and implementation strategy which can become a model for the County. (Costs :Nil).

10. Introduce a 'London Underground' style bus route map.
In order to help local residents plan and envisage travel around the area, it is recommended that, as part of the review, a route map be produced similar to the London Underground system map. The map would be based on a North/South and East/West configuration to enable it to capture the main destinations, i.e. Birmingham/Bromsgrove/Worcester (being North/South) and Redditch, Bromsgrove, Stourbridge (being East/West). This would enable all principal villages and estates along these routes to be listed together with the appropriate bus service number. (Costs: Nil – this could be something that the County might sponsor/organise the launch of a design award)
11. Improved driver training to improve customer service.
The County Council are seeking to ensure the development and delivery of appropriate training and assessment programmes from September 2008 (Passengers) and September 2009 for all small and medium sized operations in Worcestershire. The Task Group therefore (i) commends the County's Strategy for bus driver training to this Council; (ii) asks that a copy of this report be forwarded to all bus operators drawing their attention to the broad issue of reminding drivers of their duty of care and courtesy to passengers; and (iii) recommends that a newsletter in this regard be sent from the County Council to all operators and drivers. (Costs: Nil).
12. Proactive involvement by Bromsgrove District Council in the Worcestershire County Council Transport Strategy.
Having established a good working relationship with the relevant officers from the County Council during the consideration of this issue, it is the view of the Task Group that this Council should continue to foster this good relationship through a proactive involvement in the Worcestershire County Council Transport Strategy. (Costs: Nil).
13. A new Bus Station for Bromsgrove
The existing bus station is wholly owned by Worcester County Council, and, as such, future development would be their primary responsibility. Our liaison with the County has engendered a positive response leading to a general appreciation that
 - (a) It is essential that the town centre bus station is completely rebuilt (preferably on the existing site) and should involve public consultation at the design and layout stage, which should include 'County Standard' bus shelters and signage;
 - (b) The site of the present bus station is the preferred site according to the public survey, and lends itself to be developed incorporating an Information Centre and perhaps a Police Drop-In Centre; and
 - (c) The existing toilet block should be re-located, possibly on ground opposite the Drill Hall)

Our discussions with Worcestershire County Council have revealed a willingness to establish a Joint Working (or Focus) Group with the critical focus of achieving a new Bus Station for Bromsgrove.

(Costs: There will no doubt be a cost implication in effecting (a), (b) and (c) above, but which are unspecified at this point in time.)

14. Joint County and District Town Centre Steering Group

The Task Group Chairman, Councillor B. Lewis F.CMI, be invited to sit on the Joint County and District Town Centre Steering Group to assist the Council in ensuring any approved recommendations contained within this Scrutiny Report are implemented.

(Costs: Nil).

3 Background and terms of reference

'Increasing traffic volumes and its associated adverse effects on congestion, air quality and carbon emissions is a key problem....'

The situation is likely to continue to deteriorate as long as the private car remains the dominant mode of travel choice, even for short journeys...The proposed growth in travel demand arising from the Regional Spatial Strategy puts further emphasis on the needs to provide a sustainable and realistic alternative to the car for certain types of journey'

*(Passenger Transport Accessibility Best Practice Report November 2007 –
Worcestershire County Council)*

Terms of Reference

At a meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on the 12th June 2007 it was decided that a task group would be established to scrutinise issues relating to public transport in and through the Council's area, with specific reference being made to buses.

The Task Group's terms of reference, which were compiled by the appointed Chairman, Councillor B. Lewis F. CMI, were approved (as amended) by the Board at its meeting held on 3rd July 2007, although the Chairman did remark at the first meeting of the Task Group that there was a possibility that the work of the Group might involve some "cross-border" enquiries (i.e. transport systems employed by West Midlands/Worcestershire County Councils). Further comments were made at a subsequent meeting of the Cabinet, where the Leader suggested that the scope of the Task Group should be extended to include the impact of the proposed re-development of the Bromsgrove Railway Station, particularly with regard to issues associated with the relocation option which would allow for increased parking capacity, a bus interchange facility, and potential for a Park-and-Ride station in a strategic location. Comments were also expressed that transport links to railway stations across the whole of the district should also be covered by the scrutiny exercise. Whilst it was conceded that these latter points were extremely important and relevant issues, and that due consideration would be given during the overall deliberations, it was considered that, with the timescale available to the Task Group for consideration and report, they would not take up a predominant amount of the Groups' time and/or recommendations. (Indeed comments were made that this was an issue worthy of a possible scrutiny exercise of its own). For information, the full terms of reference are set out in the attached **Appendix 1**.

Summary

It is a Government requirement that Local Authorities provide a Public Transport Strategy that best meets local needs and provides best value for money, at the same time subsidising services which are considered vital to the public good, thus allowing the community to access social activities, health care and educational amenities.

In this regard, a Local Transport Bill was published in November 2007, and covered four key policy areas, namely (i) Improving local bus services; (ii) Reforming local transport governance; (iii) Updating the legal framework for local road pricing schemes; and (iv) Delivering the new regulatory framework for bus services (See attached notes from the Local Government Association at **Appendix 2**).

Briefly, the role of the Public Transport (Buses) Task Group was to examine the current bus services (or the lack of), timetables, bus condition and age, and the general availability and acceptability to current bus users at large within the Bromsgrove District.

Methodology

There were a total of 9 Task Group meetings, and at the first meeting a schedule of work was compiled, and the group decided on a range of activities, including

- Endeavours to establish who was operating the various bus services, and to interview the key Personnel if possible;
- An examination of timetables, fares and available subsidies;
- Liaison with Worcestershire County Council to establish their remit for services, current thinking and opportunities to work together;
- Discussions with representatives from Equalities and Disability groups regarding accessibility and inclusion;
- Involvement of the District Council's Assistant Chief Executive and Transport and Engineering Officers;

To bring together the above-mentioned points a "One Page Strategy" was adopted (see **Appendix 3**) to focus and clarify members' aims into specific areas i.e.,

- (a) Listing 'ambitions' to promote 'step change' and creative thinking;
- (b) Establishing current performance levels so that our 'starting point' for the review was grounded in reality;
- (c) Wide consultation of the travelling public with a view to establishing current satisfaction levels and areas for improvement;
- (d) Consultation with strategic partners and other transport experts;
- (e) Development and resource support for members (e.g. training, admin and facilitation support);
- (f) Project management planning (i.e. who does what, when, how and to what timescale); and
- (g) Anticipated outcomes.

This approach meant that the scrutiny investigation was not simply an exercise in 'fault finding' or appraising the 'status quo' but instead a purposeful, evidence based examination of transport issues (focused on buses) and an earnest attempt to articulate a new, achievable vision for Bromsgrove

This page is intentionally left blank

4 Consultation and background research

Opening Gambit – press release

At the start of the review a press release was issued by the Council, and the Public were encouraged to submit comments and suggestions relating to bus services in the town and its environs. Nineteen letters and emails were received and it became obvious that more work was needed to engage directly with people who had views but did not tend to correspond with the Council.

Contacting Bus Operators

The Task Group Chairman also wrote to the Managing Directors and Chief Executives of the fourteen bus companies Operating in/through Bromsgrove (**Appendix 4**) enclosing a questionnaire and seeking their views. Sadly, only five replies were received, two of which were in the form of personal interviews, with Mr. Mark Davis, proprietor of MRD Travel, and Mr. Sean Simpson, Network Performance Manager, First Travel.

Face-to-face surveys of bus users

After opting to apply a more hands-on approach, the Task Group undertook **two** face-to-face surveys of the public at Bromsgrove bus station and obtained the views of **107** concessionary travellers. A copy of the questionnaire is attached at **Appendix 5**.

Survey no.1 was held in the late morning and resumed in the late afternoon of Wednesday 10th October 2007, and collected (in the main) views from concessionary bus pass holders. This survey also captured objective data regarding the **condition of buses** (e.g. age and accessibility) with some subjective comments regarding external appearance.

Survey no.2 was conducted in the early evening of the 18th December 2007 and involved interviews of some **40** commuters.

Whilst carrying out these surveys we also sought views of a small number of bus drivers, people who were considering using the buses, and two local beat Police Officers.



Reply form in 'Together Bromsgrove' magazine

The survey was designed by the Task Group in conjunction with officers from the County Council and also became the basis for a separate postal survey (i.e. reply form) which was issued in the winter edition of Bromsgrove District Council's own publication 'Together Bromsgrove'. The reply form was aimed at both bus users and non-users. This 'easy to use' format was more successful than the initial press release and generated **91** responses.

IMPROVEMENT **Together**
Bromsgrove

Bus User Survey for Bromsgrove District Council

Q1 How many times per week do you use bus services?
 Every day
 At the weekend
 Once a week
 Once a fortnight
 Once a month
 Other (please specify)

Q2 Why do you usually take the bus?
 Work
 Shopping/leisure
 Social
 Visiting family/friends
 Education
 Hospital
 Tourism
 Other (please specify)

Q3 Which of these things would encourage you to use the buses more often? Number your top 3 with 1 being the most important?
 More convenient pick up/drop off points
 Improved waiting areas
 More direct routes
 Cheaper fares
 More information about public transport
 More frequent service
 Cleaner buses
 More accessible buses e.g. lower platforms
 Reliable service
 I use it as much as I am able to already
 Other (please specify)

Q4 Do you have a car at your disposal today?
 Yes No

Q5 Where do you CURRENTLY look for passenger travel information? • Please tick ALL that apply.
 Local media
 Leaflet
 Website
 Telephone
 On the bus
 By text/SMS
 At the bus stop
 I just know

Q6 Where would you PREFER to look for passenger travel information? • Please tick ALL that apply.
 Local media
 Leaflet
 Website
 Telephone
 On the bus
 By text/SMS
 At the bus stop
 I just know

A FEW BRIEF DETAILS ABOUT YOURSELF PLEASE

Q7 How old are you/What age group do you belong to? • Please tick ONE only
 18 or under
 19-24
 25-34
 35-49
 50-64
 65+

Q8 If you are 60 years old or over, do you have a concessionary travel pass?
 Yes No

ARE THERE ANY OTHER COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD?
 YES NO

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE KEPT INFORMED OF OUR REVIEW OF BUSES?
 YES NO
 IF YES - PLEASE SUPPLY DETAILS E.G. NAME ADDRESS/EMAIL

worcestershire COUNTY COUNCIL

11

In total, our consultation exercise resulted in responses from **257** members of the public being received.

Equalities and Diversity

As referred to earlier, as part of the terms of reference, the Task Group covered accessibility and suitability of bus services for people with mobility difficulties. It is interesting to note the comments contained in a separate report recently completed and entitled "Achieving Disability Equality in the Bromsgrove District" by Rhyan Berrigan. For completeness, a copy of part of that report is attached (**Appendix 6**), and the parts of the report which related to public transport are shown on page 19, paragraph 4.3.

Members of the Disability Action Group also very kindly reciprocated with our visit to them by attending some Task Group meetings and participating in our survey work.

The Expert View

Mr. Steve Harrison (Project Leader, Transportation) Worcester County Council and his colleagues were immensely helpful in providing us with background data, reports and examples of 'best practice' which has inspired us to be positive, forward looking and creative in what we can achieve for Bromsgrove.

Likewise the Chairs' review of the Ring and Ride Service in neighbouring Redditch was ably supported by Mr Peter Rose during a 'benchmarking visit' in November '07.

To avoid re-inventing the wheel:

Worcestershire County Council have recently (November 2007) published a series of Best Practice Reports to 'support the development and provision of a high quality passenger transport system...' We have drawn on these reports to (in part) substantiate and inform our recommendations and commend these reports to Bromsgrove District Council. It is our hope that, in turn, our work helps to inform the Bromsgrove dimension of these County-wide reports i.e.

- **Passenger Transport Infrastructure Best Practice Report**
- **Passenger Transport Accessibility Best Practice Report**
- **Passenger Transport Vehicles & Rolling Stock Best Practice Report**
- **Traffic Management and Parking for Passenger Best Practice Report**
- **Passenger Transport Marketing and Information Best Practice Report**
- **Community Transport Best Practice Report**
- **Land Use and Development Control for Passenger Transport**
- **Executive Summaries Best Practice Workshops 6th and 7th Nov 2007**

Source www.worcestershire.gov.uk/transport

This page is intentionally left blank

5 Making sense of the numbers

Statistics can prove or disprove any point. There are inevitably potential issues of (a) surveyor bias (which we have done our best to remove); (b) the vested interests expressed when talking to professionals and interest groups (e.g. bus drivers, operators, strategic partners etc.); and (c) whether the people (for example) who respond to postal surveys are typical of the travelling public. In addition, our 'consultees' expressed multiple views, and some of the opinions captured were sometimes hurried as passengers boarded their buses.

Nevertheless we have endeavoured to speak to *'the ordinary man and woman on the Bromsgrove omnibus'* and there are a number of irrefutable trends that emerge from the survey work. The trends will be obvious to anyone who spends even a short period of time investigating this matter and they cannot be ignored.

Of 91 **postal replies** received via the Together Bromsgrove survey;

- **30** respondents said that more **frequent services** was their **first priority**;
- **22** respondents said that more **frequent services** was their **second priority**, and
- **5** respondents said that it was their **third priority**.

Therefore 57 people (nearly 63%) rated this as one of the top three priorities.

Other main priorities included the need for:

- More information (12 first priorities);
- A reliable service (11 first priorities);
- More convenient drop of points (9 first priorities);
- Improved waiting areas (6 first priorities);
- More direct routes (6 first priorities).

In our first "face-to-face" survey of 107 bus users at Bromsgrove Bus Station, 88 people asked us to **record specific comments on the survey sheet (indicating a strong opinion)**. Of these:

- **35** people made comments relating to **poor frequency and gaps in routes**;
- **13** comments were received concerning the need to improve the **bus station**;
- **5** comments described '**rowdiness**' on the buses by school children;
- **9** people expressed dissatisfaction with **timetabling** arrangements;
- **9** people made adverse comments regarding **drivers**;
- **17** respondents felt that they were generally satisfied but added a caveat stating that **bus frequency and the bus station need to be improved**.

In our second face-to-face survey involving 40 commuters, **strong opinions** were received from 32 people. Of these:

- **17** comments were received concerning the need to **improve the bus station**;

- **13** people made comments relating to **poor frequency and gaps in routes**;
- **2** made comments regarding 'nefarious behaviour' of school children in and around the station area.

In both 'station surveys' it was noticeable that people were highly likely to comment on the area that they were standing in whilst responding to the survey – particularly if it was (as with the December survey) cold, raining, with little shelter, poor seating and a predominance of litter!!

To summarise therefore the issues commented upon most often are:

- (a) The need to improve the **FREQUENCY** and **RELIABILITY** of the bus services;
- (b) The need to bridge **GAPS** in **ROUTES** and;
- (c) the need to **IMPROVE THE BUS STATION** itself;

Other issues that were mentioned less often – but are nevertheless very important are also dealt with in this report e.g. the need for

- (d) greater **ACCESSIBILITY** on the buses for people with mobility difficulties;
- (e) improved **ROLLING STOCK** and **DRIVER TRAINING**;
- (f) a reduction in **NUISANCE** and **LITTER** caused by young people using the bus services and station; and
- (g) a new railway interchange.

This report therefore attempts to provide realistic solutions to these issues which, we feel, **can** be achieved with our partners.

6 A new bus station for Bromsgrove

To say that Bromsgrove has a bus station is somewhat of a misnomer. It is more accurately described as a 'linear arrangements of bus stops' poorly suited for that purpose.

The station is characterised by:

- **Poor access for bus drivers** (who sometimes have to circle to gain access – and are unable to stop at designated points);
- **Poor waiting areas** that are inadequately sheltered from the elements (of particular concern given the potential for hypothermia for the elderly);
- **Inadequate timetable information and no 'real time' information;**
- **Poor signage** which adds to the feeling of **confusion and congestion;**
- A general appearance of being **run down with poorly maintained public toilets;**
- Frequent complaints of **poor links to outlying areas and inadequate service frequency** and **unhelpful drivers;**
- Frequent complaints of **rowdy school children littering the vicinity;** and
- A feeling that Bromsgrove Bus station is the '**poor relation**' compared to others areas (Worcester, Kidderminster etc.).

In their own words, here is a sample of comments from survey respondents:-

"The bus station is dirty, badly maintained, few seats or timetables"

"Provide better cover from the rain"

"Buses don't stop at designated places - very confusing"

"The bus station is improved but still very poor compared to Worcester and Kidderminster"

"The bus station is appalling – there are no seats"

"Don't re-site the bus station to Recreation Road – this will involve an extra walk for the elderly and mobility impaired"

"Switch off engines at Bromsgrove bus station"

"I am partially sighted- there is a lack of shelter when waiting"

*“Buses and coaches easily congest the area - have to circle 3 times to get in”
(DRIVER)*

“Put the number 93 on the bus stop so people know where it will stop” (DRIVER)

“The toilets at the station are appalling”

“Provide better cover from the rain...I’m cold and wet”

Bromsgrove bus station is tolerated by the local community as a ‘necessary evil’ but it is certainly not an advert to promote increased use of the service.

A new Bus Station for Bromsgrove

The existing bus station is wholly owned by Worcester County Council, and, as such, future development would be their primary responsibility. Our liaison with the County has engendered a positive response leading to a general appreciation that

- (d) It is essential that the town centre bus station is completely rebuilt (preferably on the existing site) and should involve public consultation at the design and layout stage, which should include ‘County Standard’ bus shelters and signage;
- (e) The site of the present bus station is the preferred site according to the public survey, and lends itself to be developed incorporating an Information Centre and perhaps a Police Drop-In Centre; and
- (f) The existing toilet block should be re-located, possibly on ground opposite the Drill Hall)

Our discussions with Worcestershire County Council have revealed a willingness to establish a Joint Working (or Focus) Group with the critical focus of achieving a new Bus Station for Bromsgrove.

(Cost: There will no doubt be a cost implication in effecting (a), (b) and (c) above, but which are unspecified at this point in time.)

Bromsgrove – The Way Forward

- A Partnership Approach (for bus and rail stations):
 - County & District Councils (officers & members)
 - Infrastructure providers (e.g Network Rail)
 - Service operators
 - User representatives
- Agree outcomes;
 - Quality of facilities
 - Capacity
 - Implementation programme
 - Ongoing funding
- Identify costs
- Identify funding
- Deliver scheme

We therefore recommend that Bromsgrove District Council agree to initiate and participate to the fullest extent in a new partnership focused on achieving a new bus station for Bromsgrove

We currently have this:



Linear stops/poor seating
A narrow slip road prone to congestion



Poorly presented
time-table Information



Culverts used for dumping
Extensive littering

Working with our partners we COULD have something more like this:



This page is intentionally left blank

7 Improved routes and frequency

A major complaint which emerged from both the 'face to face' survey work and the "Together Bromsgrove" questionnaire establishes the requirement for more frequent bus services and better links to

- (a) **Provide new or extended services to outlying areas where residents feel cut off and unable to use public transport;**
- (b) **Provide better links to key community amenities (such as hospitals)** where there is obvious demand but limited and inconvenient supply (e.g. services finishing before visiting hours); and
- (c) **Provide new and better evening routes and Sunday services** as it is apparent that a lack of these services frustrates the use of other public amenities.

Improved Routes and Frequency

A lack of frequency and gaps in routes and services was **the** issue most complained about in the surveys undertaken.

The Task Group is of the view therefore that the County Council, in conjunction with its bus operators and Bromsgrove District Council, should embark on a major review of routes and frequencies to produce new business cases to provide those services required by the community.

(Costs: Nil)

Section 9 of this report expands on this recommendation to include a review of rolling stock (and funding bids) as part of the County Council's move to develop a 'Vehicles and Rolling Stock Strategy for Worcestershire'

Below are the details, comments and suggestions received from current bus users which underpin our conclusions:

(a) Provide new or extended services to outlying areas where residents feel cut off and unable to use public transport

In their own words: LINKS TO WYTHALL / HOLLYWOOD / CHARFORD / KIDDERMINSTER AND HAGLEY

"I Live in Wythall- can't get to Bromsgrove without going to Redditch or Brum"

"Wythall and Hollywood only have an hourly bus service- forces us to use car"

"I can't get from Birmingham to Wythall at night - can't go to the theatre"

" We are cut off and can't use buses"

"A Sunday and evening service is needed for Wythall"

"More Sunday buses in Charford"

"More frequent service needed through Belbroughton, currently every 1.5 hours"

"The last bus from Kidderminster to Bromsgrove is at 4.30pm !"

"143 service has been reduced - Birmingham Rd/Lickey end residents don't have bus route"

"Hagley is very poorly served. Some of the 192 service axed recently"

"Hagley, Romsley, Clent, Bromsgrove not linked up"

"The Hagley link is terrible"

"I can't get home to Redditch from Bromsgrove after 6.00pm"

"I can't get to Redditch from Romsley in time for work. Would use bus if I could."

"Very poor service which is unreliable, can only use car"

Services criticised for poor frequency included the 93, 141, 143, 144, 145, 177, 192, 202, 318 and 627.

It is apparent, therefore, that the bus services connecting Bromsgrove with Birmingham, Redditch and other outlying areas are **not satisfying public demand**. The survey illustrates the demand for improvement.

(b) Provide better links to key community amenities

The population of Bromsgrove is served principally by four hospitals. The scrutiny review found that evening visiting to all, with the exception of the Princess of Wales hospital, was not possible as the bus services were not compatible with visiting times.

A similar situation is evident on Sundays, when hospital visiting is more convenient to most.

Bus services (in general) from Bromsgrove to the various hospitals is severely criticised for the lack of appropriate service – it is felt that this must be addressed sooner rather than later as we have an ageing population which will, by definition, be more likely to require hospital services and will need the support of family visits.

In their own words: LINKS TO LOCAL HOSPITALS

“I work at Bromsgrove Hospital (POW). The Sunday bus is every two hours, the 334 and 343 leave Bromsgrove within four minutes of each other-stagger them to provide a better service”

“I am Disabled – it is a nightmare since they stopped the 143 route(Catshill to the Alex Hospital)”

“More buses needed at night on 143 - they finish too early for those visiting Hospital”

“I live in Hollywood. The only bus from the Alex Hospital is the 178 Johnsons Travel. It leaves at 17.39 but visiting time is until 8.00 p.m.”

“We need more frequent links to HOSPITALS in Redditch & Bromsgrove - means long waits”

“X3 no longer stops at PRINCESS OF WALES & ALEXANDRA HOSPITALS”

“Direct bus from Bromsgrove to Alex hospital please”

“Kidderminster hospital bus should go to Redditch hospital without us having to change bus”

“Would like 3rd bus to Redditch hospital from Catshill’.

(c) Provide new and better evening routes and Sunday services as it is apparent that a lack of services frustrates the opportunities to use other public amenities.

In their own words: IMPROVE SUNDAY AND EVENING SERVICES

“Can’t get home to Redditch from Bromsgrove after 6pm -therefore can’t socialise in Bromsgrove”

“More evening buses between BROMSGROVE and Redditch”

“Alvechurch needs a better weekend service and extra morning buses”

“Need to re-introduce the evening service on the 177”

“The last bus from Kidderminster to Bromsgrove is 4.30 p.m. - needs to be later”

“Stoke Prior needs a Sunday service”

“More Sunday services in Charford”

“A Sunday and evening service for Wythall’

“Sunday and Bank Holiday buses please for Wythall/Hollywood”

“Better weekend service and extra morning buses for Alvechurch”

A specialist Sunday Service provided by the County or “a. n. other” bus operator could be the solution.

The Task Group noted that with the introduction of cross-country ‘concessionary’ bus passes scheduled to commence in April 2008, it is conceivable that there will be an increase in the number of passenger journeys – and therefore increasing levels of frustration felt by passengers at the poor frequency and gaps in routes and service.

The Task Group recommends that Worcester County Council investigates the opportunity and business case to provide, via a bus operator or through one of its own County-owned (and branded) buses, to complete a circular service connecting Bromsgrove, Redditch, Worcester, Kidderminster, and returning to Bromsgrove (i.e. a circular route).

8 A bus shuttle link from the new railway station

The new railway station being built by Network Rail will have a 'park and ride' facility adjacent to it. The 'park and ride' area will be in accordance with Worcester County Councils' 'Gold' or 'Silver' standard.

It is considered essential that that the proposed bus interchange (providing the shuttle service to the town) is completed simultaneously with the other works.

A number of comments were received regarding poor links between buses and the rail service e.g.,

"The 143 from Redditch doesn't give enough time to pick up train passengers – we need a Station Shuttle Service"

"All buses should link up to the new station that I heard about".

In the County Council's most recent best practice publication 'Executive Summaries' Best Practice Workshops 6th and 7th of November 2007, it is clear that new Rail and Bus Stations should operate to the 'Gold or Silver Standard'. In relation to bus interchange facilities this includes:

'ADEQUATE CAPACITY FOR ALL SERVICES: Sufficient bus bays/platforms/layover facilities to accommodate existing levels of service with sufficient capacity/space for future expansion' and....

FREE CAR PARKING: For passenger transport ticket holders and bona-fide bus/rail users. All stations are to be treated as Park-and-Ride sites' (page iv)

We therefore recommend that Bromsgrove District Council agrees to participate to the fullest extent in a new partnership aimed at supporting and advising upon the bus interchange facility to the proposed new rail station – e.g. advising on routes and frequency based on local research

This page is intentionally left blank

9 Improve rolling stock (buses)

“There is clear evidence that improving the quality of passenger transport vehicles has a major role in supporting balanced and integrated transport strategies. Passenger transport vehicles meeting the needs of users in terms of safety, accessibility, capacity, comfort and information can support the development and funding of a passenger transport network offering a realistic and sustainable alternative to the car”

(Passenger Transport Vehicles and Rolling Stock Best Practice Report Nov 2007).

So how good is the bus ‘rolling stock’ serving the people of Bromsgrove – and does it need to be upgraded? During the first ‘face to face’ survey at Bromsgrove Bus Station, one of the Task Group members recorded details of the number of buses frequenting the site, their age (based on registration plate) and made a subjective judgement on the external appearance (e.g. clean or not).

Comments were also made by our surveyor regarding the age and condition of buses, together with their ability to accommodate wheelchairs, a pram or a shopping trolley. In short, the age and accessibility of buses left a lot to be desired.

The survey indicated the following:

- 26 **different** buses arrived at the bus station (a number of local route buses made a number of “repeat” journeys while we were on site);
- 16 were managed by “FIRST” (61.5%);
- The average age of the “FIRST” buses was **7 years old**;
- The average age of other buses was **9 years old**;
- The oldest bus operated was by “CLEARWAYS”, which was **seventeen years old** (1990);
- The general overall visual impression of all buses was that of “*ok/ reasonably clean*”; and
- Both “FIRST” and “LUDLOWS” had low floor entrance capabilities but none of the buses could be said to have all of the facilities needed to encourage use by people with mobility difficulties, as referred to below.

(N.B. Subsequent to the surveys undertaken by the Task Group, a Vehicle Examiner from the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) has conducted vehicle condition checks at the Bus Station, during which he spoke to a number of drivers, reminding them of the legalities of leaving their engines running unnecessarily, and also of the damage to the environment and the health risk such action poses to the general public within the vicinity of the bus station).

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Regulations 2000

These govern the provision and minimum standards for various features including:

- A space for a wheelchair with suitable safety provisions
- A boarding device to enable wheelchair users to get on and off vehicles
- A minimum number of priority seats on buses for disabled passengers
 - The size and height of steps
 - Handrails to assist disabled people
- Colour contrasting of features such as handrails and steps to help partially sighted people
 - Easy to use bell pushes throughout a bus
- Audible and visual signals to stop a bus or request a boarding device
 - Equipment to display the route and destination

The view from our expert adviser on accessibility (who was present at the survey) Mr Ray Crossland is:

"I see no evidence that bus operators are fully 'gearing up' to serve the needs of people with mobility difficulties (or even carrying heavy loads). Even if people with mobility difficulties can access the bus through low level platforms, it is then extremely difficult for them to move around. This means that a crucial part of the community is discouraged from using the buses."

The Task Group supports this view and none of our surveyors (or passengers) felt that Bromsgrove is served by modern, well equipped and fully accessible bus fleets.

From a legal perspective we believe that all **new** buses must now conform to the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and that all buses, regardless of age, must conform by 2017.

However, by virtue of the cost of DDA compliant buses, even at the "second-owner" stage, it is questionable whether the smaller operators can sustain the ever-increasing costs based on their current business models. This has 'knock-on' effects for the increasing aged rolling stock ranging from poorer air quality from inefficient engines to a general deterrent to travel by bus.

The need to support the development and introduction of new, suitable rolling stock through subsidies is overwhelming. The position of our partners at the County Council is clear and positive and involves drawing together a vehicle and rolling stock strategy for Worcestershire.

- *'for inclusion within the Worcestershire Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy'...and to*
- *Provide the evidence base required to underpin funding bids to external bodies (such as the Dept of Transport) for enhancement of the Worcestershire passenger transport network' (page i Executive Summary)*

An important addition to the establishment of appropriate and modern rolling stock for Bromsgrove would be through the introduction of a 'Ring-and-Ride' and Community Taxi, or similar scheme. For clarity:

A Ring-and-Ride/or Dial-a-Ride is a 'door to door' service which is pre-booked by individuals. These individuals become members of the sponsoring organisation and pay a fare. The service is usually grant funded and operates using minibuses or cars.

This is different to a Community Bus Service/Community Taxi scheme whereby minibuses are operated by volunteers and paid drivers serving regular routes to published timetables – available to all members of the public.

We have certainly found demand for both services. For the Ring-and-Ride Scheme it is possible to envisage a link between (or expansion of) the currently successful service in Redditch to provide an efficient and effective Bromsgrove/Redditch service facility. (Further details of the Redditch scheme can be obtained by telephoning 01527 64910, or by visiting the website www.google.co.uk and keying in Redditch Dial-a-Ride).

Approaches for funding could be made via the County Rolling Stock Strategy for start up Capital and Revenue costs for both Ring-and-Ride and Community Bus Services. It is worthy of note that the annual cost to Redditch Borough Council for the 'Ring-and-Ride' scheme is approximately £300,000 - however, some relief is available by way of grants and fares recovery.

In their own words: RING-AND-RIDE SERVICE

"I would like a ring-and-ride service like they have elsewhere. I have 2 sons – both in wheelchairs"

"We need a ring-and-ride because there is no bus service from Hollywood to Bromsgrove - I'm 76"

"A ring-and-ride for Wythall please".

This Task Group therefore:

- | |
|--|
| <p>(a) Supports moves by the County to develop a Vehicles and Rolling Stock Strategy and invites this Council to become proactive partners in future bids for new rolling stock;</p> <p>(b) Requests that the Council submits this report as part of the 'evidence' required to support such bids;</p> <p>(c) Commences preparatory discussions with Redditch Borough Council to assess the feasibility of a joint bid (via the County) for a co-operated ring-and-ride scheme; and</p> <p>(d) That Bromsgrove District Council should also investigate – with the County Council – the potential to introduce a Community Bus Service to further 'infill' gaps in current services.</p> |
|--|

This page is intentionally left blank

10 Providing new bus shelters

The Worcestershire County Council's Transport Strategy identifies that a 'Worcester Standard' of bus shelter/stop will be introduced. This will bring uniformity across the County, save for a variation in style to suit village scenes. It is conceivable that in future, Parish Councils will be asked to contribute to the funding of village bus shelters.

This approach should be encouraged as the way forward and is **recommended**.

Certainly there is some evidence of public dissatisfaction with the condition (and lack of modernisation) of bus stops, e.g.,

"Other places have decent bus stops and shelters - we're not very good at those"

"Proper seats in bus shelters please"

"Solar powered stops and shelters to provide information about the next bus".

There were also comments regarding the need to repair specific bus stops/shelters, e.g.,

"Replace bus shelters in Marlbrook"

"Re-instate bus shelter by the Museum in Bromsgrove. It was well used."

"Shelter needed in Belbroughton, outside Talbot"

"More bus shelters in Charford"

"Bus shelter o/s St Chads Church in Rubery has a leaking roof and is vandalised"

"Please repair seat in Alvechurch to Redditch Bus stop - Parish Council won't do it because of vandalism"

"Cleaner buses please and MORE bus shelters".

In addition to the need for more (modern) bus shelters, a number of people during our surveys mentioned that consideration could also be given to:

(a) an increased number of pick-up points (to bridge the walking gap especially for those with mobility difficulties); and

(b) Flexibility to 'flag down' drivers in areas where it is safe to do so.

This Task Group commends the need for a uniform standard and recommends a period of consultation to establish whether (and where) more pick-up points could be located. The Task Group requests urgent action to repair the damaged/vandalised shelters identified above given the implications for winter bus travellers.

This page is intentionally left blank

11 Transforming Bus Timetable Information

Each local authority has a statutory duty to provide bus service information (Transport Act 2000). There is however no statutory duty to market the local passenger transport network although the need to do so proactively in conjunction with our County Council partners has become apparent throughout this review.

Our survey research found widespread dissatisfaction with the lack of availability (and accuracy) of timetable information.

In their own words: THE NEED TO IMPROVE INFORMATION

“More timetables at bus station, also at Morrisons and bus stops in Aston Fields”

“Not enough timetables at Bromsgrove Station”

“Timetables needed for all services at the Bus station”

“Don’t put timetables too high on bus shelters so we can’t read them”

“Catshill timetable info is limited – I get it from Library - need more details

“A map showing routes is a good idea”

“Notify local routes in local papers”

“Real-time electric info at bus stops”

“Ink smudges easily on timetables”

“Timetable information is FALSE on the bus stops Redditch to B'ham - says there is NO Sunday service”

“Need better timetables so that I know where buses go and can plan trips”

“Proper timetable books needed”

“Changes in timetables are not properly announced”

“This timetable at the bus station is 2005 therefore out of date”

“More accurate timetables at station please”.

In order for bus travellers to plan their routes and time efficiently, bus time tables must be:

- Current
- Available at bus stops, on buses, local shops, community locations and other amenities (e.g. Railway station)
- Free
- Relevant to a particular route
- Updated

Timetables should also be

- Displayed in larger print or Braille for those with visual impairments
- Available in a range of format from electronic media, paper format to ‘electronic real time passenger information displays (RTPI) at shelters
- Positioned appropriately
- Using quality printed materials which does not decay, fade or smudge easily.

Clearly there is scope for the County Council, Bus Operators and Bromsgrove District Council to work in concert to provide high quality local travel information.

The County Council is currently considering the production of a new strategy to

“apply a consistent approach to the marketing and delivery of information on passenger transport services in Worcestershire. It is also recommended (in the document referred to below) that ‘Worcestershire County Council prepare a review of all their printed, electronic and face-to-face information and marketing information.....”

Further, (and under the Transport Act 2000),

“it is recommended that, where an operator fails to ensure the provision of required information, Worcestershire County Council uses its powers under the Transport Act 2000 to arrange for the necessary information to be made available to the public and to recover from the operator the reasonable costs of doing so’.

Page iii

The Task Group therefore:

- **Commends the move towards a ‘best practice strategy’ by the County Council**
- **Urges Bromsgrove District Council to use a variety of ‘engagement’ methods available to it (e.g. ‘Together Bromsgrove’, website etc.) to consult with the public further to support the County’s preparation of a new marketing and information strategy.**

Insofar as Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) is concerned, Worcester County Council are looking to work with other local authorities in this regard:

“to provide where appropriate,(and subject to funding), passenger transport information in electronic format...at key passenger transport interchanges such as bus stations and rail stations.”

The further roll-out of RTPI systems to other locations should be explored in terms of costs and benefits. These additional locations should include:

- *Hospitals*
- *Town and City Centres*
- *Major Leisure and sport facilities*
- *Along key passenger transport service corridors that carry a volume of passengers.”*

Page xii

Clearly Bromsgrove should not be left behind in the move towards modernising the information (and methods of providing information) to our bus travellers. There are also a range of initiatives being planned or suggested (from a new railway station to a new bus station and town centre re-development) which makes this essential.

This Task Group therefore recommends that Bromsgrove District Council becomes a pilot authority to work with our County partners to develop and implement a local best practice marketing and implementation strategy which can become a model for the County.

A London Underground style route map for Bromsgrove and the surrounding area.

In order to help local residents plan and envisage travel around the area it is recommended that (as part of the above mentioned review) a route map be produced similar to the 'London Underground System' map.

The map should be based on a North/South and East/West configuration to enable it to capture the main destinations, i.e., Birmingham, Bromsgrove, Worcester (being North/South) and Redditch, Bromsgrove, Stourbridge (being East/West).

This would enable all principal villages and estates along these routes to be listed together with the appropriate bus service number.

This page is intentionally left blank

12 Improving bus driver skills

A condition of the Worcestershire County Council subsidy to bus operators requires bus drivers (operating on subsidised routes) to undergo a two hour driving test. The re-testing is at three year intervals.

Our survey revealed less than complementary comments regarding the skills and attitudes of some drivers ranging from:

“Drivers are impatient”
“Can’t understand the drivers”
“Bus drivers move off before people are seated”
“Rude drivers--sometimes break the speed limit”
“Drivers not cheerful”
“Drivers could be more pleasant”.

It should be noted, however, that we **did** receive some complimentary comments (shown below) but it is clear that there is not a consistent level of driver skills or customer service across the network of providers:

“145 drivers are friendly”
“007 drivers are helpful and kind.”

Neither is the problem simply a local issue. In the County Councils’ recent ‘Passenger Transport Driver Training Best Practice Report Nov 2007’, they cite national statistics regarding complaints against drivers, i.e.,

“A study in 2005 concluded that of the 43,043 complaints received (0.002% of all passenger journeys), 36,634 were attributable to drivers” (Section 3.10.1).

A number of the most commonly complained about issues were mentioned by our respondents, which included

- Poor or dangerous driving
- Poor/ unhelpful attitude
- Not allowing those unsteady on their feet to sit down before moving off, etc.

We have found the County Councils’ attitude and approach to this issue as helpful, positive and forward looking. In the above-mentioned Best Practice Report they state:

“Worcestershire County Council, as a major provider of and sub-contractor of passenger, education and special needs transport, has the opportunity to take a lead in the setting of both driving standards, customer care and disability awareness for all members of the community’ (Section 5.3).

The County are seeking to ensure the:

“Development and delivery of CPC training and assessment programmes from September 2008 (Passengers) and September 2009 for all small and medium sized operations in Worcestershire.”

(It may be prudent to consider the impact of the said training in terms of passenger satisfaction at a later date).

This Task Group therefore:

- **Commends the County strategy to Bromsgrove District Council**
- **Asks that a copy of this report be forwarded to all bus operators drawing their attention to the broad issue of reminding drivers of their duty of care and courtesy to passengers**
- **Recommends that a newsletter in this regard be sent from the County Council to all operators and drivers.**

APPENDICES

1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

2 LOCAL TRANSPORT BILL

3 “ONE-PAGE STRATEGY”

4 CHAIRMAN’S LETTER TO BUS COMPANIES/LIST OF COMPANIES

5 FACE TO FACE SURVEY FORM

6 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY REPORT (RHYAN BERRIGAN)

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX 1

TERMS OF REFERENCE –

PUBLIC TRANSPORT(BUSES) TASK GROUP

The terms of reference as set out below were noted and approved at the first meeting of the Task Group, held on 22nd August 2007:-

“Bus routes and frequencies; bus load factors; bus suitability and age; value for money, and accessibility and suitability of the bus service for disabled users”.

This page is intentionally left blank

Local Transport Bill

8 November 2007

Councils must have a greater say in delivering high quality, sustainable and affordable public transport.

LGA key messages on the Local Transport Bill, published today:

- **Strong local leadership is essential in tackling congestion and improving local transport services.** This will require councils to join up all the different elements of transport to benefit the local economy, the environment and to provide better access to services for all; as such, solutions must be decided and delivered locally.
- **Franchised contracts for local bus services should be delegated to local authorities, rather than unelected panels.** We support the proposals designed to enhance partnerships and remove obstacles to franchised local bus services. However, we oppose approval of these by an appointed panel, when this power should be delegated to democratically accountable local transport authorities.
- **Greater powers over transport planning should be devolved to groups of councils in major urban areas.** Proposals to devolve more transport powers and allow for a bottom up reform of governance arrangements in major urban areas are positive. This will give authorities realistic options for improving services and enable a more cohesive approach to transport planning. We want flexible transport powers devolved to groups of authorities at the sub-regional level and allow individual areas to make decisions on governance arrangements.
- **Road pricing are only one vital element of a wider package required to allow councils to raise investment and improve local transport services.** We support the increase in flexibility for councils to bring forward local road pricing schemes. But such schemes can make sense only as part of a wider package of powers over decisions and funding that allow councils to invest in roads, buses and trains and provide better public transport to benefit the local area.

Summary of government proposals:

The stated purpose of the bill is to tackle congestion and improve public transport through empowering local authorities to develop local solutions to local transport challenges. The intention is to provide a tool-kit of powers within an overarching national framework.

The bill covers four key policy areas:

- Improving local bus services
- Reforming local transport governance
- Updating the legal framework for local road pricing schemes
- Delivering the new regulatory framework for bus services

Further information

For further information on this briefing, please contact Andy Taylor in LGA Public Affairs at andy.taylor@lga.gov.uk or 020 7664 3334.

briefing

Summary of key proposals affecting local government

Improving the quality of local bus services

Voluntary partnership agreements and statutory quality partnerships

- Voluntary partnership agreements will be strengthened with a revised competition test to allow multilateral agreements between a local authority and more than one operator.
- Existing arrangements would be changed to allow quality partnership schemes to cover minimum frequencies, timings and maximum fares where there are “no admissible objections” from relevant bus operators. This bill would also allow for improvements to be phased in over time.

LGA view

- The LGA supports the proposals to allow councils to enter agreements with more than one operator and to specify minimum frequencies, timings and fares. We are disappointed that the bill now states that a QPS can include provisions as to maximum fares, frequencies or timings only where there is agreement from operators. This will give operators, rather than local authorities, the upper hand in negotiating deals on fares and frequencies and seriously undermines the objective of giving Local authorities more control over bus services.
- It appears that some progress has been made on competition issues since the publication of the draft bill. We will look closely at the revised proposals to ensure that they are proportionate and give local authorities and operators' confidence that they can satisfy the competition authorities.

Quality Contract Schemes

- The current arrangements require local authorities to demonstrate that quality contracts are “the only practicable way” for a local authority to implement a policy in its bus strategy. Under the bill's proposals, this will be replaced by a set of criteria requiring councils to demonstrate that a scheme is in the “public interest”. The current requirement for schemes to be approved by the Secretary of State will be replaced by approval by an Approvals Board appointed by the Senior Traffic Commissioner. The time limits for quality contract schemes will be extended and provisions will allow for schemes to be phased in. There will be no requirement to secure approval for straightforward continuations of schemes, or for certain types of variations to existing schemes.

LGA view

- The LGA has argued for a significant reduction in the barriers to the use of quality contracts where Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) consider this approach to be the best means of delivering their bus strategies. We therefore support the replacement of the Secretary of State's approval role with a new framework for approval. However, we believe that this power should be delegated to LTAs as elected representatives of their communities, rather than appointees who have no democratic mandate.
- We are therefore pleased with the proposals to remove the “only practicable way” test and support the revision to the proposals for the “competition” test to be replaced by a broader “proportionality” test within the public interest criteria.
- We remain concerned that the process for development and approval of Quality Contracts may present barriers to local authorities' ability to implement the schemes in practice. We will be lobbying during the parliamentary process for the bill to address these issues.

Punctuality

- The bill includes proposals designed to improve quality of punctuality data provided to Traffic Commissioners and to give them additional powers to hold operators to account for their contribution to the performance of local bus services. Local

authorities' contribution to performance will be monitored and managed through the national indicator on punctuality included within the new performance framework and the duties under the Traffic Management Act.

LGA view

- The LGA recognises that the current regulation exercised through traffic commissioners is inadequate and that better monitoring of standards of service delivery is required. We are pleased that performance arrangements for local authorities are within the framework for local areas as proposed by the Local Government White Paper. Traffic Commissioner involvement and intervention should come into play only where issues affecting punctuality cannot be resolved locally.

Traffic Regulation Conditions

- The bill clarifies that traffic regulation conditions may be applied in order to address an anticipated future need, as well as an existing one.

LGA view

- This will allow proactive rather than purely reactive imposition of traffic regulation conditions which will be helpful, for example in preventing excessive competition between operators (bus wars) before it has significant detrimental effect on services.

Other measures

- Other measures include increasing flexibility for local authorities to subsidise services; a review of the Bus Service Operators Grant; removal of the requirement for the Secretary of State to give consent to the sale of council-owned bus companies. The bill will also remove restrictions to allow Passenger Transport Authorities to buy and lease buses, bringing them into line with other LTAs.

LGA view

- These are a positive set of proposals. We particularly interested in working with government to look at how subsidies which are currently related to fuel usage could be used as effectively and as well targeted as possible to tackle objectives such as carbon reduction.

Reforming Local Governance

- Local authorities in metropolitan and other areas outside London will be empowered to carry out a review of transport governance and propose changes to existing arrangements. In a change to previous proposals, authorities will no longer require direction from the Secretary of State to initiate a review of governance.
- The bill changes the name of Passenger Transport Authorities to Integrated Transport Authorities.
- The bill also provides options for updating the existing powers and duties of PTAs, including:
 - Make changes the constitution of an existing PTA
 - Make changes to the existing transport responsibilities of PTA/Es, district councils and potentially the Secretary of State in respect of Highways Agency and heavy rail.
 - Allow new PTA/E to be set up or existing PTA/Es to be dissolved with agreement of all authorities affected.
 - Make changes to the geographical area covered by a PTA/E, similarly with the agreement of local authorities affected. New boundaries will be able to follow district boundaries rather than county boundaries as previously proposed.
- Cities will be able to develop its governance arrangements over time and keep arrangements under review.

LGA view

- This set of proposals is intended to allow bottom-up reform of governance arrangements and enhance powers for transport in the major urban areas. Much of this directly reflects the LGA's arguments for devolving transport powers to cities and their surrounding city regions and stronger leadership within PTAs. We have argued that as circumstances differ in different parts of the country, flexibility to allow decisions on the most appropriate governance arrangements to be made by individual areas is crucial. We are pleased that the requirement for the Secretary of State to "direct" local authorities and PTAs to review local arrangements has been dropped.
- We are also pleased that Government has listened to arguments from local government that new sub-regional governance arrangements should be able to be extended to cover district boundary areas, rather than having to include whole county areas as was previously proposed.

Local road pricing schemes

- The bill aims to give more flexibility to local authorities to take forward local road pricing by:
 - replacing the requirement for approval from Secretary of State with a new framework of accountability which would set out guidance on scheme design, the legal framework, how local authorities can use the revenues arising and options for how it might operate.
 - allowing a scheme to be taken forward jointly by an LTA and relevant PTA
 - requiring local authorities to apply their share of the net proceeds of the scheme to support the achievement of its local transport policies
 - removing the specific powers of the Secretary of State to require a local authority to consult or hold a public enquiry, while still allowing the LTA to do so if it wishes.
- It also includes measures to ensure consistency and interoperability between local schemes through specifying standard data formats, specifying unique numbering for equipment and setting standards for encryption and security.
- The bill also makes it very clear that it makes no provision for a national road pricing scheme.

LGA view

- Increased flexibility for local road pricing is welcome and we are pleased to see that the consultation document states that the decision to undertake such schemes is for individual areas to decide.
- The proposals in the bill do not however address significant barriers to establishing local schemes :
 - how the substantial amount of upfront funding required will be provided; and
 - how they will form part of a wider package of powers to deliver improved transport networks.
- If local schemes are to be successful, local authorities implementing them will require real freedom and flexibility to invest in and plan for improvements in public transport in advance of the introduction of a scheme.

New regulatory framework for bus services

Passenger representation

- The bill now includes enabling powers to allow a new national body to represent passenger interests to be established.

LGA view

- As locally elected representatives of the community, local authorities are best placed to represent the interests of bus passengers in their areas. The LGA is keen to engage with Government on proposals for passenger representation to ensure they develop in

a way that supports local authorities in this role.

Traffic Commissioners

- The bill will place the existing Senior Traffic Commissioner role on a statutory footing and enable him to issue guidance to the Traffic Commissioners.
- The bill has abandoned proposals consulted on over the summer to radically restructure the traffic commissioner system. Instead it introduces flexibility to allow traffic commissioners to be allocated more flexibly according to workload and areas of expertise.

LGA view

- Again we are pleased that Government has listened to local government's response to its proposals for reform to the traffic commissioner system. The LGA argued that a stronger regulatory regime and increased consistency and efficiency among traffic Commissioners could be delivered with modifications to the existing system without creating a centralised bureaucratic system. The proposals in the bill should still allow for flexibility in decision making according to local circumstance.

Further information

For further information on this briefing, please contact Andy Taylor in LGA Public Affairs at andy.taylor@lga.gov.uk or 020 7664 3334.

The full text of the bill and the government's response to the consultation on the Draft Transport Bill 2006 can be found here:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/localtransportbill/>

This page is intentionally left blank

ONE-PAGE STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT (BUSES) TASK GROUP

What is the broad Topic area? *'Travelling First Class'* A review to support improvements to bus service travel in and through the Bromsgrove district

What are the specific topic areas?

- 1/ Internal condition of the buses (suitability and age) in the operators vehicle fleets
- 2/ Access to buses for the public with restricted mobility or heavy loads (Shoppers/Mothers)
- 3/ Bus routes & frequency

What are the ambitions?

- 1/ To improve the quality of travel for bus users (leading to more bus users)
- 2/ To improve entry onto buses. To promote this as a viable option for all sections of the community (elderly, people with mobility difficulties, shoppers with heavy loads)
- 3/ To improve frequency of bus routes where appropriate

How well do we perform at the moment?

We will review the current condition of the vehicle fleets. We have asked a number of questions to establish the current 'benchmark' see below

Who shall we consult about the current service and how we can improve it?

Residents of Bromsgrove: possibly via our Customer Service Panel or similar body

Businesses: Visits to (and from) bus operating companies (e.g. Clearways/Diamond/First)

Expert Witnesses: Equalities and Diversity forum visit by the Chair and Cllr McDonald (13th Sept), County Cllr Ed Moore (Transport Working Party) and Mr Harris (Author of Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy). Other experts to be identified

What other help do we need?

Research help: to answer the following questions: **(1)** How many bus operators – names & addresses (SM) **(2)** How many buses in each fleet & carrying capacity (SM) **(3)** number with 'low loaders' (SM) **(4)** Future plans to improve vehicle fleet (SM) **(5)** demographic information to show the changing nature of the travelling public (HB) **(6)** Other reviews carried out like this by other authorities (David M) **(7)** Other similar districts – how do we compare and what can we learn from them (David M) ? **(8)** Legal position regarding payment of subsidies (SM) **(9)** Route information (SM/BL)

Key: BL: Cllr Brian Lewis SM: Steve Martin. David M: David McGrath. HB: Hugh Bennett

How long should it take?

4 months – within which timescale we will complete:

- ✓ Base line/ benchmarking exercise to assess condition of fleet (end Sept 07) if statistical information available
- ✓ Interview operators/ identify improvement plans/ make recommendations (end of Dec 07)

What will be the outcomes?

Recommendations to improve internal vehicle condition, access to buses and targeted improvements to specified routes

This page is intentionally left blank

Councillor B. Lewis F.CMI

Castlebourne Lodge,
Stourbridge Road,
Belbroughton, Stourbridge,
West Midlands DY9 9XU

Telephone: 01562 730709

E-mail: b.lewis@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Main switchboard:
Textphone:
Fax No:

Bromsgrove (01527) 873232
Bromsgrove (01527) 881291
Bromsgrove (01527) 881212

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL
THE COUNCIL HOUSE
BURCOT LANE
BROMSGROVE
WORCESTERSHIRE. B60 1AA**



The Managing Director
First Midland Red
Heron Lodge, London Road
Worcester
WR6 2EW

bromsgrove council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

10th September, 2007

Dear Sir,

Re: Bus Services in Bromsgrove and Environs

The Bromsgrove District Council Scrutiny Steering Board has outlined several issues which it deems worthy of Scrutiny.

I have been appointed Chairman of the Task Group, which is exploring the provisions of the existing bus services in the Bromsgrove District.

It is therefore, necessary to have your thoughts, insofar as your Company is concerned, regarding present conditions of service, and future aspirations, say, for the next five years and should include the following points:-

- Routes. Can they be improved ?
- Age of current fleet of buses
- Replacement schedule for new buses
- Will replacement buses have facilities for the physically impaired, i.e. wheelchairs, prams etc.
- Anticipated customer use (load factors)
- Do any of your company routes serving Bromsgrove, receive Worcestershire County Council subsidy support ?
- Does your Company liaise with other bus operators regarding route time tables and frequency of services?
- Your views regarding bus stops in the Bromsgrove District, and in particular the Bromsgrove bus station, would be appreciated.

I would appreciate your comments at your earliest convenience.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,

Councillor Brian Lewis

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER SENT TO THE FOLLOWING:-

Company	Title	First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Address 1	Address 2	City	Postal Code	Work Phone
Birmingham Coach Company	Mr Howle	Geoffrey	Howle	Chairman	Cross Quays Business Park	Hallbridge Way, Tipton Road	Tividale, Warley	B69 3HY	
Central Connect Ltd	Mr Elms	Steve	Elms		Beacon House	Long Acre	Birmingham	B7 5JJ	01213222731
Clearways Coaches	Mr Wheeler	David	Wheeler	Managing Director,	56 Meadow Road	Catshill	Bromsgrove	B61 0JL	01527 872556
Cofion Coaches (Euroliners)	Mr Stiles	Glen	Stiles	Managing Director	1631 Bristol Road South	Rednal	Birmingham	B45 9UA	
First Midland Red					Heron Lodge	London Road	Worcester	WR6 2EW	01905 763888
Hansons Coaches					60A Hayes Lane	Lye	Stourbridge	DY9 8RD	01384 894020
Hardings Coaches	Mr Playford	Malcolm	Playford		Oxleasow Road		REDDITCH	B98 0RE	
Johnsons Coach Travel					Liveridge House, Liveridge Hill	Henley-in-Arden	SOLIHULL	B95 5QS	01564 797010
Ludlows Bus And Coach Company					Coombs Road		Halesowen	B62 8AA	0121 559 7506
Midland Rider					Unit 6 CMT Trading Estate	Broadwell Road	Oldbury	B69 4BQ	07969 948810
MRD Travel	Mr Davies	Mark	Davies	Managing Director	60 Woodrow Lane	Catshill	Bromsgrove	B61 0PL	01527 875592
Travel Express					30 Coton Road	Penn	WOLVERHAMPTON	WV4 5AT	
Travel West Midlands	Mr Rampton	Richard	Rampton	Head Office,	51 Bordesley Green		Birmingham	B9 4JZ	0121 254 7200
Whittle					Foley Business Park	Stourport Road	KIDDIMINSTER	DY11 7QL	01562 820002



Bus User Survey for Bromsgrove District Council

Hi we're from Bromsgrove Council and we're doing a quick survey to see how bus services can be improved in this area

Q1 How many times per week do you use bus services?

- Every day
- At the weekend
- Once a week
- Once a fortnight
- Once a month
- Other (please specify)

M	<input type="text"/>
F	<input type="text"/>

Q2 What is the purpose of your journey today?

- Work.
- Shopping/leisure
- Social
- Visiting family/friends
- Education
- Hospital
- Tourism
- Other (please specify)

Q3 Which of these things would encourage you to use the buses more often? Tell me which are your top 3 with 1 being the most important?

- a) More convenient pick up/drop off points
- b) Improved waiting areas
- c) More direct routes
- d) Cheaper fares
- e) More information about public transport
- f) More frequent service
- g) Cleaner buses
- h) More accessible buses e.g. lower platforms
- i) Reliable service
- j) I use it as much as I am able to already
- k) Other (please specify)

Q4 Where have you travelled from today?
(Postcode/Road/area)

Q5 Where are you travelling to today?
(Postcode/Road/area)

Q6 Number bus you are waiting for/ just got off?

Q7 Did you have a car at your disposal today? Yes No
Q8 Where do you CURRENTLY look for passenger travel information?

Please tick ALL that apply

- Local media
- Leaflet
- Website
- Telephone
- On the bus
- By text/SMS
- At the bus stop
- I just know

Q9 Where would you PREFER to look for passenger travel information?

Please tick ALL that apply

- Local media
- Leaflet
- Website
- Telephone
- On the bus
- By text/SMS
- At the bus stop
- I just know

A FEW BRIEF DETAILS ABOUT YOURSELF PLEASE

Q10 How old are you/What age group do you belong to?

Please tick ONE only

- | | |
|-------------|-------|
| 18 or under | 19-24 |
| 25-34 | 35-49 |
| 50-64 | 65+ |

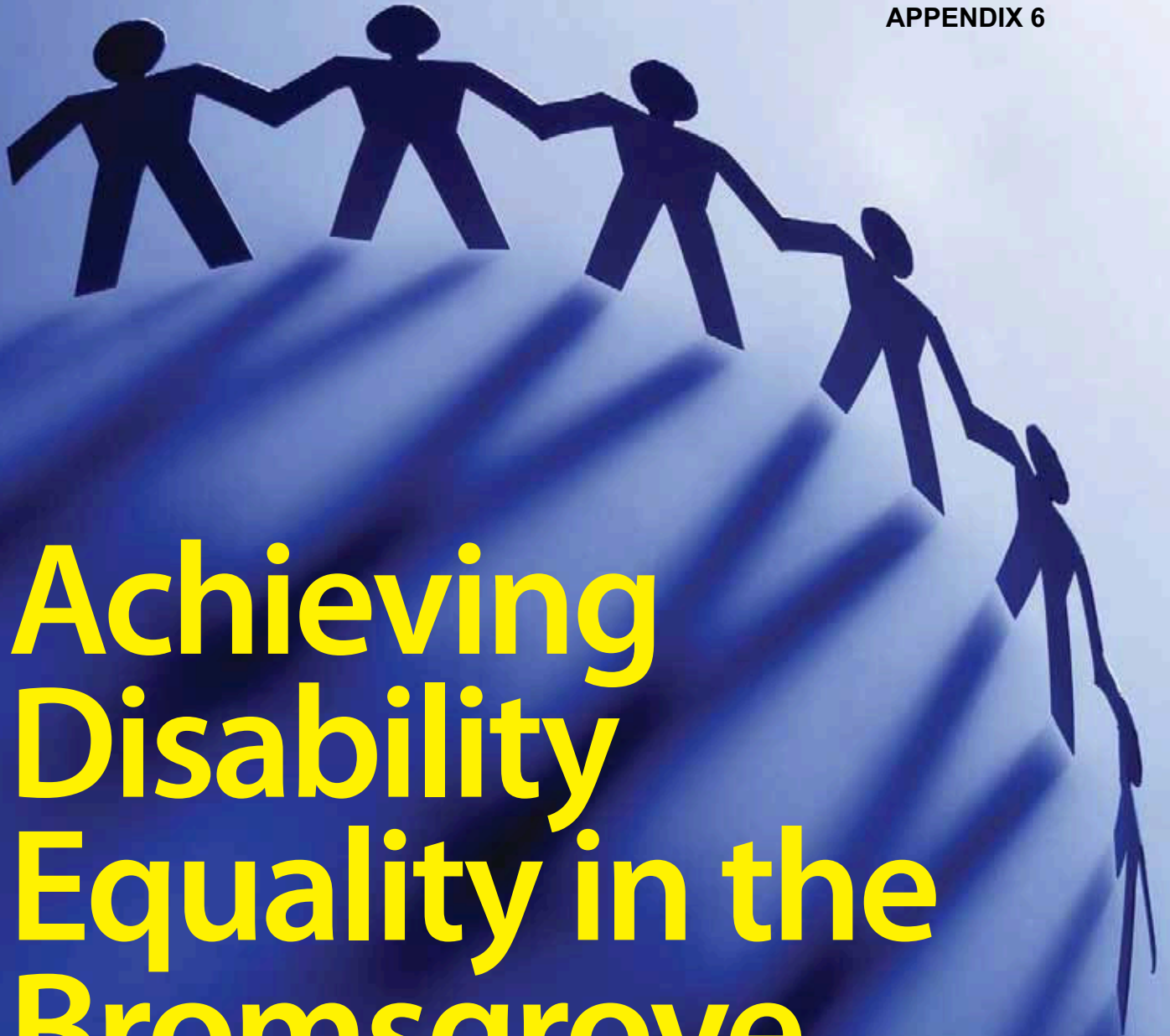
Q11 If you are 60 years old or over, do you have a concessionary travel pass? Yes/No

Q12 How would you describe your ethnicity?

- | | | |
|--|--|---------------------|
| <i>White: British</i> | <i>White: Irish</i> | <i>White: Other</i> |
| <i>Mixed: White & Black Caribbean</i> | <i>Mixed: White & Black African</i> | |
| <i>Mixed: White & Asian</i> | <i>Mixed: Other</i> | |
| <i>Asian or Asian British: Indian</i> | <i>Asian or Asian British: Pakistani</i> | |
| <i>Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi</i> | <i>Asian or Asian British: Other</i> | |
| <i>Black or Black British: Caribbean</i> | <i>Black or Black British: African</i> | |
| <i>Black or Black British:</i> | <i>Other</i> | <i>Chinese</i> |

ARE THERE ANY OTHER COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE KEPT INFORMED OF OUR REVIEW OF BUSES? YES NO
IF YES – PLEASE SUPPLY DETAILS E.G. NAME ADDRESS/EMAIL



Achieving Disability Equality in the Bromsgrove District

Report of Research Findings
by Rhyan Berrigan



Bromsgrove
District Council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

4) Findings

Throughout the course of my investigation and from points discussed at the Disabled Users Group on the 29th June 2007 it became clear that the high dependency unit, although important, was not top priority. Instead it emerged that transport was top priority. The High Dependency Unit and access to the Town Centre was second and third priority respectively.

I interviewed disabled people, getting their individual perspective. 3 issues came to light 1) Transport; 2) HDU and 3) Access to the Town Centre. All affect disabled people in the Bromsgrove District as does the exclusion of outer lying areas such as Wythall, Alvechurch and Hagley.

I decided to focus my report on Transport, the HDU and accessibility of the Town Centre.

4.1) Transport

In one of my first meetings, when discussing the priority issues affecting disabled people in the local community, it was stated that “there would be no point installing a HDU and improving access to shops in the Town Centre if disabled people could not get to the Town Centre to access them”. Accessible public transport is needed for disabled people who do not have access to a car. Transport is poor that is why it is a number 1 priority issue. While meeting with a wide range of disabled individuals and disabled organisations, in the Bromsgrove District, the common theme was that transport needed to be improved. Bromsgrove’s rural population have difficulty getting into the Town Centre. Alvechurch, for example, have better public transport links to Redditch than to Bromsgrove.

4.2) Parking

Disabled parking charges is another transport issue disabled people felt very strongly about. Bromsgrove District Council is the only Council in the County to charge disabled people for parking. There are a number of disabled people in the Bromsgrove area who are disabled enough to be entitled to and subsequently apply for disabled Blue Badges.

Bromsgrove Customer Service Centre 2006/07

There is a steady stream of Blue Badge applications throughout the year; there are similar numbers of applications every month. The average number per month from July 2006 to June 2007 = 152, 75% (1366) are dealt with face to face and 25% (456) apply by post.

Month	Number of Blue Badges Issued
June 2007	150
May 2007	162
April 2007	127
March 2007	170
February 2007	147
January 2007	146
December 2006	107
November 2006	157
October 2006	185
September 2006	154
August 2006	158
July 2006	159
Total Badges Issued	1822

Disabled people classified under the autistic spectrum could be entitled to Blue Badges later in 2007. Therefore Bromsgrove District Council could receive more Blue Badge applications. More people will also be able to claim the reduced cost disabled parking permit, this would reduce Bromsgrove District Council's revenue received from parking charges and parking permits.

Having to pay for disabled parking is still a major bone of contention. The majority of disabled people I spoke to had strong negative views on the issue. They felt that they hadn't been consulted when the Council started to impose charges. In discussion with my colleague I discovered that there had been a consultative process before Shopmobility was set up.

When deciding on disabled parking charges and parking permits the Council would not have been able to take into account the proposed changes in Blue Badge eligibility. If Blue Badge eligibility does change the Council would have to rethink its parking strategy.

There has recently been further dialogue between Bromsgrove District Council and the disabled community regarding car parking charges.

4.3) Buses

Buses are inaccessible to wheelchair users. 1st) according to disabled people I have interviewed there is only 1 space for wheelchairs if indeed they have any space at all. 2nd) If a bus is full to capacity; few people are willing to move for the disabled wheelchair passenger. Mobility scooters are bigger than they have been in the past so are not allowed on the buses as they are too big. Learning disabled people I have interviewed have stated that they find the bus time tables confusing. The bus times are not clear, the print too small and is often obscured by graffiti. The unreliability of the buses was also raised. The unreliability of buses was a particular concern to learning disabled people and their support workers. Learning disabled people are encouraged to go out and about in the local community if able to do so. It is pointless if a learning disabled person travels to another part of the District and cannot return due to irregular timetables. In order for learning disabled people to build up confidence whilst travelling independently they need a reliable and frequent service, allowing them to learn a routine.

New regulations which came into force on 4 December 2006 gave disabled people a 'right of access' to goods, services and facilities, with respect to transport services. These duties make it unlawful for a transport operator to discriminate against a disabled person simply because they are disabled, or to treat disabled people less favourably or fail to make a reasonable adjustment to the way they provide their services. In light of these regulations, bus operators throughout the country will have to review their policies and procedures to ensure that they are not in contravention of the new duties. However, buses do not have to be fully accessible until 2016. Come 2016 bus operators in the Bromsgrove District could stop operating altogether rather than comply with the new access legislation.

Many bus companies in Bromsgrove use old buses that have steps. Wheelchair users, people with mobility problems and parents with babies in prams would not be able to access the buses without a ramp. Many disabled wheelchair users and those who are mobility impaired have free bus passes but they are not benefiting from free travel because they cannot get onto a bus.

Bromsgrove District Council does not have control of the bus services. They can however inform bus companies of disabled people's access problems and press for companies to do something about inaccessibility. By bringing the problem of accessibility for disabled people to the attention of various bus companies, the bus companies are more likely to act.

In the Bromsgrove District, buses are run by several different companies. It would be difficult to approach each company individually. It has been suggested that the District Council first raise concerns of disabled people's inaccessibility to public transport by contacting Worcestershire County Council. The County Council can then approach inaccessibility issues with the bus companies directly. The regularity of the bus services is poor. Many buses run on an hourly basis and only run for a short time frame throughout the day.

4.4) Dial-a-Ride

The majority of disabled people I talked to would like to see a Dial-a-Ride scheme set up in the Bromsgrove District.

The Dial-a-Ride scheme is part of community transport. Dial-a-Ride schemes vary from one area to another. I researched the Redditch Dial-a-Ride scheme. Redditch pays their 6 drivers a salary. Paying minibus drivers a salary is not the norm but there are a few areas that do.

The Redditch Dial-a-Ride operates to and from the Town Centre. The scheme looks at the transport needs in the area they cover, where there are gaps not covered by a good bus service. As Bromsgrove bus service is poor there would be a lot of gaps in transport that could be covered by Dial-a-Ride. There would be potentially a large number of users in the Bromsgrove District.

The service is aimed at people that are unable to use public transport. There are no age restrictions on Dial-a-Ride users; most however are in their 70's/80's. There is a high proportion of elderly people and disabled people in the Bromsgrove District therefore lots of potential service users.

In order to use Dial-a-Ride it is a legal requirement that users have to register before using the service. Registration is free of charge.

Dial-a-Ride operators would have to apply for an operators permit costing £7.00 a year for each vehicle under section 19 of the Transport Act. Operating permits are a legal requirement. Changes in the Transport Act will come into force later in the year.

Size of the minibus has to be considered. The most regular size minibuses have 9 seats with 1 wheelchair space, the size Redditch generally uses. Minibus sizes range from 8 seats to 16. Less than 8 seats are classified as a car. 16 seats are classified as a bus. Operators can not pay drivers of cars because then the service becomes like a taxi service. The size of minibus depends on scheme, it is difficult to judge the size of the minibuses required.

Doctors and social services refer many people to Dial-a-Ride; it improves customers' quality of life and access to the community.

Pros

Dial-a-Ride is a popular choice of transport service; many disabled people would like to see the scheme set up as soon as possible.

Fares have to be cheap and comparable to other means of public transport. The service improves disabled peoples quality of life. Service users have more independence not having to rely on friends and family to get out and about and are able to maintain social links.

Dial-a-Ride fares are cheap. Fares cost £1.50 one way and £3.00 return. Concessionary pass fares cost 50p 1 way, 1.00 return. To provide one journey it costs Dial-a-Ride £7.50.

Section 19 of the Transport Act states that the Dial-a-Ride scheme can only charge for cost of transport, this makes source of financial assistance important because it would be difficult to self finance.

In Redditch there is a very big demand for the service. There are six minibuses are in use and sometimes all six driving about community at same time.

Cons

There is only one wheelchair space in most common sized Dial-a-Ride minibus. Running of an effective Dial-a-Ride service is complex. A software package that allows the service to be run as efficiently as possible is expensive. Minibuses themselves are expensive. Second hand minibuses are cheaper to buy however they may have to be adapted. The quantity of minibuses required to run an efficient service varies from place to place. Bromsgrove is spread out with rural areas. A greater number of minibuses may be required to run a good service. Strict maintenance procedures have to be followed, drivers have to check their vehicle for wear and tear every morning and general maintenance and fuel costs are all a great expense.

Redditch Dial-a-Ride is over subscribed, sometimes the service is fully booked and they have to turn customers away.

Customers can book up to three days in advance. Generally the customer is not encouraged to book transport on the same day because the service doesn't want to become like a taxi service. However late bookings are accepted if there is enough space in the minibus. Bookings for medical appointments can be booked seven days in advance because appointment times are at specific times. 10/15 % of customers use the service for medical appointments.

Flexibility is a must. Booking over phone is the most popular method but it is possible to book face to face, email or fax as well. Dial-a-Ride staff try to match bus routes to times of customer appointments. It is important to have a maximum travel time so customers know what to expect in journey time and ensure that customers know that the service cannot guarantee to pick up a passenger then drop them off straight to their destination. Drivers must follow a route picking up all the customers along the way.

There are regular group bookings; roughly 70% of customers are group bookings. Roughly 30% of service users are individual bookings. Groups consist of 4 or more people. Booking reservations need to be confirmed every week. There are a lot of group pick ups. It is often the same people every week that pre book slots for regular activities e.g. Age Concern. Group travel is more efficient

4.5) Dial-a-Ride - Issues to consider:

Minibuses have to be checked every 6 weeks. Minibuses with a tail lift have to have the tail lift inspected every 6 months to check if it is in good working order. The more minibuses purchased means the more maintenance involved. Maintenance takes a large amount of the budget but it is legal requirement.

Before drivers start their rounds they have to go through a 20 minute check list every morning. When timing drivers' shifts and bookings you must allow time for completion of the safety check list. Simple checks include tyre pressure and condition before the start of the journey.

The service operates Monday – Friday 8.45am– 4.20pm. Evening and weekend schemes were researched but there was not enough demand. Paying drivers more money if they worked evenings and weekends and lone working would need to be considered if Bromsgrove wanted a Dial-a-Ride service to run evenings and weekends. Bromsgrove Council may consider operating the scheme on evening and weekends especially if Shopmobility opens on Saturday. There is a seasonal variation in demand, similar in variation to Shopmobility usage. In winter there are few bookings after 3.30 because of the dark afternoons.

Redditch Dial-a-Ride uses Mobirouter computer software to run the service efficiently. The software looks complicated on the screen, confusing to start with. There is 3 days training to get used to the software however it has taken staff members a month to feel confident using the system.

Pros

The software enables office staff to log bookings and plan routes of the day's bookings easily. Colour coding is used, using the code staffs know when minibus over booked, full, or half full.

Office staff can map customers pick up points, the software package shows the precise route every minibus is travelling. Therefore it is easier to fit in late bookings allowing the service to become a more efficient system.

Since Redditch Dial-a-Ride started using the software package it has picked up more passengers with same number of minibuses. The software package maximises the services potential and customer demand. The software package enables the drivers to have a computer print out of their routes before start of their journey. The routes are easier to follow and more structured.

Cons

The system looks complicated to use at first. The office staff take a while to become fully confident using the software package. The software package could crash. If this occurs, until the system is back up and running, operating the Dial-a-Ride service would be difficult.

There are too many pop up windows on screen to get to customer/route details and to log/cancel booking, therefore making the booking process complicated.

Minibuses are accessible, they have a moving step which can be lowered to help people to step on to the minibus, and there is also tail lift for wheelchair access.

Fuel is expensive; the Dial-a-Ride service spends £20,000 on diesel a year. It is costly to run a successful Dial-a-Ride service.

Employment of staff is another cost to consider. To run the software package smoothly staff must be adequately trained. Redditch employs three office staff who log and coordinate the bookings plus a manager to oversee the scheme plus six drivers. Cost is an important issue, costs include fuel costs, tax, operating permit, minibus maintenance and office staff and drivers salaries to name but a few.

Bromsgrove District Council would have to decide whether or not to pay Dial-a-Ride minibus drivers a salary. Salaried minibus drivers are an added expense but maybe necessary to maintain a full compliment of drivers to meet customer demand. Wyre Forest Dial-a-Ride have volunteer drivers, however they never have a full compliment of drivers to meet customer demand.

Who would control Dial-a-Ride and fund the service is something to be researched further. Many Dial-a-Ride schemes are funded at least partly by Worcester County Council grants. Redditch Borough Council also funds Redditch Dial-a-Ride.

If Bromsgrove Council were to decide on minibuses with over 16 seats there would a legislation problem. Using minibuses with over 16 seats would mean having to have only volunteer drivers because otherwise it could be seen as competition for public bus services.

One suggestion is to link the Dial-a-Ride scheme with Rural Rides, to help keep Dial-a-Ride set up costs down.

4.6) Rural Rides

Rural Rides is a similar scheme to Dial-a-Ride in its aims and activities. Its aim is to assist anyone who has difficulties in accessing public transport in order to attend medical, social and other appointments. Also for any other travel necessary to support their daily living needs. Rural Rides activities are provided by volunteer drivers who take people to appointments – medical and social and other essential needs. Also for shopping, visiting relatives and friends and any other important visits to be made to support them in getting around in the community in which they live.

Pros

Combining the two schemes could speed up the process and time scale in which Dial-a-Ride is set in the Bromsgrove District. Setting up a Dial-a-Ride service as soon as possible would be very positively received by the local disabled community. The feasibility of linking with Rural Rides requires further research.

Rural Rides is a popular service, however it is over subscribed. The fares in comparison to Redditch Dial-a-Ride are expensive. However Bromsgrove is a very different area to Redditch. Bromsgrove is more rural and spread out, a Bromsgrove Dial-a-Ride service would have to cover more miles. Bromsgrove Dial-a-Ride fares maybe more expensive than Redditch Dial-a-Ride fares, this needs further research.

Cons

Rural Rides uses volunteer drivers, there is never a full compliment, not enough to meet demand. The volunteer drivers use their own cars and are only paid a mileage allowance; this may explain their expensive fares. The Rural Ride service cannot accommodate less mobile and disabled customers who need help getting in or out of the car. The service also cannot accommodate wheelchair users. The volunteers' cars have no access ramps and are too small to carry wheelchair users. Most of the volunteer drivers are retired so they are not physically able to lift a customer out of the car. Rural Rides would need more funding if it was to run a minibus service and take on more staff to cope with the rise in customers. Accessible transport would mean disabled people could attend public events more easily. This meets with the legal requirement of the Disability Equality General Duty to "encourage participation by disabled persons in public life."

Funding could come from a range of sources from Worcestershire County Council, Lottery funding, and Bromsgrove District Council subsidy.

The feasibility of linking Dial-a-Ride with Rural Rides requires further research.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5TH MARCH 2008

DEDICATION OF CYCLEWAY

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Roger Smith
Responsible Head of Service	Claire Felton

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval to the proposed dedication of the part of a cycleway at Catshill being part of Sustrans Route 5 Cycle Path between Milton Road and Stourbridge Road (the Cycleway) which is within Council ownership.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That that part of the Cycleway within the Council's ownership be approved for Dedication as a public cycle path; and
- 2.2 That the Scheme of Delegation be amended to delegate authority to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services to approve dedications of cycleways, bridleways, footways, footpaths and highways where no objections to the proposal have been received.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council was approached to ascertain ownership of the route of the Cycleway as the area was overgrown and required maintenance. It was subsequently established that part of the Cycleway fell within the Council's ownership (as shown on the plan at Appendix 1) and that the remaining part of the route, which was not owned by the Council, had previously been dedicated as a public cycle path.
- 3.2 The Council has been approached by Worcestershire County Council requesting that the section of the Cycleway owned by the Council be dedicated as a public cycle path to complete the route to regularise the position.
- 3.3 Upon dedication of the Cycleway, any maintenance liabilities for the cycleway will formally pass to the Worcestershire County Council.
- 3.4 It should be noted that part of the Council-owned section of the Cycleway is subject to a restriction requiring the consent of the Secretary of State for

Health to any disposition of the land. This consent will be requested if the Council confirms approval for the Dedication although no difficulty is anticipated in this respect.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no new financial implications for the Council.

The surface of the Cycleway has been made up to the required standard by Sustrans (a registered charity which co-ordinates the National Cycle Network). Although no maintenance of the surface has yet been necessary, the Council is technically responsible for maintenance until dedication. Following dedication, future maintenance of the surface of the Cycleway will be the responsibility of Worcestershire County Council.

However the Council is and has always been responsible for the maintenance of the hedges and other vegetation adjoining the Cycleway; this will be unaffected by the dedication. This maintenance work should, however, be included in the Street Scene and Waste Management work programme.

No financial implications are anticipated in the process of dedication other than administrative costs.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and The Access to the Countryside (Dedication of Land) (England) Regulations 2003 govern this process

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 Sense of Community and Well Being – to encourage the public to use cycleways

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

- *If the Cycleway is not dedicated any costs incurred in maintaining the surface of the Cycleway could be this Council's responsibility rather than that of the County Council*

- 7.2 This risk is being managed as follows:

Risk Register: *Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services*

Key Objective Ref No: 4

Key Objective: *Effective legal services*

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 It will regularise the existing informal use of the Cycleway by members of the public. If approved, it is proposed that the dedication will be communicated to customers on the Council's website and at the Customer Service Centre.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None

11. 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

12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	No
Chief Executive	No
Executive Director (Partnerships and Projects)	No
Executive Director (Services)	No
Assistant Chief Executive	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic	Yes

Services	
Head of Organisational Development & HR	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

13. WARDS AFFECTED

Catshill and Marlbrook

14. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Plan showing route of Cycleway (coloured blue)

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

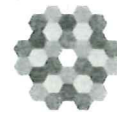
Details about Sustrans

CONTACT OFFICER

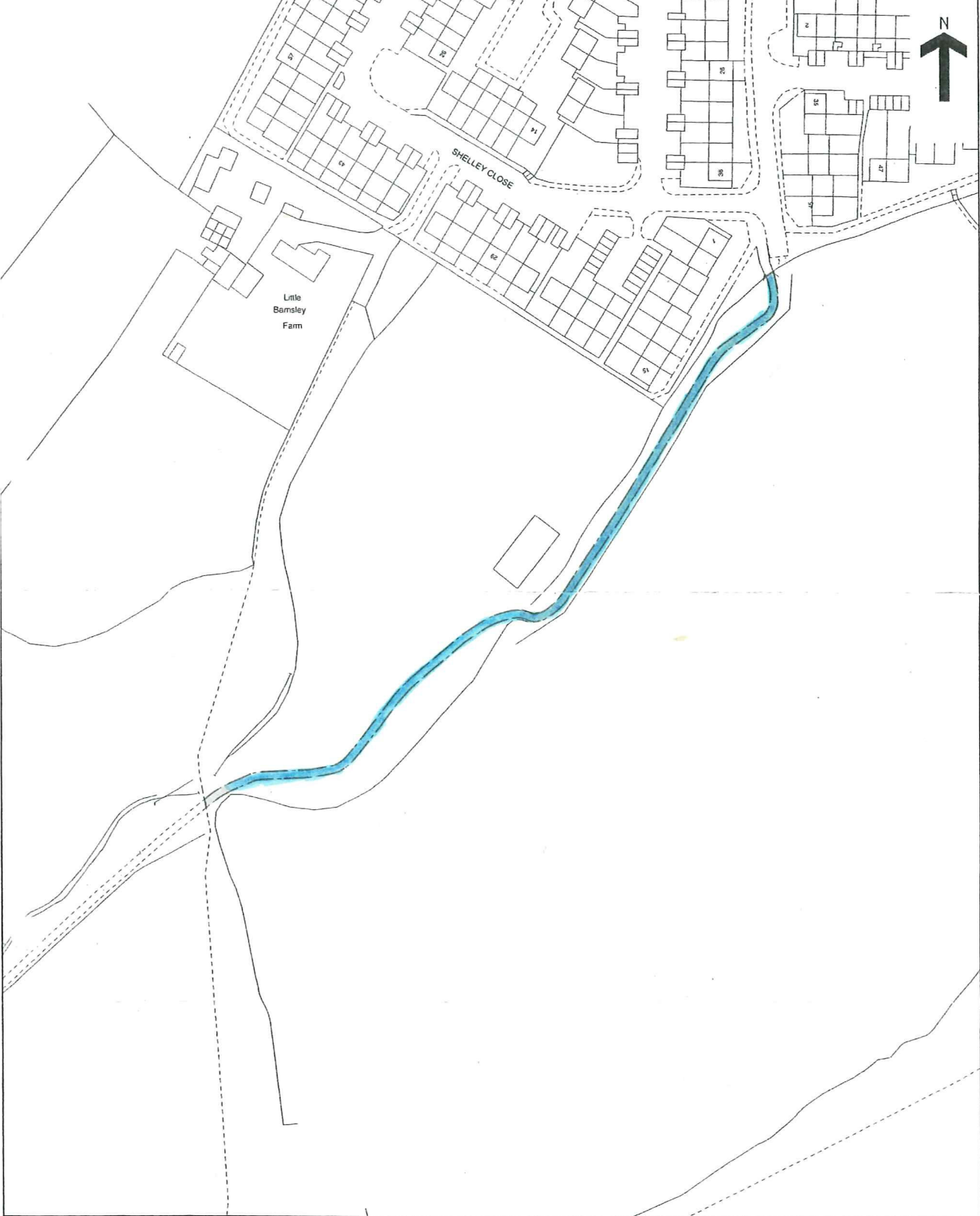
Name: Patricia Everett
E Mail: p.everett@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881369

Land Registry
Index map plan

Ordnance Survey map reference SO9673NW
Scale 1:1250
Plan prepared on 04/07/2007 at 00:00:01



© Crown Copyright. Produced by Land Registry. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited without the prior written permission of Ordnance Survey. Licence Number 100026316.



This plan should be read in conjunction with result C88AAHB.

This plan shows the general position, not the exact line, of the boundaries. It may be subject to distortions in scale. Measurements scaled from this plan may not match measurements between the same points on the ground. See Land Registry Public Guide 7 - Title Plans.

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5TH MARCH 2008

COUNCIL PLAN 2008-2011 PART 2

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Roger Hollingworth, Leader of the Council
Responsible Head of Service	Hugh Bennett, Assistant Chief Executive

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To agree the Draft Council Plan for 2008-2011, including a high level action plan for the Council's priorities for 2008/2011.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Cabinet approves the Draft Council Plan 2008-2011 **attached at Appendix 1**, paying particular attention to the new Balanced Scorecard for the Council on page 16 and the Council's Strategic Action Plan 2008/2011 (page 17).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Cabinet and Full Council re-confirmed the Vision, Council objectives and reduced the number of priorities from ten to five in September 2007. The five priorities are:-
- A thriving market town.
 - Clean streets and recycling.
 - Customer Service
 - Sense of Community
 - Housing
- 3.2 Following a similar process to that used to develop the last Council Plan, the Council again must focus service activity on its priorities, convert the priorities into a measurable set of outcomes and activities, establish a system for measuring progress and link these activities to financial planning to ensure they are appropriately resourced. The Council's balanced scorecard has therefore been updated and sets out the five Council

priorities in the customer perspective, supported by a range of priorities for each of the other three perspectives: financial, process and human resources and organisational development. Planning, which was formerly a priority in its own right, has now been included within the process perspective as PR5.

- 3.3 A key aspect of the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment model is the ability of councils to convert ambition into service outcomes. The Council Plan 2008-2011 sets out a Specific Measurable Agreed, Realistic and Time bound (SMART) Strategic Action Plan that identifies the outcomes we are trying to achieve for each key deliverable, how we will know that we are progressing towards these outcomes, projects and resources in support of the outcomes, when we expect to deliver them and who is responsible.
- 3.4 The Council Plan will need further detail in order for the Cabinet to oversee progress against it. The key to this will be the development of our next detailed Improvement Plan which will be based on the Council Plan. This work is due to take place between March and June 2008 and will draw information from the Service Business Plans. Besides measuring progress on projects, the Cabinet will also need to monitor progress on key indicators that relate to our priorities. A set of new National Indicators that will replace existing Best Value Performance Indicators will be introduced in April 2008 (please see section 46 in Appendix 1 for the new corporate indicators). These indicators will be monitored through progress reports throughout 2008/09.
- 3.5 A Key Line of Enquiry in the Audit Commission's CPA model is whether councils have sufficient capacity to realise their ambitions and priorities. For Bromsgrove District Council, the key to this is ensuring the budget follows the priorities and key deliverables of the Council Plan. The budget bids and savings received from Heads of Service in Autumn/ Winter 2007 were ranked according to their contribution to the Council's priorities and the Medium Term Financial Plan was approved by Full Council on 16th January 2008.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 As set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications to this report.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 The existing corporate objectives have been expanded on through the development of the Council Plan 2008-2011.

7. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 The Council Plan 2008-2011 will be supported by the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

8. **CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The Council Plan 2008-2011 will guide the Council's future service delivery and will therefore have a direct impact on the Customer. Specific Customer Implications are covered in CP3 and PR1 in Appendix 1.

9. **EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Please see CP3 and CP4 in Appendix 1

10. **VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Please see FP1 in Appendix 1

11. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Procurement Issues

A number of the strategic actions have procurement issues. These include; market testing services, shared services and a preferred partner for the town centre.

Personnel Implications

The HR&OD perspective details the HR&OD strategic support activities to deliver the Council Plan 2008/2011.

Governance/Performance Management

The report outlines arrangements for performance managing the Council Plan. Improved Governance is considered a key process development (see PR2).

Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Community Safety is not a stated priority for improvement by the Council, but is an important aspect of the Sense of Community priority (CP4) and the Strategic Action Plan includes actions relating to Community Safety.

Policy

The Council Plan takes account of the recent Local Government Act 2007 and the Council Plan Part 1 referred to a range of policy documents. As the Council comes out of recovery it will have more opportunity to consider longer term policy outcomes.

<p>Environmental See CP5 and PR5 in Appendix 1</p>

12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

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

13. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards

14. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Council Plan 2008-2011

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cabinet Report, Council Plan 2008/2011 Part 1, Bromsgrove District Council (September 2007).

CONTACT OFFICER

Name : Jenny McNicol (Senior Policy and Performance Officer)
E Mail: j.mcnicol@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881631



Bromsgrove District

Council Plan 2008-2011

“Working together to build a district where people are proud to live and work, through community leadership and excellent services”.



Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk



CONTENTS

PAGE

1.	Introduction from the Leader of the Council	.....	3
2.	About Bromsgrove District	.....	5
3.	Strategic Partnership Working	.....	9
4.	Setting the Council's Priorities	.....	11
5.	Our Vision, Values, Council Objectives and Priorities	.....	13
6.	Council's Balanced Scorecard	.....	16
7.	Strategic Action Plan	.....	17
8.	Corporate Performance Indicators	.....	46
9.	Medium Term Financial Plan 2007/2010	.....	50
10.	Value for Money Strategy	.....	61
11.	Council's Performance Management Arrangements	.....	63
12.	Glossary of Terms	.....	65

If you require this document in large print, Braille or audio tape, please contact:

Fiona Scott, Equalities Officer,
The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove, B60 1AA
Tel: 01527 881719, email: f.scott@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Need help with English? Ethnic Access Link Tel: 01905 25121

'Potrzebujesz pomocy z Angielskim – skontaktuj się z Ethnic Access
Tel: 01905 25121'

Potrebujete pomôct's angličtinou? Kontaktujte etnickú prístupovú linku
na telefómom čísle 01905 25121

„Aveți nevoie de ajutor cu engleza? Contactați Ethnic Access la numărul
de telefon: 01905 25121.”

क्या अंग्रेजी में सहायता चाहिए? ऐथनिक ऐक्सेस लिंक [Ethnic Access Link]
से फोन: 01905 25121 पर संपर्क करें

[Ethnic Access] آپ انگریزی میں مدد چاہتے ہیں۔ نسلیاتی رسائی سے رابطہ کریں ٹیلیفون: 01905 25121

1. Introduction from the Leader of the Council



Welcome to the Bromsgrove District Council Plan. The Plan sets out a “road map” for the Council’s work between now and 2011, by which time we will be a modern council, at least CPA rated “Fair” and well on our way to “Excellent”, under the new area-based inspection regime.

The Council operates in a complex environment, having to balance public expectation of the

Council’s services alongside the Government’s shared priorities for local government, the County wide Local Area Agreement, protecting the small number of vulnerable people in our communities and understanding the demographic issues we face, in particular, a commuting workforce and an ageing population. If this is not enough, the local government expenditure environment is likely to become tighter over the next few years due to Central Government spending pressures, so value for money will become even more important.

The Council Plan brings together all this different information and through using the balanced scorecard technique, articulates our ambitions for the Council and the District into measures of success we understand and can work toward. The Council Plan is the starting point for driving the Council’s performance management framework, medium term financial

plan, annual budgets and corporate risk register. As a result, we do not expect the Plan to be left on a dusty book shelf, but to be a living document, that decision-makers at both a Member and officer level refer to in order to provide a strategic direction and to help take some of the undoubtedly difficult decisions we will have to make over the next three years.

The Council has made significant progress over the last 12 months and we were rated as “Poor” when our CPA rating was published in June 2007, as we had expected. Based on the progress we are continuing to make we expect to be CPA rated “Fair” when we are next assessed in late 2008. We have a resourced Improvement Plan that is focused on identified performance issues, improved Member/Member and Member/officer relations and leadership from both Members and senior management, something the Council has been lacking in the past.

The Council has a Vision for the District and the Council, one that we all understand and own, and the Council Plan expands this Vision:-

“Working together to build a district where people are proud to live and work, through community leadership and excellent services”.

Working together is critical to delivering this vision. In the past, the Council has not worked as a team. Proper political debate, robust scrutiny, Member ambition and officer advice all have their place within a modern council, but this must happen within a framework of respect and recognition that we are all here to serve our communities. Community leadership is also vital. As Members we have a duty to work with and understand our communities; being elected every four years is not enough. We need to engage regularly with our communities, in order to represent them.



The main issues we face as a District are detailed in the next section of the Plan. These include the need to regenerate our town centre so that it reflects the wealth of the District and ensuring we have sufficient affordable housing. We have brought these, plus our other three priorities and the work we

are undertaking to develop the Council together under the “Building Pride” banner:-



The Council Plan was developed by Members and officers considering a range of information from residents including the Customer Panel, Best Value Satisfaction Survey results, PACT meeting feedback, Area Committee feedback as well as considering our current performance, national legislation, the County and District Community Strategies and our financial position. I very much hope that the Plan reflects the best part of local, county, regional and national aspirations for our District. I want this to become an on-going process, one of dialogue. With this in mind, every year we will refresh the Council Plan to ensure we are listening and reflecting the views of our communities.

Roger Hollingworth
Leader of the Council

Kevin Dicks
Chief Executive

An electronic version of this plan can be found on our website:

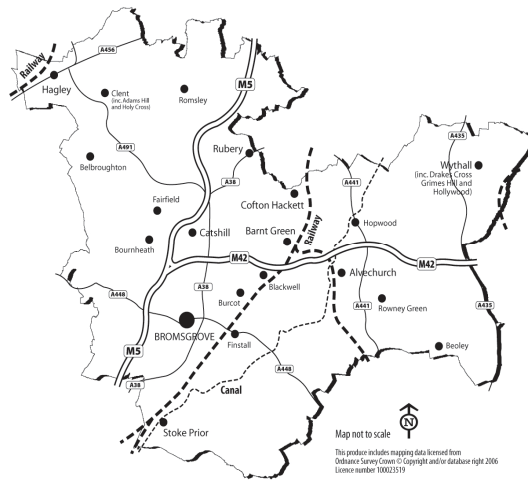
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

2. About Bromsgrove District

Location

Bromsgrove District is in north Worcestershire, covering a large area of approximately 83.9 square miles. Whilst only 14 miles from the centre of Birmingham, the Lickey Hills country park provides an important dividing line between the urban West Midlands Conurbation and the rural landscape of north Worcestershire. Ninety percent of the District is greenbelt which causes problems for housing policy. Four radial routes pass through the District, each served by railway lines and major roads, including the M5 running north and south, the M42 running east and west, with further links to the M40 and M6.

Map of Bromsgrove District



Data suggests that 16,643 people travel into the District for work, with 26,112 (29%) of the population travelling out, a net commute out of 9,469. Our main communities are detailed in the map (left). The District has no wards in the top 20% most deprived in England.

Population

The population of the District is 91,600 and the Office for National Statistics predicts that this will increase by 15.3% over the next 30 years to 104,600 in 2029. The current review of the Regional Spatial Strategy is likely to require homes for 3,000-7,000 households to be built in the District in the next 25 years and there is also the possibility that the District may have to take on some of Redditch Borough Council's housing allocation.

The black and minority ethnic population (BME) is only 3.3%, which is low for the region and nationally. This BME % comprises 1% Irish, 0.8% Asian, 0.8% mixed, 0.4% black and 0.3% Chinese. There are 37,798 households in the District. Over 25% of households contain only one older person. An estimated 6,964 households in the District have one or more members in an identified special needs group. This is 19.1% of all households in the District, well above the national average; of these 56.7% have a physical disability and 37% are frail elderly. The elderly population is predicted to expand as a proportion of the overall District population, with the over 80s population estimated to increase by 123.3% by 2029.

Economy

The economic picture of the District is generally very positive. The mean household income is £36,906, which is the highest in the County (the County average is £34,737). There are three major areas of economic regeneration within the District: the Longbridge site, Bromsgrove town centre and Bromsgrove railway station. In April 2005, parts of Phoenix Venture Holdings (PVH), most significantly MG Rover and PowerTrain entered administration, resulting in the closure of the Longbridge car plant. These parts of the Group employed around 5,850 people in the West Midlands and an estimated £410m was spent with firms based in the West Midlands as part of the supply chain. Whilst unemployment levels naturally increased with the closure, the District's unemployment levels have returned to very low levels (2.5%). Bromsgrove town centre needs a major overhaul to encourage local shopping and compete with neighbouring shopping centres. Bromsgrove station is the third area of concern. The current station facilities are not considered fit for purpose and a feasibility study is currently being carried out on the possible redesign of the station so that it can take bigger trains and more passengers and anywhere between an increase of 70 to 300 additional car parking spaces. This would help "future proof" the station against any changes to transport charges that may affect Birmingham city centre.

Sustainable Development

A healthy natural environment is vital to our existence. We need clean air to breathe, water to drink and food to eat. The past twenty years have seen a growing realisation that the current model of development is unsustainable. Our way of life

is placing an increasing burden on the planet. In other words, we are living beyond our means. We need to make a decisive move toward more sustainable development, not just because it is the right thing to do, but also because it is in our own long-term best interests. By thinking about the way in which we do things and becoming more sustainable, we can meet our own needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This is the concept of sustainable development, and must underpin all of our actions.

We already have a number of initiatives in place to help improve our sustainability. The Council House is in the process of switching to 100% green electricity, and part of our power comes from solar panels on our roof. We use 100% recycled paper, and encourage recycling in house and in the wider District. We are signed up to the Worcestershire car sharing scheme. The Local Strategic Partnership's Better Environment Group has a number of projects underway aiming to reduce our carbon footprint, help conserve and enhance our biodiversity, and reduce pollution.

Affordable Housing

One of the biggest issues facing the District is affordable housing: 83.4% of households are owner occupied, the 11th highest figure in England and Wales, and house prices are rising faster than the national average, with the average house price being £240,867. The Council is currently operating a planning moratorium with only affordable housing developments being built. The Housing Strategy has a target of 80 units of affordable housing a year for the next four years.

Education, Deprivation and Health

The percentage of the population qualified to NVQ Level 4 is significantly higher than average. GCSE results gained at local authority schools and colleges in Worcestershire in 2006 were amongst the highest in the country (56.3% achieved five or more GCSEs at A*-C). The District ranks 299th out of 354 councils on the national index of multiple deprivation 2007 (where one is the most deprived), making the District one of the least deprived nationally. Only 4,456 households are in receipt of housing or council tax benefits in the District, one of the lowest figures in Worcestershire. As a result, identifying the vulnerable within our communities is more difficult than a district with geographic areas of deprivation.

Generally, the District's population is healthier than the regional average. Young people (18-24) have a high risk status being the most likely to smoke, binge drink and not take exercise. Potentially, we could be storing up problems in our young people. The most recent Primary Care Trust (PCT) annual report noted that our children's health is good, but there is a need for more child and adolescent mental health services. The PCT retain a concern (shared by the Council's own Community Safety Team) that domestic violence remains "common place". The rate of teenage pregnancies in Bromsgrove in 2004 was 22.4 conceptions per 1,000 females, which is almost half that of the England average. The rate has also decreased in Bromsgrove from 26.7 in 1997.

Crime and Fear of Crime

There has been a 31.9% reduction in headline comparator crime figures for the District over the last three years. This, together with the Partners and Communities Together meetings, has had a very positive impact on fear of crime in the District: 98% of residents feel safe in their neighbourhood during daytime and 73% after dark. Low level issues like anti-social behaviour, litter, rubbish, "young people hanging around", vandalism and criminal damage remain an issue. Drug offences are low.

Regulatory, Political, Managerial and Financial Context

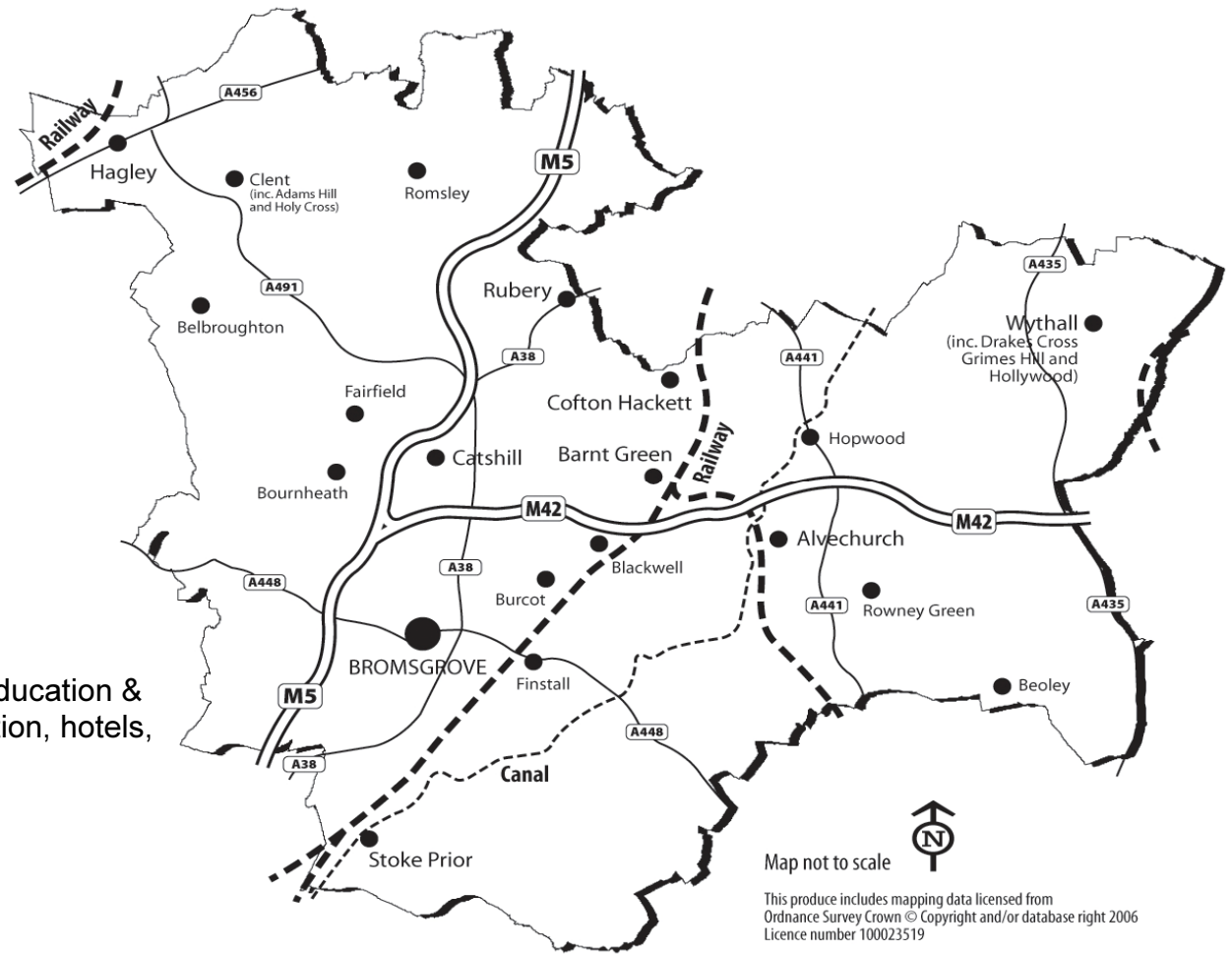
The Council has a majority Conservative administration, with 26 Conservatives, six Labour, four independents, and two Wythall Residents Association. A further seat is subject to a forthcoming by-election in spring 2008. The Council operates a modernised political structure with the Leader/Cabinet model, supported by three non-Executive Boards: Audit Board, Scrutiny Steering Board and Performance Management Board. There is also a Planning Committee, Standards Committee and Licensing Committee. The Council has a new Corporate Management Team (CMT) and a new Chief Executive, Kevin Dicks.

The Council has a net budget of £11.733m (2008/09), a planned Council Tax increase of 4.45% and Government Grant of £4.858m. The Council employs 454 staff.

Table 3 - About Bromsgrove District



Size Area:	83.9 square miles
Population:	91,600
Households:	37,798
Towns and large villages:	Bromsgrove, Hagley, Rubery, Wythall
Main Employment:	Public Administration, Education & Health (25.5%); distribution, hotels, & Restaurants (21.2%)
Unemployment:	2.5%
Ethnicity:	3.3%
Deprivation Ranking:	299 out of 354



This produce includes mapping data licensed from Ordnance Survey Crown © Copyright and/or database right 2006 Licence number 100023519

3. Strategic Partnership Working

Bromsgrove Partnership

The Bromsgrove Partnership (the District's Local Strategic Partnership Board) consists of key public, private and voluntary sector organisations operating within the District. The purpose of the Board is to work together on a range of issues that require joined up thinking to deliver joined up solutions for our residents. In March 2006, the Board agreed to reduce in number and focus around a new set of priorities. The role of Elected Members has been strengthened by ensuring that the Leader of the Council sits on the Board and acts as Vice-Chairman as well as a county councillor and a parish council representative. The Board continues to be chaired by a private sector representative, Mark Weaver.

Sustainable Community Strategy 2007-2010

The Sustainable Community Strategy sets out a vision for the District and is concerned with addressing issues important to residents, the business community and visitors to the District. It is based on an understanding of the available evidence and focuses on the way in which services are delivered and how they can be improved for everyone's benefit. The Strategy is a developmental, rolling document and the priorities identified may change over time as improvements are realised and new issues emerge. The aims and objectives of the Strategy are to provide a co-ordinated approach to improving the quality of life for everyone in the District and is in effect a business plan for the Local Strategic Partnership Board to manage against and

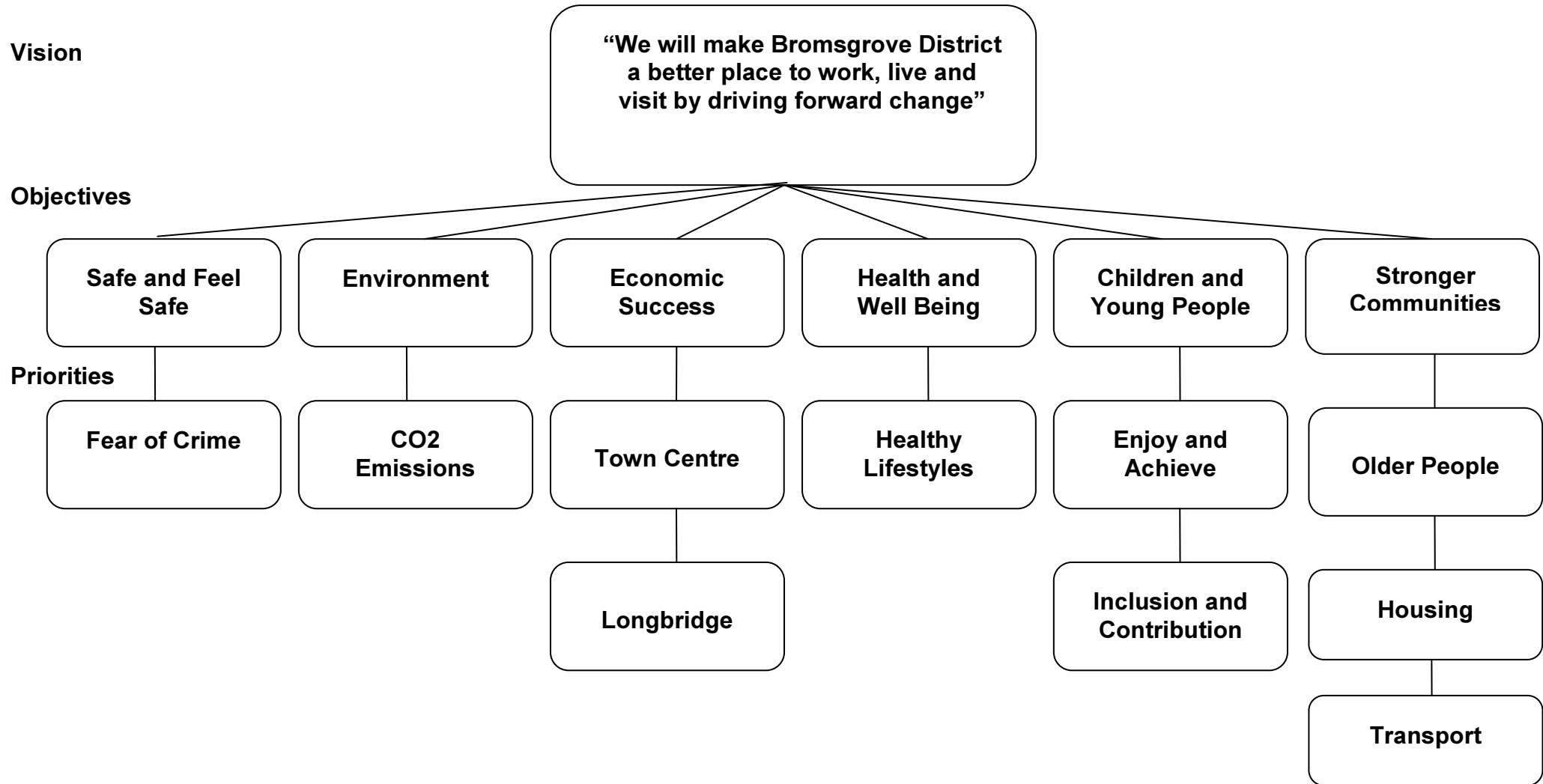
be held accountable on (Full Council receive an annual report from the Board).

Worcestershire Local Area Agreement 2006-2009

In April 2006 Central Government and Worcestershire County Council, as the accountable body for the Worcestershire LSP, signed a Local Area Agreement (LAA) covering the period 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2009. The agreement is a form of contract with six objectives and a range of targets in support of them. Some of the targets attract a "pump priming grant" from the Government in support of the delivery of a range of "stretch targets". If these are delivered the Government will pay a "reward grant". Just like the Bromsgrove Partnership wants organisations operating within the District to align their business plans to the District's Community Strategy, the Worcestershire LSP expects District LSPs to align their community strategies to the LAA. As a result, Bromsgrove Partnership has adopted the six objectives the LAA as its six objectives and the District LSP targets are cross referenced to the LAA targets in the District Sustainable Community Strategy. However, it is recognised that there are some projects which are very important at a district level which are not reflected in the LAA, for example, the regeneration of Bromsgrove town centre, Longbridge and Bromsgrove railway station. In these instances the Bromsgrove Partnership is still seeking to work in partnership with all the relevant organisations in order to deliver joined up solutions for local people.

The County LSP is currently consulting on the draft County Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2012 and the District will be responding to the draft.

Table 4 – Bromsgrove Partnership Objectives and Priorities



4. Setting the Council's Priorities

The Council Plan

The Council Plan brings together national and community priorities and ensures that the Council has a structured approach to providing quality services and adding value for local people. The Plan sits at the top of the Council's strategic planning and performance management systems. It ensures that we take co-ordinated action to address the agreed four Council Objectives (COs) and five Priorities. These are essential to the delivery of our Vision and Values. The Council Plan sits within a wider strategic framework formed by the District Sustainable Community Strategy and Countywide Community Strategy. The relationship between the Council Plan and other key plans is set out on page 63.

The key features of the Council Plan and associated plans are as follows:-

- The **Council Plan** sits below the national priorities and Community Strategy for the whole of the District and above the Council's Improvement Plan, Departmental Service Business Plans and Action Plans. The Council Plan is a three year document.
- The Council Plan acts as a high level 'map'. Each Council Objective, Priority has a reference number and these are tracked into Departmental Service Business Plans, Team Plans and individual Personal Development Reviews, to create a "golden thread". By creating this "thread" we become more efficient, concentrating our resources and energy onto those things that really matter.
- The three year Council Plan is supported each year by an annual **Improvement Plan**, which provides Members and senior management with a focus on those actions which are considered key to driving improvement in the Council's performance.
- Alongside the Improvement Plan sits a set of Corporate Performance Indicators, approximately 25-30 in total and based on the Council's Priorities. Again, these are designed to provide Members and senior management with a focus on improving those performance indicators which are considered key to driving improvement in the Council's service delivery.
- The Council Plan is underpinned by the three year **Medium Term Financial Strategy** and the annual **Budget Plan**. These ensure that resources follow the stated priorities of the Council.
- The risks associated with the delivery of the Council Plan are managed through the **Corporate Risk Register** and Action Plan.
- The Council's overall financial and service delivery performance are set out in the Council's **Annual Report** and a summary published in "Together Bromsgrove", the Council's residents' magazine.

How the Council Plan Influences the Budget

The Council has improved the linkages between consultation, performance and the annual and three year budget process with the development of an integrated forward plan. Customer Panel surveys are used to test our priorities with residents and to ascertain their satisfaction levels. In addition to those submitted by each Council service, the Council's Equalities Forum and our Staff Champions group were also asked to submit a number of budget bids to be considered in the 2008/09 budget round.

Building on the experience of the last Council Plan, the Council has held a number of focus groups asking residents what they thought of the budget bids submitted for the 2008/09 budget round. The Council also provided residents with an online facility for the public to comment on the budget and this information was taken to Cabinet as part of the budget deliberations and will be repeated for the 2009/10 budget. The development of these budget bids was set within the strong strategic framework of the Council Plan and its objectives and priorities.

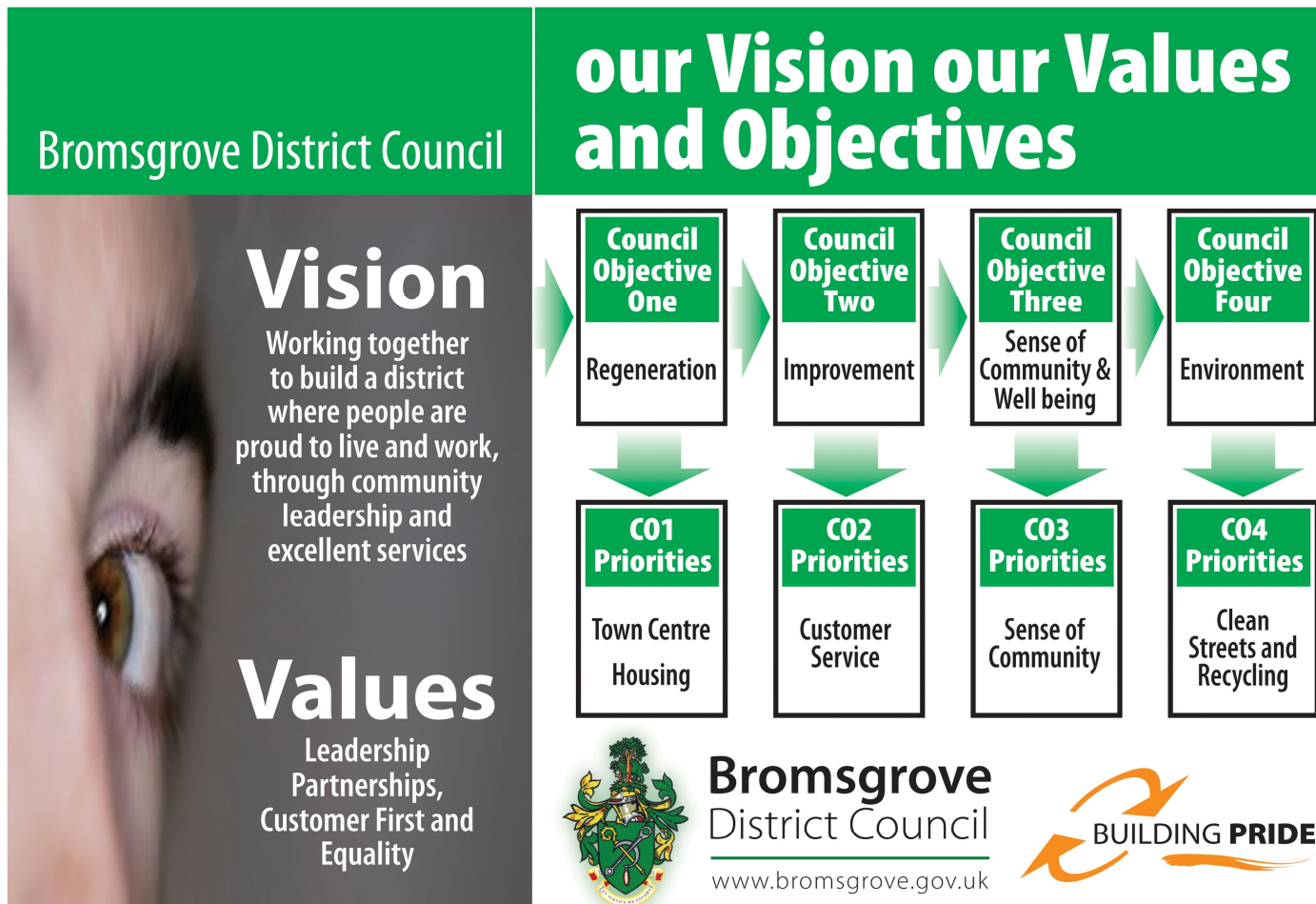
Further Information

Electronic versions of the key documents mentioned earlier can be found on our website at:






www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

5. Our Vision, Values, Council Objectives and Priorities:-

Page 122



We have further articulated each of our Values as follows:-

Demonstrating Leadership	
	
	
<p>Who are our Leaders ? everyone can lead by example and inspire others</p> <p>What is our Leadership Vision ? visible leadership</p>	
<p>We will do this by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● setting an example ● communicating positively ● building trust ● living and breathing the Bromsgrove way 	
 <p>Bromsgrove District Council www.bromsgrove.gov.uk</p> 	

Promoting Equality	
	
	
<p>Who is affected by Equality ? all of us</p> <p>What is our vision for Equality ? to eliminate discrimination and promote equality</p>	
<p>We will do this by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● treating everyone as an individual ● understanding their particular needs ● involving them in shaping our services ● monitoring our progress 	
 <p>Bromsgrove District Council www.bromsgrove.gov.uk</p> 	

Putting the Customer First



**Who are our Customers ?
everyone we come into contact with**
**What is our Vision for Customer Service ?
to exceed expectations and delight
our Customers**



- We will do this by**
- treating customers as individuals
 - listening carefully to our customers
 - taking ownership of problems
 - doing the little things - they matter !

Working in Partnership



**Who are our Partners ?
everyone with a shared desire to build
strong and prosperous communities**
**What is our Partnership Vision ?
to work together to build a district that
people are proud to live and work in**



- We will do this by**
- understanding our communities
 - working towards a common goal
 - sharing resources
 - making things happen

6. Council's Balanced Scorecard

The Council has a balanced scorecard for the Council's five priorities, which were approved by Full Council on 19th September 2007. The scorecard identifies the key support service activities required to deliver the priorities. A Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Realistic and Targeted strategic action plan for the balanced scorecard has also been agreed (see pages 17 to 45).

Customer Perspective (CP)	Town Centre (CP1)	Housing (CP2)	Customer Service (CP3)	Sense of Community (CP4)	Clean Streets and Recycling (CP5)
Financial Perspective (FP)	Value for Money (FP1)	Financial Management (FP2)	Financial Strategy (FP3)	Financial and Performance Reporting (FP4)	
Process Perspective (PR)	Customer Processes (PR1)	Improved Governance (PR2)	Spatial Business Project (PR3)	Improved Partnership Working (PR4)	Planning (PR5)
Human Resource and Organisational Development Perspective (HROD)	Learning and Development (HROD1)	Human Resource Modernisation (HROD2)	Positive Employee Climate (HROD3)	Performance Culture (HROD4)	

7. Strategic Action Plan

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Town Centre (CP1)	Regenerate the Town Centre	Public Support for Plans	Area Action Plan: Issues and Options stage Completed	Town Centre Project Plan	31 October 2008	Planning and Environment Services	Leader of the Council
			Move Towards Preferred Options Stage	Town Centre Project Plan	31 March 2011		
		Work Commenced	Procure Preferred Partner	Town Centre Project Plan	30 June 2008	Planning and Environment Services	Leader of the Council
			Public (and trader) Consultation on Plans	Area Action Plan	31 Mar 2010		
Agree Sites for Relocation of Public Sector Partners	Identification and Discussion with Fire and Rescue, Police and WCC about Potential Sites for Relocation	Town Centre Project Plan	31 March 09	Planning and Environment Services; WCC Police, Fire and Rescue Service	Leader of the Council		

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Town Centre (CP1) continued		Reach Agreement on Redevelopment of the Market Hall Site	Hold Discussions with Retailer	Town Centre Project Plan	31 December 2008	Planning and Environment Services/ Retailer and Develop resources	Leader of the Council
			Close Market Hall and Relocate Market to an Outdoor Site on the High Street	Town Centre Project Plan	31 March 2009		
		Redevelop Public Toilet Facilities in Town Centre	Commission Architect and Builder and Commence Work	Capital Programme	30 April 2009	Capital Programme	Leader of the Council
		High Street Enhancement through Improved High Street Events and Christmas Lights	Hold Discussions with Sponsors and Businesses to Agree Enhancements	Town Centre Project Plan	31 December 2008	Attraction of Sponsorship Planning and Environment Services	Leader of the Council

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Housing (CP2)	Delivery of Affordable Housing Target (Housing Strategy)	240 units of affordable housing built	80 units per year	Support applications for or to consider future of affordable housing on Areas of Development Restraint	On-going	Strategic Housing/ Principle RSL Partner Consultation Group	Portfolio Holder for Planning
				Commission Housing Needs Survey to provide basis of affordable housing need in the District	31 July 2008	Strategic Housing/ Principle RSL Partner Consultation Group	Portfolio Holder for Planning
				Encourage Maximum Potential of Affordable Housing through the RSS Allocation	31 March 2011	Strategic Housing/ Principle RSL Partner Consultation Group	Portfolio Holder for Planning

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Housing (CP2) continued				Use of Existing Public Sector Sites e.g. Council House	Ongoing Local Area Agreement Target to 31 March 2009	Strategic Housing/ Principle RSL Partner Consultation Group Asset Management Strategy	Portfolio Holder for Finance
	Homelessness Prevention and Reduction in the Use of Temporary Accommodation	50% Reduction in People Housed in Temporary Accommodation	Year on Year Reduction (down to 34 individuals by 2011)	Implementation of new Homelessness and Prevention Support Services	31 March 2010	Strategic Housing Team/ BDHT Housing Agency agreement	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Portfolio Holder for Planning
				Additional Staff Resource to Carry Out Home Visit/ Mediation	31 March 2010	Strategic Housing Team/ BDHT Housing Agency agreement	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Portfolio Holder for Planning
				Implementation of Rent Deposit/ Bond and a Spend To Save Scheme	31 March 2010	Strategic Housing Team/ BDHT Housing Agency agreement	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Portfolio Holder for Planning

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Housing (CP2) continued				Re-Negotiated SLA with BDHT to Provide Management of 'Move On' from Temporary Accommodation	31 March 2010	Strategic Housing Team/ BDHT Housing Agency agreement	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Portfolio Holder for Planning
	Improved Housing Service	Achieve 2* Housing Audit rating	Development of Improvement Plan and implementation of actions	Develop and agree draft Improvement Plan Implement and monitor improvement actions Undergo Housing Inspection	30 September 2008 From 30 September 2008 onwards 31 March 2011	Strategic Housing Team	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Customer Service (CP3)	Overall Customer Satisfaction with Council	Achieve 60% Customer Satisfaction with Council by 2011 [Customer Panel Survey - baseline 51%]	Annual Customer Panel Survey	Annual review of Customer Panel Contract	31 October 2008	Approved Budget	Portfolio Holder for Customer Care and Customer Service, and Revenue Generation
			Customer Feedback	Monthly reporting of Customer Feedback information to CMT	Every month	Tagish Software	
			Improvements to performance indicators that drive customer perception	Annual review of Corporate Indicator Set	01 April 2008 and annually thereafter	Service Business Plans Linked to Budget Process	
			Annual Review of Council's Customer Standards	Series of Focus Groups with Customers and Non-Customers	31 December 2008 and annually thereafter	CCPP Team and Improvement Plan Fund	
			PACT meetings	CMT to attend programme of PACT meetings	Annual programme	Ward Members, CMT and Police	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Leisure Services

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Customer Service (CP3) continued	Customer Satisfaction with the Customer Service Centre	Achieve 85% of Customer Panel who would recommend the CSC to a friend [Customer Panel Survey - baseline 72%]	Annual Customer Panel Survey	Collate Results of Satisfaction Survey	30 September 2008 and annually thereafter	Approved Budget	Portfolio Holder for Customer Care and Customer Service, and Revenue Generation
			Quarterly Telephone Survey	Customer Service Centre Team Plan	Every quarter 2008-2011	Customer Service Centre Staff	
			A5 Feedback Sheets	Customer Service Centre Team Plan	Every quarter 2008-2011	Customer Service Centre Staff Service	
			Improvements to Performance Indicators that Drive Customer Perception	Continued Monitoring against Corporate Indicator Set	01 April 2008 (and review each year)	Business Plan linked to budget process	
			Customer Service Board Continuing to Deliver the Customer Peer Review Action Plan	Customer First Strategy Action Plan	Annual Review reported to February Cabinet each year	Customer First Board	

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Customer Service (CP3) continued	Customer Satisfaction of Minority Groups with the Council	Annual Satisfaction Survey of the Equalities Forum	Quarterly Feedback from Equalities Forum (minutes to CMT)	Track Council Responses to Issues Raised through Annual Report	31 Dec 2008 (and every year thereafter)	Equalities Officer Capacity Building Funding	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services
	Satisfaction of People with Disabilities	Annual Satisfaction survey of Disabled User's Group	Quarterly Feedback from Disabled User's Group	Track Council Responses to Issues Raised through Annual Report	30 June 2009 (and every year thereafter)	Equalities Officer Capacity Building Funding	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services)

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Sense of Community (CP4)	Neighbourhood Management	Achieve 35% of Residents who Feel They Can Influence Decisions in their Area [Customer Panel Survey – baseline 31%]	2 x Pilot Area Committees	Extend evaluation of Two Pilots and Agreement on Way Forward	31 March 2009	Learning to Deliver Grant	Leader of the Council
			Develop Action Plan for Board on Agreed Way Forward	Action Plan on Target	31 March 2011	Possible 2009-2010 Budget	
			PACT Meetings	CDRP Tasking Meetings	68 PACT meetings over 12 months, repeated annually	Members, Senior Officers and Community Safety Team	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Leisure Services
		Reduce the Fear of Crime Perception within the district by 4% (baseline to be established following annual satisfaction survey)	Additional Neighbourhood Wardens	Budget bid for increased number of Neighbourhood Wardens	Implementation from 1 st April 2008	Budget Bid 2008/09	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Leisure Services

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Sense of Community (CP4) continued	Equalities	% Increase in Minority Groups' ability to influence Council and % Increase in Minorities' Positive Perception of the Council	Local Government Equalities Standard (BV2a) Level 3 Number of budget bids submitted to Equalities Forum	Equalities Action Plan 2009-10 Budget Consultation Plan	31 March 2010 31 January 2009 and annually thereafter	Capacity Building Fund Equalities Forum Disabled Users' Group Bromsgrove Black History Society CCPP Team, Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, Financial Services	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services)
	Popularity of Events Programme	% Satisfaction with overall cultural offer	Annual Customer Panel Survey 2% per Annum Growth in Participation Rates	Increased number of facilitated events throughout district	Implementation from 1 st April 2008.	2008/09 Budget	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Leisure Services

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Sense of Community (CP4) continued		% Residents' satisfaction with Artrix (baseline 2007 46%)	Increased Usage Figures for Artrix	Increase influence on Artrix Board	30 September 2007	Culture and Community Services	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Leisure Services

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Clean Streets and Recycling (CP5)	Reduce Levels of Unacceptable Detritus	High Quartile Outturns across BV199a-d	Annual Targets (see Corporate Performance Indicators)	Programmed Clean according to Environmental Protection Act	On-going	Approved Budget	Portfolio Holder for Street Scene and Recycling
			Rapid Response Hit Squad	Budget Bid for Development of fast response squad for detritus issues	Implementation from 01 April 2008	2008/09 Budget Bid	
				Gradual Increase in Enforcement Activity		Implementation 01 April 2008	2008/09 Budget Bid
	Improved Customer Perception of Cleanliness	Achieve 70% Public Satisfaction with Cleanliness of District [Customer Panel Survey, baseline 62%]	Annual Customer Panel Survey questions	Annual review of Customer Panel Contract	31 October 2008	Approved Budget	Portfolio Holder for Street Scene and Recycling

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Value for Money (FP1)	Delivery of Agreed Savings	Cashable Savings as per Medium Term Financial Strategy	Quarterly Updates on VFM Action Plans	VFM Strategy	31 March 2011	Procurement Manager Additional Resource May be Required	Portfolio Holder for Finance
	Alternative Methods of Service Delivery, to include revisiting the shared services/ joint working agenda	Cashable Savings and Improved Services	Completion of Project Plans	Development of Project Plans Based on VFM Assessments by Departments	31 March 2011	Procurement Manager and Heads of Service	Portfolio Holder for Finance
	Improved procurement	Fewer Suppliers and Efficiency Savings	Monthly Procurement Report	Procurement Action Plan	31 March 2011	Procurement Manager and Heads of Service	Portfolio Holder for Finance
	VFM Ratings	75% of Services Scoring 2 or Above	Quarterly Updates on VFM Action Plans	VFM Strategy	31 March 2011	Procurement Manager Additional Resource Maybe Required	Portfolio Holder for Finance

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Financial Management (FP2)	Financial Management	Budget to Profile Throughout Year	Quarterly Reporting of Budget to Actual to Cabinet and PMB	Monthly Budget Reports to Cost Centre Managers and Portfolio Holders	31 March 2011	Service Accountants and Budget Holders	Portfolio Holder for Finance
	Integrated Financial and Performance	Budget Aligned to Priorities Corrective Actions based on Integrated Information	Quarterly Integrated Reports to Cabinet and PMB	Integrated Financial and Performance Management Timetable	31 March 2011	Head of Financial Services and Assistant Chief Executive	Portfolio Holder for Finance
	Improved Asset Management	Re-Configured Property Stock that Matches Council Priorities (including decision on future of Council House)	Asset Management Plan on target	Development of Property Register Stock Assessed Against Corporate Priorities	31 December 2008 31 December 2008	Assets Management Group	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services)

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Financial Strategy (FP3)	Treasury Management	% Return on Investment until Funds No Longer Available	Quarterly Monitoring	Market Test Delivery of Function	31 March 2010	Finance Team	Portfolio Holder for Finance
		Borrow at an Appropriate Level	Deliver Treasury Management Strategy	Annual Review	From 31 March 2010	Financial Services Department	
	Implementation of the Purchase Ordering Processing System	Enable Online Ordering and Efficiency Savings	POP Implementation Plan	Implementation of the POP system	31 March 2009	Financial Services Department	Portfolio Holder for Finance
	Risk Management	Risks Successfully Managed	Quarterly Review of Corporate Risk Register	Risk Management Strategy Action Plan	31 March 2011	Internal Audit	Portfolio Holder for Finance

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Financial and Performance Reporting (FP4)	Budget Consultation	% of Residents Who Understand the Choices the Council has to Make (no baseline available)	Annual Customer Panel Questions	Development of High Profile Method of Explaining Budget and Enabling Public Feedback	31 January 2008 and annually thereafter	Corporate Communications and Customer First Manager	Portfolio Holder for Finance
	Integrated Annual Report	Achieve 60% of Residents who Remember Receiving Together Bromsgrove (Customer Panel Survey – baseline 49%) Achieve 65% of Those Who Found it Useful (baseline 60%) Achieve 75% of Residents who Remember	Positive Feedback from Audit Commission	Production of Single Council Annual Report Condensed Version Produced for July “Council Chat”	30 June 2008 and annually thereafter 31 July 2008 and annually thereafter	Financial Services Department and CCPP Team	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Leader of the Council

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Financial and Performance Reporting (FP4) continued		Receiving Council Tax Leaflet (baseline 70%) Achieve 78% of Those who Found it Useful (baseline 73%)					
	Performance management	Attain Score of 3 for CPA KLOE for Performance	Feedback from Audit Commission	Undergo CPA Inspection in Autumn 2008	31 Dec 2008	CCPP Team	Leader of the Council
		Attain 75% of BVPIs above the Median	Feedback from Audit Commission	Regular performance clinics and Monthly reporting against PIs	31 March 2011	CCPP Team	Leader of the Council

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Customer Processes (PR1)	Customer Feedback System	% of Complaints Referred to Ombudsman % of Compliments Received (no baseline)	% of Complaints Resolved (no baseline)	Maintain Customer Feedback System Monthly Reporting of Feedback and Annual Review of System	Ongoing 1 st April 2008 and monthly thereafter	Approved Budget E-Government and Customer Services Department	Portfolio Holder for Customer Care and Customer Service, and Revenue Generation
	Achieve 90% Resolution of Customer Queries at first point of contact by March 2011 Achieve 15 Second Average Speed of Answering Customer Calls (baseline 31 seconds)	Reduced Demand for Face to Face Contact Through Improved Service Delivery	Increased Website Usage Increased Automated Payments Increase Speed of Answering Customer Calls Through Additional Staff (budget bid)	Re-engineering of Customer Processes Roll Out of Remainder of Resource Level Agreements	31 March 2009 31 March 2009	E-Government and Customer Services Department	Portfolio Holder for Customer Care and Customer Service, and Revenue Generation

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Improved Governance (PR2)	Overview and Scrutiny	Policy Changes As A Result of Scrutiny	Better Reports Pre-Check and Presentation by Portfolio Holder	Ethical Governance Review and Toolkit Scrutiny Training Programme	31 March 2009 30 September 2009	Legal and Democratic Services Department HR&OD Department	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services
	Member Standards	Reduction in Cases Reported	Issuing of Guidance and Training Based on Identified Issues	Standards Committee	31 March 2008	Legal and Democratic Services Department	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services
	Member/Member, Member/Officer Relations	% of Members and Officers Who Feel Political Climate is Appropriate	Improved Member Conduct, Attendance at Training and Briefing Sessions	Regular Training and Briefing Sessions on Conduct, Behaviour, Bias and Pre-Determination	31 March 2009 and annually thereafter	Approved Budget	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services)
	Elections	Election Delivered to Statutory Standards	Election Action Plan	Strand System Installed and Operational	31 May 2008	Approved Budget	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Spatial Business Project (PR3)	New system installation and integration of these to existing core applications: Phases 1 and 2	Installation of Env Health Systems; Estate & Asset Management Module; Building & Development Control Modules; Electoral Management Systems; Housing module; Licensing Module; Land Charges Module; Document Management System; Business Process Mapping. Integration of New Systems to Existing Applications	Monitoring of milestones against Implementation Plan	On-target with Implementation Plan	31 December 2008	Approved Budget Contract with MDA £300,000 Annual Saving	Portfolio Holder for ICT and Spatial Project

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Spatial Business Project (PR3) continued	Speed of Processing Customer Queries	New and Better Customer Standards	Monitoring of milestones against Implementation Plan	On-target with Implementation Plan	30 September 2008	Approved Budget Contract with MDA £300,000 Annual Saving	Portfolio Holder for ICT and Spatial Project
	Continue to Maintain Accuracy of Council Data	Fewer Complaints Caused by Poor Data	Monitoring of milestones against Implementation Plan Customer Feedback System	On-target with Implementation Plan	30 September 2008	Approved Budget Contract with MDA £300,000 Annual Saving	Portfolio Holder for ICT and Spatial Project

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Improved Partnership Working (PR4)	Introduce Co-Mingled Recyclables Collection	Reduced Number of Operator Accidents and Efficiency Savings	New Collection Starts in Autumn 2009	Construction of Site Redesign of Routes/Purchase of Vehicles	31 March 2009 31 October 2009	County Council Approved Budget	Portfolio Holder for Street Scene and Recycling
	Delivery of Bromsgrove Sustainable Community Strategy, 2007-2010	70% of targets achieved	Bi-monthly Reporting to the LSP Board	Delivery of Community Improvement Plan	31 March 2008	Bromsgrove Partnership	Leader of the Council
				Full review of Sustainable Community Strategy	31 March 2010	Bromsgrove Partnership	

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Planning (PR5)	Longbridge	Agreed Plans	Planning application submitted and considered by Planning Committee	Negotiate improvements to Project Plan and Planning Application Secure Community Benefits via s.106 agreements	31 July 2008 31 July 2008	Development Control and Strategic Planning Policy	Portfolio Holder for Planning
	Regional Spatial Strategy 2	Agreement of Appropriate Housing Figures	Agreement of allocations for next 20 years	Examination in Public	From 30 September 2008 – 31 March 2009	Strategic Planning Policy	Portfolio Holder for Planning
	Rolling Vision of the District	Local Development Scheme (LDS)	LDS on target timescales	Submission of LDS timetable	To be agreed with GOWM	Strategic Planning Policy	Portfolio Holder for Planning
	Town Centre	Delivery of Area Action Plan	Appoint consultants to draft evidence for Town Centre Area Action Plan	Assess Issues and Option Paper Evidence Gathering	30 June 2008 31 October 2008	Strategic Planning Policy Strategic Planning Policy	Portfolio Holder for Planning and Leader of the Council

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Planning (PR5) continued				Draft Preferred Options Document prepared	31 March 2011	Strategic Planning Policy	Portfolio Holder for Planning and Leader of the Council
	Maintain Green Belt	90% Green Belt maintained	Enforcement Number of appeals upheld	Consistency of decision-making Use of Government Guidelines Informed Planning Committee	Ongoing	Partially funded through Housing and Planning Delivery Grant Resource implications to be kept under review	Portfolio Holder for Planning
	Speed of processing planning applications	Top quartile BV109a-c (see Corporate PIs)	Annual Targets (see Corporate PIs)	Recruitment and Retention of staff (workforce planning)	31 December 2008 and annually thereafter	Partially funded through Housing and Planning Delivery Grant Resource Implications to be kept under review	Portfolio Holder for Planning

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Learning and Development (HR&OD1)	Member Development	Evaluation of Modern Councillor Programme Against Agreed Criteria	Completion of Modern Councillor Programme	Training Needs Analysis Delivery of Mandatory and Priority Elements	31 Dec 2008 30 June 2008	Member Training Approved Budget Capacity Building Fund	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services
	Management Development Strategy	Improvements in 5 Determinants of Job Satisfaction (Employee Survey) IIP Report	Completion of Mandatory Element of Training All Managers Have Personal and Skills Development Plans in Place	Training Directory Established Modern Manager Skills Audit Completed	On-going 30 April 2008 (annually)	Approved Corporate Training Budget All Managers	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services
	Investors in People (IIP) Accreditation	IIP Re-accreditation Achieved	IIP Action Plan on target	IIP Action Plan	30 April 2008	Named Individuals in Plan	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
HR Modernisation (HR&OD2)	Workforce Planning	Alignment of People to Service Objectives	Service Workforce Plans Reviewed by HR&OD	Development of Service Workforce Plans	30 September 2009 (plans reviewed every two years)	Approved Corporate Training Budget Service Managers	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services
	Single Status	Equal Pay for Equal Work	Proposed New Pay Structure and Terms and Conditions Developed	Single Status Action Plan	30 April 2008 (subject to negotiations)	Approved Single Status Budget WMLGA Trade Unions	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services
	Policy Development	Consistency in People Management (Employee Survey)	Fewer Grievances Fewer Complaints	Delivery of People Strategy (timetable for Review of Core Policies)	31 October 2009	Human Resources and Organisational Development Team	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
HR Modernisation (HR&OD2) continued	Recruitment and Retention	Increase in Successful Recruitment at First Attempt	Increase in Applications	Revision of Advertising Image and Forms	In Place	Human Resources and Organisational Development Team	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services
		Workforce More Representative of Population	Increase in Applications	Management Reports on Nature of Applicants	In Place		
		Reduced Turnover	% of Staff Who Have Applied for Job Outside of the Council in Last Year (Employee Survey)	People Strategy and Management Development Strategy	31 March 2009 31 March 2009		

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Positive Employee Climate (HR&OD3)	Employee Satisfaction	Improvements in 5 Determinants of Job Satisfaction (Employee Survey) IIP Report	IIP Re- accreditation Staff Forums	IIP Action Plan Develop Satisfaction Measuring at Forums	31 April 2008 Date TBC following decision on date for the Staff Survey 2008	HR&OD Department	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services
	Industrial Relations	No Industrial Action	Climate Questionnaire to Union Liaison Group	Monthly Meeting with Unions Attended by Senior Managers Annual Review of JCC arrangements	On-going 30 November 2008	Human Resources and Organisational Development Department	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services

Priority	Key Deliverable	Outcome Measure	How Do We Know We Are Getting There?	Project/Action	Completion Date	Resource	Lead Member
Performance Culture (HR&OD4)	Personal Development Review Process	Achieve 85% of Staff Who Understand What They Are Contributing to Council Objectives [baseline 74%]	100% of PDRs completed	PDR Timetable Annual Review of PDR Process	30 April 2008 30 November 2008	Human Resources and Organisational Development Department	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services
	Team Action Planning	Achieve 85% of Staff Who Understand What Their Teams Are Contributing to Council Objectives (Employee Survey – baseline 74%)	100% Team Action Plans Completed	ACE to attend every DMT Quality Check of each Business Plan Annual Review of Team Plans.	31 September 2008 and annually 30 November 2008 and annually 31 May 2009	Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team	Leader of the Council
	Development of Core Competencies for all Staff	% of Staff Meeting Core Competencies	% of Employees Who Understand What is Expected	Development of Launch of Core Competencies (linked to PDRs)	Date Subject to Review by CMT	Human Resources and Organisational Development Department	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services

8. Corporate Performance Indicators

The Council's set of Corporate Performance Indicators has been revised to take account of the reduction in the number of Council priorities from ten to five and also to take account of the new set of National Indicators (NIs) that will be introduced in April 2008. These will replace the Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) which have been in use since 2000 and will be used as part of the judgements to be made in Comprehensive Area Assessments, which are due to commence in 2009.

A total of 198 new National Indicators (NIs) will be used with effect from April 2008, replacing the BVPI set. Of the 198 indicators only 64 apply at the District Council level and of those there are only 17 that are collected by district councils. This significant reduction gives us the opportunity to focus our attention on local performance measures that better reflect our priorities.

Targets and reporting frequencies have been set for all corporately approved performance indicators (where practical). Where 'TBC' is used in the table below, the Council is waiting for confirmation of the indicator meaning and information from other organisations before a meaningful target can be set. For new indicators, performance information will be captured in 2008/09 to establish a baseline, from which targets can be set for 2009/10 onwards.

PI Ref	PI description	Link to Corporate Priority	HoS	Set targets or baseline in 2008?	Reporting Frequency	Targets		
						08/09	09/10	10/11
NI 5 (place indicator)	Overall / general satisfaction with local area	All	Kevin Dicks	B	Annually	tbc	tbc	tbc
NI 179	Value for Money – total net value of ongoing cash-releasing value for money gains that have impacted since the start of the 2008-09 financial year	All	Jayne Pickering	T	Quarterly	£230k	£240k	£250k
NI 4 (place indicator)	% of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality	All	Kevin Dicks	B	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a

PI Ref	PI description	Link to Corporate Priority	HoS	Set targets or baseline in 2008?	Reporting Frequency	Targets		
						08/09	09/10	10/11
New LPI	% of residents satisfied with retail & leisure facilities offered in the town centre	CP1	Phil Street	B	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a
New LPI	% of residents satisfied with transport links to and from the town centre.	CP1	Phil Street	B	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a
NI 155	Number of affordable homes delivered	CP2	Dave Hammond	T	Quarterly	80	80	80
NI 156	Number of households occupying temporary accommodation	CP2	Dave Hammond	T	Quarterly	34	34	34
New LPI	% of customer panel who would recommend the CSC to a friend	CP3	Deb Poole	B	Annually	75	80	85
New LPI	Number of complaints received	CP3	Hugh Bennett	B	Monthly	n/a	n/a	n/a
New LPI	% of complaints resolved at each stage	CP3	Hugh Bennett	B	Monthly	n/a	n/a	n/a
New LPI	% of complaints dealt with inside response time standard (10 days)	CP3	Hugh Bennett	B	Monthly	n/a	n/a	n/a
LPI	% of staff who are satisfied with their level of involvement in decision making that affects their work & performance	CP3	Jo Pitman	T	Annually	70%	75%	80%
LPI	Sickness absence (local PI to replace BV12)	CP3	Jo Pitman	T	Monthly	8.75 days	8.5 days	8 days
LPI	Monthly call volumes CSC (activity measure)	CP3	Deb Poole	n/a	Monthly	n/a	n/a	n/a
LPI	Monthly call volumes switchboard (activity measure)	CP3	Deb Poole	n/a	Monthly	n/a	n/a	n/a
LPI	Resolution at first point of contact – all services	CP3	Deb Poole	T	Monthly	90%	95%	95%
LPI	Average speed of answer (in seconds)	CP3	Deb Poole	T	Monthly	35 secs	30 secs	25 secs
LPI	% of calls answered	CP3	Deb Poole	T	Monthly	80%	85%	90%
NI 181	Time taken to process HB/CT benefit new claims or change events	CP3	Jayne Pickering	T	Monthly	15.7	15.7	15.7

PI Ref	PI description	Link to Corporate Priority	HoS	Set targets or baseline in 2008?	Reporting Frequency	Targets		
						08/09	09/10	10/11
LPI	Percentage of invoices paid on time	CP3	Jayne Pickering	T	Monthly	98%	98%	98%
NI 157	Processing of major, minor and other planning applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Major ➤ Minor ➤ Other 	CP3	Dave Hammond	T	Monthly	75%	80%	85%
						80%	85%	85%
						90%	90%	90%
LPI	% of PACT meetings attended by SMT member(s)	CP4	Kevin Dicks	T	Quarterly	85%	85%	85%
LPI	Number of attendances at arts events	CP4	John Godwin	T	Monthly	25,523	26,036	26,557
LPI	Number of people attending the annual bonfire	CP4	John Godwin	T	Annually	11,339	11,566	11,890
LPI	Artrix usage	CP4	John Godwin	T	Annually	41,218	41,950	42,790
LPI	Sports centre usages	CP4	John Godwin	T	Monthly	672,420	766,020	781,340
LPI	% of people who remember receiving 'Together Bromsgrove'	CP4	Hugh Bennett	T	Annually	tbc	tbc	tbc
NI 1 (place indicator)	% of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area	CP4	Claire Felton	B	Annually	tbc	tbc	tbc
LPI	Equality standard for Local Government	CP4	Claire Felton	T	Annually	Level 2	Level 3	Level 3
NI 2 (place indicator)	% of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood	CP4	John Godwin	B	Annually	tbc	tbc	tbc
LPI	Measures of incidence of crime (to be selected from figures available from CDRP)	CP4	John Godwin	B	Monthly	n/a	n/a	n/a

PI Ref	PI description	Link to Corporate Priority	HoS	Set targets or baseline in 2008?	Reporting Frequency	Targets		
						08/09	09/10	10/11
NI 17 (place indicator)	Perceptions of anti-social behaviour	CP4	John Godwin	T	Annually	36%	32%	28%
NI 21 (place indicator)	Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police	CP4	John Godwin	B	Annually	tbc	tbc	tbc
NI 23 (place indicator)	Perceptions that people in the area treat one another with respect and consideration	CP4	Claire Felton	B	Annually	tbc	tbc	tbc
NI 27 (place indicator)	Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police	CP4	John Godwin	B	Annually	tbc	tbc	tbc
LPI	Sports development usages	CP4	John Godwin	T	Monthly	19,263	19,648	20,041
NI 191	Residual Household waste (kg per head)	CP5	Mike Bell	T	Monthly	231.9	tbc	tbc
NI 192	Household waste recycled & composted	CP5	Mike Bell	T	Monthly	31.702%	tbc	tbc
NI 195	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of graffiti, litter, detritus and fly posting)	CP5	Mike Bell	T	3 times a year	tbc	tbc	tbc
NI 196	Improved street and environmental cleanliness – fly tipping	CP5	Mike Bell	T	3 times a year	tbc	tbc	tbc
LPI	Abandoned vehicles	CP5	Mike Bell	T	Monthly	95	95	95
LPI	% animal debris cleared within timescales	CP5	Mike Bell	T	Monthly	95	95	95
LPI	% of fly tips dealt with in response time	CP5	Mike Bell	T	Monthly	95	95	95
LPI	Number of missed household waste collections	CP5	Mike Bell	T	Monthly	900	900	900
LPI	Number of missed recycle waste collections	CP5	Mike Bell	T	Monthly	200	200	200
New LPI	Satisfaction with waste collection, street cleanliness and recycling (to replace former satisfaction surveys BV89, 90a & b) (annual)	CP5	Mike Bell	T	Annually	tbc	tbc	tbc

9. Medium Term Financial Plan 2008-2011

Budget Summary 2008/2011

The Council Plan is supported by the Council's financial resources. The three year medium term financial plan is summarised below:-

	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000
Base cost of General Fund Services	12,065	11,651	12,166
Pressures	1,670	2,265	2,264
Savings	-1,424	-1,803	-1,916
Investment Income	-408	-127	0
Recharge to capital programme	-130	-133	-136
Net operating expenditure	11,773	11,853	12,378
Transfer from (-) to balances	-355	-26	-71
Collection fund	-37	0	0
Government Grant	-4,858	-4,945	-5,047
Assumed Council Tax	-6,523	-6,882	-7,260
Overall Shortfall	0	0	0

Budget Changes 2008/09

The Council Tax increase for 2008/09 generated only £325,000 of additional income for the Council, which when set alongside the demands for increased service provision made by local residents gives the Council very limited flexibility to meet local needs. The Council responded to this in three ways. Firstly, all budget bids were ranked as unavoidable, high priority, medium priority and low priority. The prioritisation of these bids is based on their contribution to the Council's corporate objectives and priorities. Secondly, the Council agreed £1.424m of financial savings for 2008/09, rising to £1.916m in 2010/11 and thirdly the Council has a Value for Money Strategy which it has used to find further efficiencies and improve service quality.

For 2008/09 to 2010/11 the following unavoidable and high priority budget bids were successful:-

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
	£'000	£'000	£'000
KNOWN UNAVOIDABLE PRESSURES			
<u>Street Scene & Waste Management</u>			
Non achievement of co-mingle saving		500	500
Loss of income from Highways work	50	50	50

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Planning & Environment</u>			
Loss of PDG income	186	157	163
Income from BDHT re sale of houses	70	70	70
Land Charges	45	45	45
Loss of income/expenditure from Hostel and B&B	12	12	12
Taxi Licensing Vehicle Maintenance	9	9	10
Choice Based Lettings Revenue costs	10	10	10
<u>Culture & Community</u>			
Income from Phase 2 Dolphin	60	60	60
Additional Staff CCTV Control Room	23	23	23

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Legal, Equality & Democratic Services</u>			
Case Management System	7	7	7
<u>Corporate</u>			
Charge for land rental Bromsgrove Rovers	15		
Grant reduction Amphlett Hall	14	14	14
Museum Grant to trust			
Total Unavoidable	501	957	964

HIGH PRIORITY PRESSURES			
<u>Corporate</u>			
Improvement Plan	75	0	0

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Culture & Community</u>			
Sports dev officers	60	60	60
Neighbourhood wardens	45	45	45
Additional street theatre events	10	10	10
Develop vetting policy for children & young people	5	2	2
<u>Planning & Environment</u>			
“Scores on the Doors” on-line publication of food hygiene inspection results	7	2	2
Town Centre development	0	0	0
Staffing restructure	23	23	23
Nightstop	6	6	6
Markets relocation	17	3	3

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Finance</u>			
Aspiren	6	6	6
Internal Audit Trainee	19	19	20
<u>Legal, Equality & Democratic Services</u>			
Standards board local filtering	30	31	32
Outsourcing document scanning process	0	48	48
<u>E-Government & Customer Services</u>			
CSC Staffing capacity enhancement	22	22	22
Councillors' Remote Access	15	15	15
Increase bandwidth for Internet link	9	9	9
Partnership office	25	25	25

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Human Resources & Organisational Development</u>			
Restructure of section to realise efficiencies	25	25	9
Share service with Redditch	30	30	30
Equality & Diversity Forum bids	5	5	5
External valuation support	10	10	10
<u>Street Scene & Waste Management</u>			
Restructure of section to realise efficiencies	124	149	152
Additional Staff Streets Hit Squad	50	50	50
Operational Cost Hit squad	6	6	6
Total High Priority Pressures	640	617	606
Allocation of other pressures 2008/09	529	691	694
TOTAL ALL PRESSURES	1,670	2,265	2,264

For 2008/09 to 2010/11 the following recommended budget savings were agreed by Cabinet and Full Council:-

SAVINGS IDENTIFIED			
	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000
<u>Corporate Communications</u>			
Restructure of section	25	26	27
General savings	5	5	5
Income generation from additional advertising in Together Bromsgrove.	10	10	10
Savings on area committees	16	8	8
General savings, stationery & training	3	3	3
Reduction in LSP funding	5	5	5
<u>Corporate Services</u>			
Deletion of general expenses budget	18	18	19

	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000
<u>E-Government</u>			
Desktop printer reorganisation - cancellation of Icon project - balance of saving	3	3	3
Contribution from revenue refresh budget	38	13	13
Bring ICT Helpdesk in-house		25	25
<u>Financial Services</u>			
Delete Senior Auditor post	35	35	35
Income from procurement officer	26	26	42
Miscellaneous savings	12	12	12
<u>Human Resources & Organisational Development</u>			
Restructure of section	108	108	92
Changes of childcare scheme- replace with Childcare vouchers	14	14	14
Review of Corporate Training Budget	10	10	10

	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000
<u>Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services</u>			
Income generation from BDHT	10	10	10
Restructure of section	104	190	193
<u>Planning and Environment</u>			
Additional income re licensing	30	32	34
Additional income re building control	5	5	5
PDG & LABGI income (transfer whole reserve to revenue)	345		
Sales of location maps/aerial photos	2	2	2
Cease sending out copies of plans with decision notices	1	1	1
Charge for pre application advice		1	1
Restructure of section	75	247	247
Tree advice to County	5	5	5
Cab Housing advice service grant reduced	3		

	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000
<u>SSWM & Culture & Community</u>			
Restructure of section	219	262	268
Additional savings from leisure trust transfer	50	50	50
Concessionary parking passes for the elderly - stop issuing (phased basis as annual passes in issue)	90	120	120
Increase Excess Charge Fee	20	20	20
Sponsorship	25	25	25
Lifeline	5	5	5
Charge green waste		400	400
Commencement of co-mingled recycling collections (Collect as alternating collection with residual)			100
<u>Other Areas</u>			
Cease ongoing transfer to replacement reserve ICT	107	107	107
TOTAL SAVINGS	1,424	1,803	1,916

10. Value for Money Strategy

The Council is committed to work to establish Value for Money principles in the way in which its delivers services. The key processes through which these principles will be delivered are contained within the recently adopted Value for Money Strategy. Some of these principles are embedded to a lesser or greater degree within the organisation; others will need to be established.

Departments must develop a vision of what services they will deliver and what the services will look like. This is already included as a key part of the Service Business Planning process. Once the vision has been established and translated into practical activities, **all** resources must be directed into achieving that vision. If any activity is only partly aimed at achieving the overall vision, the resources must be redirected to other activities. The responsibility for developing and implementing this vision must be that of the Head of Service. In order to develop and establish a Value for Money culture within the Council:-

- Departments must take care to investigate and understand customers' expectations and priorities and reallocate resources to satisfy them. This is key to making sure that resources are allocated according to the Council's overall priorities.
- Departments must act commercially in delivering services. Public sector managers act commercially

when they use and procure resources (such as staff, equipment, available funds) efficiently and those resources are solely used for achieving the overall vision of the service.

- As well as establishing Value for Money principles within their service on a day-to-day basis, departments must look to develop specific Value for Money projects aimed at generating efficiency gains and/or service improvements. The criteria for selecting these projects will focus on areas of above average cost and/or below average performance.
- The Business Service Plans must include Value for Money targets and be linked to the achievement of efficiency gains to be included in the budget. At the same time they have to deliver longer-term efficiency gains to be included in the Medium Term Financial Plan. For some services VFM targets will be relatively easy to quantify and measure. For others (e.g. planning) the achievement of a set of performance goals may constitute the achievement of Value for Money.
- Where service departments are proposing efficiencies, they must consult with central departments that possess the expertise to deal with particular issues that may arise, for example in the fields of legal services, finance, ICT and Human Resources. For example, most efficiency proposals will have some HR implications for staff and the

Council and may require consultation with the trade unions.

- Departments need to monitor on a regular basis how well they are achieving the cost and performance targets. This will require the ability to access data on demand and immediately rather than at the end of a quarter or a month. Managers must hold regular meetings which concentrate on up-to-date assessments of performance and plan action to be implemented as soon as possible to improve performance.
- The large ICT projects such as the Spatial Project have the capability of delivering significant efficiencies, but these efficiencies can only be maximised if the user departments plan at an early stage how they are going to use the new technological capabilities to provide measurably better customer services and/or deliver cost savings. The departments also need to consider (and include in their service plans) how the new technologies will enable them to transform the way in which they do business and enable them to reallocate resources from traditional activities to new ways of working.
- CMT needs to consider on a regular basis examples of where authority-wide projects need to be implemented in order to deliver efficiency gains. This might include initiatives to improve sickness absence rates across the Council or procurements affecting one or more departments. The Council's Corporate

Management Team also needs to consider whether it can demonstrate that Value for Money is being delivered. This might involve considering the outsourcing of particular services such as leisure and refuse collection.

- Managers must draw up an action plan to deliver Value for Money as part of the way in which they deliver their services. This action plan needs to set out practical ways in which officers can improve Value for Money in the next year and in the medium term (1 to 5 years). The action plan must aim to improve the key performance indicators for the service as well as unit costs
- The Council will continue to use partnerships with the public, private and voluntary sector to generate efficiencies. This is already being done through initiatives such as the Worcestershire Revenues and Benefits initiative and the Worcestershire Hub.
- The Council needs to monitor Value for Money proposals to ensure they are fully implemented and the benefits realised. The Council can use its project management framework for this and the Finance Team can record efficiency gains made in the Annual Efficiency Statement.
- The portfolio holder for Financial Services will support the awareness and ownership of Value for Money at the Member level.

11. Council's Performance Management Arrangements

Corporate Performance Management Framework

The Council's Performance Management Framework seeks to create explicit links between the Sustainable Community Strategy, Council Plan, Service Business Plans and Team/Personal Development Plans

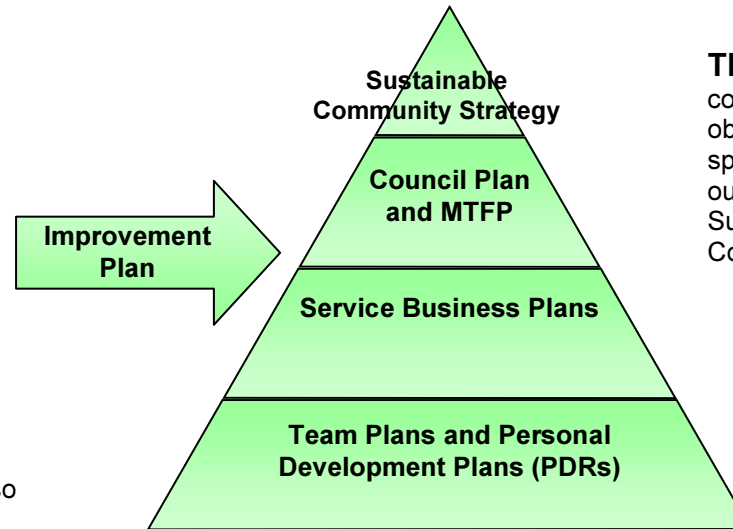
At the top of the framework is **the Sustainable Community Strategy**. It is a 10-year plan that has been developed by the Bromsgrove Partnership, comprising public, private, voluntary and community organisations, which have been consulted with locally to identify the priorities for the area. The Community Plan represents an 'umbrella' plan from which each organisation prepares its own strategy to deliver aspects of the Community Strategy for which it is responsible. The District's Community Strategy is currently being reviewed.

Improvement Plan. The Improvement Plan provides a link between the 3 year Council Plan and the 1 year Service Business Plans. It extracts key actions for the year ahead in a project chart format, against which progress is reported each month, using a traffic light system.

Performance Management

Progress against our plans are monitored and managed at a number of levels (see also overleaf):-

1. Cabinet receives a quarterly integrated financial and performance report and an Improvement Plan update each month.
2. The non-executive Performance Management Board receives monthly updates on the corporate performance indicators and the Improvement Plan. Any issues identified are reported to Cabinet.
3. All the above information goes to the Council's Corporate Management Team each month and it also receives quarterly updates against the service business plans.



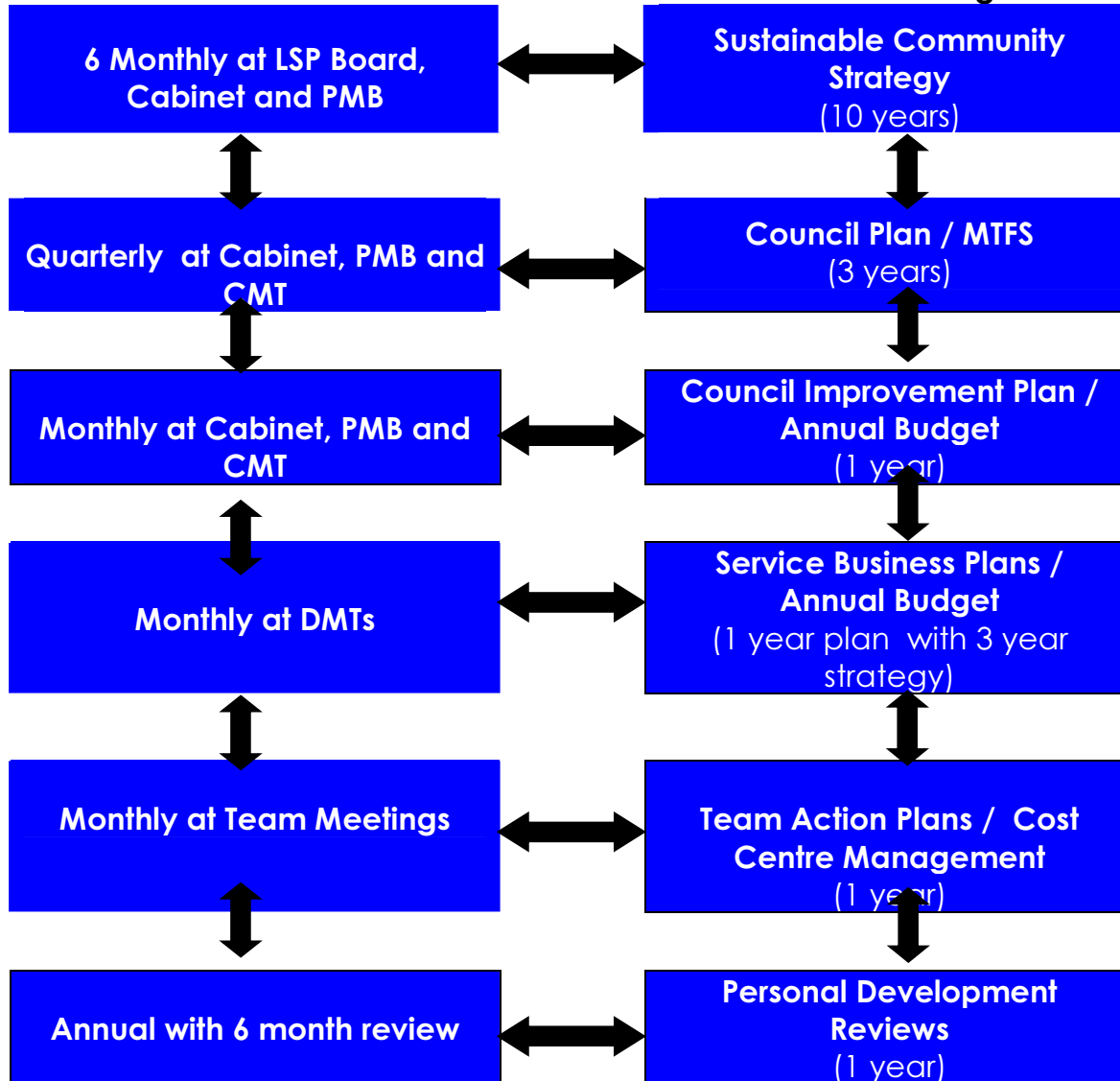
The Council Plan. The Plan is based on consultation and sets out the Council's corporate objectives and priorities for the next 3 years in specific and measurable terms. The Plan also sets out how the Council will contribute to the Sustainable Community Strategy and drives the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

Service Business Plans identify at a departmental level the actions we plan to undertake in order to deliver the Council Plan and Improvement Plan. These are then translated into team plans and individual PDRs, ensuring all staff understand their role in delivering the Council's priorities. The progress against our Service Business Plans is monitored quarterly at Corporate Management Team while staff receive a formal review of their PDR every six months.

Monitoring Arrangements

Integrated Financial and Performance Management

The **Monitoring Arrangements** for each part of the performance management framework are detailed in the table opposite.



12. Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Audit Commission	The regulatory body that has responsibility for examining the work of local authorities.
Best Value	A legal duty (Local Government Act 1999) designed to make sure that local authorities continually improve their value for money.
Building Pride	The Council's transformation programme designed to make Bromsgrove District Council an excellent local authority.
Corporate Management Team (CMT)	The Council's officer management team made up of the Chief Executive, Corporate Director Services, Corporate Director Resources and the seven heads of service.
Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)	An external assessment by the Audit Commission which makes a judgement on the whole of a Council's performance and provides a single rating of Excellent, Good, Fair, Weak or Poor.
Sustainable Community Strategy	A long-term vision for the District as a whole. The Strategy co-ordinates the actions of public, private and community organisations in meeting the needs and priorities of local communities. Under the Local Government Act 2000, all local authorities are required to work in partnership with the community, business, voluntary sector and other public sector partners to develop a long-term strategy to promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of their local communities.
Council Results	An annual report which outlines how the Council has performed against what it said it would do. It includes Best Value Performance Indicator results and targets required by law.
Local Area Agreement (LAA)	A form of contract between Central Government and the Worcestershire Local Strategic Partnership for the delivery of 35 outcomes supported by approximately 90 targets. The LAA includes a pump priming grant from Central Government and the payment of a reward grant for successful delivery of some of the targets.
Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)	A family of partnerships and organisations that is working to a common aim - to improve the quality of life in the District and deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Term	Definition
Medium Term Financial Plan	A three year budget for the Council's expenditure and income, linked to the Council's objectives and priorities.
Objectives	The broad goals for the Council, within which priorities are set.
Performance Development Review	A formal meeting between a member of staff and their line manager to review past work and agree future work, setting standards and targets.
Performance indicators	Yardsticks used to assess our achievements.
Performance Management Framework	Sets out the processes by which Elected Members, Officers and residents can monitor how the Council is performing.
Priorities	The ten areas identified by Elected Members and Officers where we wish to make significant improvement in how we perform.
Service Business Plans	One year plans that set out what each department intends to deliver over the coming year.
Spatial Business Project	A large ICT project designed to improve customer service through data integration.
Target(s)	A fixed goal or objective which results in improvements.
Values	The fundamental principles that guide the way we work.
Vision	The ideal of how we would like the District and the Council to be in the future.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

5TH MARCH 2008

CABINET

IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT [DECEMBER 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 December 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 147 actions highlighted for December within the plan 82.3% percent of the Improvement Plan is on target [green], 11.6% percent is one month behind [amber] and 2.0% percent is over one month behind [red]. 4.1% 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 DECEMBER 2007






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

November 2007

December 2007

RED	5	3.1%	RED	3	2.0%
AMBER	11	7.0%	AMBER	17	11.6%
GREEN	138	86.9%	GREEN	121	82.3%
REPROGRAMMED	5	3.1%	REPROGRAMMED	6	4.1%

Where: -

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

- 4.2 Out of the total of 147 actions for the month, 14 actions have been deleted, suspended or the timescales have been extended. This amounts to 9.5 percent of the plan. These actions are: Work Commenced (1.2); Longbridge (2.4); Overall Customer Satisfaction x2 (4.1); Three Charter Marks (5.2); Review Annual Business Cycle (6.4); Parish Council Influence (7.5); Satisfaction with Artrix (8.2) Maintain Greenbelt (10.1); Revisit Planning Moratorium (10.4); Improvements in Use of Resources score in relation to VFM (11.3); Improve Member Capacity (16.4); Better understanding of Spatial Project (17.1); Performance Management Arrangements for CMT (22.6)
- 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. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 7.1 The Improvement Plan relates to all of the Council's four objectives and five priorities.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

9. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

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

10. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Please see section 3 of the Improvement Plan

11. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 See section 11 of the Improvement Plan

12. 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.

13. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	No
Chief Executive	At CMT
Executive Director (Partnerships and Projects)	At CMT
Executive Director (Services)	At CMT
Assistant Chief Executive	No
Head of Service	No
Head of Financial Services	At CMT
Head of Legal & Democratic Services	At CMT
Head of Organisational Development & HR	At CMT
Corporate Procurement Team	No

14. WARDS AFFECTED

14.1 All wards

15. APPENDICES

15.1 Appendix 1 Improvement Plan Exception Report December 2007

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- 16.1 Full Improvement Plan for December will be e- mailed to all Members of the Corporate Management Team and can be found at www.bromsgrove.gov.uk under meetings Minutes and Agendas where there is a direct link to the Improvement Plan.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Jenny McNicol
E Mail: j.mcnicol@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881631

CP1: Town Centre																
Ref	December 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.		Start date remains further delayed until January 2008 due to reconsidered approach.											PS	Sept-07	Jan-08
1.2	Work Commenced															
1.2.2	Consultation with community.	PS														Meeting with consultants took place in December. Further work will be undertaken to prepare the Area Action Plan in January which will include seeking the views of the community. This will then form the basis of an issues and options document which will go out for wider consultation.

CP4: Customer Service																	
Ref	December 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		
4.1.1	Agree customer survey				Will be agreed in January 2008										HB	Oct-07	Jan-08
4.1.	Overall Customer satisfaction																
4.1.1	Agree customer survey	HB														Delayed due protracted negotiations. The questions are now in draft, and survey design will be completed in January due to other competing priorities.	

CP4: Customer Service																	
Ref	December 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		
4.1.2	Undertake survey				Survey will go out in February 2008										HB	Nov-07	Feb-08
4.1.	Overall Customer satisfaction																
4.1.2	Undertake survey	HB														Due to the delay in the negotiations in 4.1.1, the survey will take place later than originally planned and will go out in February 2008	

CP4: Customer Service																	
Ref	December 2007 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
4.1.6	Develop posters for internal display.				Posters will be produced in February.										HB	Dec-07	Feb-08
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
4.1.	Overall Customer satisfaction																
4.1.6	Develop posters for internal display.	HB														Other work within the customer feedback software project has been given priority. Posters will be produced in February.	

CP4: Customer Service																	
Ref	December 2007 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
4.1.7	Launch with press and Internet.				Launch arranged for 31 January.										HB	Dec-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																
4.1.7	Launch with press and Internet.	HB														Slightly delayed. Launch arranged for 31 January.	

Exception Report for December 2007 Improvement Plan

Appendix 1

CP4: Customer Service																
Ref	December 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action											Who	Original Date	Revised Date
4.1.11	Customer Service Peer Review and Update of Customer First Strategy.		Will be reported to February 08 Cabinet											KD	Oct-07	Feb-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														Delayed due to capacity issues. Now in draft form. Will be reported to February 08 Cabinet

CP6: Performance																		
Ref	December 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			
6.4.1	Undertake review of annual business cycle and reports, with particular focus on CMT, PMB and Cabinet.															HB	Nov-07	Feb-08
6.4	Review Annual Business Cycle (and reinforce business planning cycle)																	
6.4.1	Undertake review of annual business cycle and reports, with particular focus on CMT, PMB and Cabinet.	BR/HB																No capacity to undertake review. Also, initial feedback from the Audit Commission indicates our performance management processes are robust. A review of all the dates for next year was completed in December and this will be reported to February CMT. A key issue is greater middle manager involvement

CP7: Community Influence																	
Ref	December 2007 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
7.1.1	Capacity Building evaluation.				Work being undertaken by consultant, but delays created through illness. Report received Jan 08										HB	Dec-07	Jan-08
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
7.1	Area Committee pilots (probable expansion of two)																
7.1.1	Capacity Building evaluation.	HB														Report was not received until January 08 which has delayed project.	

CP7: Community Influence																	
Ref	December 2007 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
7.5.2	Guidance for “adoption” of Parish Plans developed and approach to Charter.				Draft to be completed in January.										HB	Nov-07	Jan-08
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
7.5	Parish Council Influence (and Parish Council Charter)																
7.5.2	Guidance for “adoption” of Parish Plans developed and approach to Charter.	HB														Lead member of staff have been ill and this has caused 6 days to be lost in November which has put the project back.	

CP9: Clean District																	
Ref	December 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		
9.2.2	Development of Policy Document		Orange		Policy document may miss target slightly but is close to completion.										MB	Dec-07	Jan-08
9.2	Improve Customer Perception of Cleanliness																
9.2.2	Development of Policy Document	MB	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Grey							The Policy document will set out the Council's approach to improving customer perception of cleanliness. Policy may miss target slightly but is close to completion	

FP1: Value for Money																		
Ref	December 2007 Action	Colour	Corrective Action													Who	Original Date	Revised Date
11.1.3	Quarterly report to PMB to assess the effectiveness of the alternative methods of service delivery eg- transfer to leisure trust, payroll service provision		Services will not be transferred until April 08.													JP	Dec-07	April-08
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action			
11.1	Realisation of cashable savings by alternative methods of service delivery																	
11.1.3	Quarterly report to PMB to assess the effectiveness of the alternative methods of service delivery eg- transfer to leisure trust, payroll service provision	JP														Services will not be transferred until April 08.		

FP1: Value for Money																			
Ref	December 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				
11.3.5	Identify services for detailed benchmarking & cost analysis to be undertaken															JP	Aug-07	Feb-08	
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.	

FP2: Financial Management																			
Ref	December 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				
12.1.1	Implementation of the POP project to account for commitments & accruals on the Agresso system															JP	July-07	Mar-08	
12.1	Improved Financial Management by budget holders																		
12.1.1	Implementation of the POP project to account for commitments & accruals on the Agresso system	JP																Upgrades have been tested and implemented.	

FP2: Financial Management																		
Ref	December 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			
12.1.3	Train all managers to use web access for Agresso reporting															JP	Sept-07	Mar-08
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. Accountancy Manager post to start in March 08 and to plan a proposed start date for the remainder of the Council.	

FP2: Financial Management																	
Ref	December 2007 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
12.4.3	Undertake programme.				Audit Commission focus on preparation for year end – workshops on final accounts arranged by AC for BDC staff.										JP	Sept-07	Mar-08
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
12.4	Increase Benefit from External Audit																
12.4.3	Undertake programme.	JP														Audit Commission focus on preparation for year end – workshops on final accounts arranged by AC for BDC staff. Other support to be reviewed once final accounts completed (August 08)	

PR2: Improved Governance																	
Ref	December 2007 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
16.4.1	Develop and run a training and development programme for Cabinet Members.				Project planning will commence in January and the first Cabinet session will take place in March										CF	Dec-07	Jan-08
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
16.4	Improve Member Capacity																
16.4.1	Develop & run a training & development programme for Cabinet Members.	CF														Met with Leader and identified training need and training provider.	

PR2: Improved Governance																
Ref	December 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	
16.4.2	Identify peer mentors for the Leader (and Cabinet Members) and the Leader of the Opposition.		Mentoring to commence in January. The first session will be facilitated with the Cabinet in March											CF	Oct-07	Jan-08
16.4	Improve Member Capacity															
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 start in September, but will now commence in January. The first session will be facilitated with the Cabinet in March

PR2: Improved Governance																
Ref	December 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	
16.4.5	Top Team development day to strengthen the relationship between new Cabinet and CMT.		The first planning session is scheduled for January with a facilitated Cabinet session in March.											CF	Dec-07	Jan-08
16.4	Improve Member Capacity															
16.4.5	Top Team development day to strengthen the relationship between new Cabinet and CMT.	CF														Programme has been determined and the first planning session is scheduled for January with a facilitated Cabinet session in March.

HR&OD2: Modernisation																	
Ref	December 2007 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
20.3.1	Review, develop, consult, train and Implement on all HR policies and procedures as detailed in the People Strategy		Orange		HR policy review programme has slowed down as a result of other organisational priorities (e.g. HR implications of the budget) and case management. This will be picked up again in the new Business Planning year										JP	Dec-07	April-08
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
20.3	Policy Development																
20.3.1	Review, develop, consult, train and Implement on all HR policies and procedures as detailed in the People Strategy	JP	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Health and Safety policies have been subject to review during this period and updated accordingly. HR policy review programme has slowed down as a result of other organisational priorities (e.g. HR implications of the budget) and case management. This will be picked up again in the new Business Planning year.		

HR&OD3: Positive Employee Climate																	
Ref	December 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	Aug-07	Jan-08
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
21.1	Employee satisfaction																
21.1.6	Implement Action Plan	JP														Employee Focus Groups were held in November to look at how to address the issues raised and determine an action plan.	

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

05 MARCH 2008

DECEMBER (QUARTER 3) PERFORMANCE REPORTING

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Roger Hollingworth Leader of the Council Councillor Geoff Denaro Cabinet Member for Finance
Responsible Head of Service	Hugh Bennett Assistant Chief Executive Jayne Pickering, Head of Financial Services

1. SUMMARY

To report to Cabinet on the Council's performance at 31st December 2007 (period 9, quarter 3).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes that 55% of PI's are Improving or Stable, compared to 83% at Quarter 2
- 2.2 That Cabinet notes that 73% of PI's are achieving their Year To Date target, (72% at Q2)
- 2.3 That Cabinet notes that 75% of PI's are predicted to meet their target at year end (79% at Q2).
- 2.4 That Cabinet notes the financial position for both revenue and capital funding for the second quarter of £198k underspend and £840k respectively.
- 2.5 That Cabinet approval is given for the carrying forward of the estimated under spent budgets totalling £2.250m from 2007/08 to 2008/09 as detailed on Appendix 5.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The format of the quarterly report to Cabinet has been changed to provide an integrated report, both at department and overall council level, of performance and finance. Risk Management updates are presented to the Audit Board on a quarterly basis for members consideration. Detailed information on performance will continue to be provided as appendices to CMT, Leader's group and PMB.
- 3.2 Following a recommendation from a recent review of the Data Quality Strategy by Internal Audit this report will now include a regular section to report on data quality issues.

- There continues to be some errors in reporting of performance in Departmental submissions as follows :-
 - Planning & Environment – 4 errors in reporting and 1 PI not reported in time
 - Human Resources & Organisational Development – 4 errors in reporting
 - E-Government & Customer Services – 4 errors in reporting
 - Culture & community – 3 errors in reporting
 - Finance – 3 errors in reporting.
 - Waste Management & Street Services – 1 error in reporting

3.3 These errors were in the coding of the target/trend information – i.e. incorrect traffic lighting and/or incorrect reporting as to whether performance is improving, stable or declining or simply transposition of numbers. There were no indications that the underlying performance figures were incorrect. The relevant Departmental Performance Champions have been notified and advised.

4. PROGRESS IN THE QUARTER

4.1 An integrated performance and finance report for each department, plus a council summary, is shown below.

4.2 Integrated Performance, Finance & Risk Report

Chief Executive's Department	Quarter 3 (Dec 31st) 2007/08
-------------------------------------	--

Performance Summary

No. of PI's improving (I)	1	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	0	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	0
No. of PI's Stable (S)	0	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	0	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	0
No. of PI's worsening (W)	0	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	1	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	1

Achievements

Overall, the Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team will achieve its key deliverables, as per its business plan for 2007/2008. Good areas of performance include:-

- Positive feedback from the Audit Commission on our Direction of Travel;
- A 2 out of 4 for Data Quality (improved from a score of 1 the previous year);
- Overall performance of the Council set to deliver at least a "Fair" level of performance for 2007/2008, which should lead to an overall rating of "Fair" when we have our next Comprehensive Performance Assessment;
- The launching of the District's Sustainable Community Strategy and performance framework for the LSP;
- Regular quality reports to Cabinet and PMB on performance and the improvement plan;
- Agreement on corporate customer standards and departmental customer standards, which will go live on 31 January, along with the Council's customer feedback system and customer manual for staff; and
- Working with heads of service to complete the draft Council Plan 2008/2011 and service business plans, which will be signed off by portfolio holders in February.

Issues

There are two issues for the Team: _

- Agreeing a shared way forward and approach for Area Committees in 2008/2009; and
- Improving the press coverage of the Council, which due to the difficult budget round and Single Status is running at around the 70% mark, compared to a target of 80%.

Revenue Budget summary

Service Head	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Corporate Projects	100	50	64	14	100	0
Policy & Performance	5	311	294	-18	-17	-23
Corporate Management	893	433	446	13	911	18
TOTAL	998	794	801	9	994	-5

Financial Commentary

The Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team expects to exceed its income target for Together Bromsgrove and this plus a renegotiated contract for the customer panel should see the team underspend for 2007/2008.

Capital Budget summary April- December 2007

Service Head	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Policy & Performance	45	0	0	0	35	-10
TOTAL	45	0	0	0	35	-10

Financial Commentary

- The Customer Feedback system will be implemented in the final quarter of 2007/08.
- The contribution towards the re-development of Bromsgrove railway station will now be phased and part will now be paid in 2008/09.

Culture & Community Services	Quarter 3 (Dec 31st) 2007/08
---	--

Performance Summary

No. of PI's improving (I)	3	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	3	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	4
No. of PI's Stable (S)	0	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	2	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	0
No. of PI's worsening (W)	3	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	1	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	2

Achievements

- Attendances at Arts Events will meet its 07/08 target despite of the fact that the early summer programme was heavily disrupted by the poor summer weather. This target will be re-profiled in 2008/09.
- BVPI 127a will meet it's 2007/08 target at the end of the year due to increased partnership working with in the CDRP (for example increased availability of taxis at weekends) and increased police presence on the street.
- BVPI 128 continues to perform well with a 23% reduction in vehicle crime against target in November 07.

Issues:

- BVPI 127b continues to be worse than target due to the poor start to 2007/08, although performance is now stable the initial low target has resulted in an out turn that is expected to be worse than target by 30%. This BVPI has been subject to a PI clinic in consultation with West Mercia Police, where no further action is proposed due to it's deletion in 2008/08.
- Sports Centre usage will fail to met its end of year target due to the delays that occurred in the Phase 2 building programme. Due to the nature of the works, additional works that were required as part of the trust transfer and BDC's revised project management of the design & build programme the works were delayed by 5 weeks, this has resulted in close down period commencing in the traditional peak months of Jan and Feb 08.

Revenue Budget summary

Service Head	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Arts Services	278	139	151	12	277	0
Cemeteries	-35	-48	-44	4	-31	5
Community Safety	641	374	411	37	-31	5
Culture & Community Services Management	0	163	127	-36	-56	-55
Museums & TIC	121	55	53	-1	118	-3
Parks & Open Spaces	894	142	178	36	943	49
Sports & Recreation General	281	65	55	-10	274	-8
Sports Centres	974	651	694	43	1064	90
TOTAL	3,154	1,542	1,625	83	3,255	101

Financial Commentary

- In the 07/08 budget the Dolphin Centre income was increased by £60k to reflect the additional income the Phase 2 income was expected to generate. The Phase 2 development was not scheduled to be completed until 2008/09. This saving has been resolved in the recently completed MTFP.
- This report reflects the projected loss of income at the Dolphin Centre as highlighted in the above commentary. Currently staff are maximising the dry side activity opportunities and increasing marketing and promotion activities. Plans are also in place to promote the reopening of the centre in March 08.
- The above expenditure includes the additional staffing requirements identified (£21K) in the 2008 medium term financial plan in relation to the CCTV control room service.
- The under performance of the annual civic bonfire is contained within the above figures, this represents an income short fall of £17k
- The additional costs of £19k (£13k of SS&WM charges) associated with the reintroduction of the Christmas Lights switch on is included in the performance report. Sponsorship proposals are being developed for 2008 to ensure that this financial impact is not repeated in future years.
- The Sports Development income figures include the poor performance during the summer holiday period relating to the weather conditions which reduced income by £3.5k.

Capital Budget summary April-December 2007/08

Service	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Cemeteries	15	6	3	-3	7	-8
Community Safety	18	18	19	1	19	1
Parks & Open Spaces	919	435	320	-115	658	-261
Leisure Facilities	995	45	53	8	515	-480
Sport & Recreation General	130	130	-	-130	130	0
TOTAL	2,077	634	395	-239	1,329	-748

Financial Commentary

- Additional projects in relation to the refurbishment at the Dolphin Centre and the replacement of the hot water system have been approved of £895k
- Within the parks and open spaces the New Sporting Pitches (Garringtons/UEF) scheme for £210k has been withdrawn and the Barnsley Hall Play area, Belbroughton Play facilities and Charford S106 Schemes have all been completed.
- It is projected that there will be an under-spend of £748k by the end of the financial year. This is mainly due to an under-spend of £480k on the upgrade of the Dolphin Centre, along with an underspend of £215k for the New Park (football Pitches) at Barnsley Hall. Both will be requested to be carried forward into 2008/09.

Planning & Environment Services	Quarter 3 (Dec 31st) 2007/08
--	--

Performance Summary

No. of PI's improving (I)	3	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	7	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	7
No. of PI's Stable (S)	2	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	0	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	0
No. of PI's worsening (W)	2	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	0	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	0

Achievements:

- Development Control performance continues to be high. As a “standards” Authority for the determination of major applications we are charged with determining 65% of major applications within 13 weeks. Performance currently stands at 100%
- We are currently rated the 24th best authority (out of 367) for the determination of major applications
- We are the 42nd best authority for determining “Minor” applications and 99th best for determining “Others”.
- We have achieved the governments target for Households occupying temporary accommodation 2 years early
- We passed our BSI 2000 audit inspection in Building Control
- Households occupying temporary accommodation – government set target for 2010 achieved 2 years early

Issues:

- Income is down with regard to Land Charges due to the impact of private search companies yet the workload in the Local Land Charges team has increased due to the government guidance to produce personal searches within 48 hours and deal with all work on an equal basis
- Sickness levels remain on target
- Preparation taking place for the Audit Housing Inspection in February 08. The self assessment has been forwarded.

Revenue Budget summary

Service Head	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Development & Building Control	715	39	-3	-42	704	-11
Environmental Health	1017	426	357	-69	970	-47
Licensing	2	-3	-60	-57	-38	-41
Planning Administration	-11	117	185	68	67	78
Strategic Housing	3360	433	457	24	3377	17
Strategic Planning	621	393	346	-47	570	-51
Economic Development	92	82	76	-6	103	10
Retail Market	27	8	17	10	47	20
TOTAL	5,824	1,494	1,376	-119	5,799	-24

Financial Commentary

- The current underspends were due to a number of vacancies within the department that have only recently been filled this is majority offset with spend against agency staff. As the majority of posts have now been filled there will be a reduced underspend by the end of the financial year.
- Current savings on consultancy fees including the Longbridge budget. It is anticipated that the use of consultancy fees for the advice on planning matters will not be spent at the end of the financial year and be requested to carry forward until 08/09 this has been profiled to reflect this.
- There has been an increase in income on licensing budgets which are estimated to continue into 2008/09 and will form part of revised budget proposals.
- It is projected there will be an under-spend of £25k by the end of the financial year. This being the net effect of the underspends on salaries against the loss of income in land charges due to customers using other agencies, Market Hall due to the imminent closure and the closure of the hostels.

Capital Budget summary April-December 2007/08

Service	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Strategic Housing	3,626	1,367	1,227	-140	2,156	-1,470
TOTAL	3,626	1,367	1,227	-140	2,156	-1,470

Financial Commentary

- Expenditure in 2007/08 to date on Disabled Facilities Grants and Discretionary Home Repair Grants totals £321k. There is now likely to be an end of year under-spend of £421k. The main reasons for the underspend are staffing issues and the 12 month time limit for getting work carried out following approval being granted.
- Grants to RSL schemes are also well under way in this year with £135k being spent to date of the total capital budget of £662k. Total payments of £241k are projected and the likely underspend of £423k will be requested to be carried forward to 2008/09.
- The Homeless Hostels Re-modelling scheme has commenced an £270k has been spent to date. It is projected that the carry forward of £38k to 2008/09 will be required for completion of the scheme.
- The Extra Care Sheltered Housing- Gilbert Court, Charford project commenced in September 2007 and 50% has been paid to date. There will now be an under-spend in relation to this scheme that will be requested to be c/fwd into 2008/09.

Street Scene & Waste Management	Quarter 3 (Dec 31st) 2007/08
--	--

Performance Summary

No. of PI's improving (I)	4	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	10	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	10
No. of PI's Stable (S)	3	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	0	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	0
No. of PI's worsening (W)	3	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	0	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	0

Achievements

- All ten key performance indicators are on year to date target & are projected to meet year end target. We are now entering the period of cessation of green waste collections which will have an impact on indicators for the balance of the year; however we are expecting to meet targets.
- Street cleansing is continuing to improve due to the enthusiasm of the team and Supervisor and has been motivated by the achievement of Green Apple Award in November. The team were presented with their award by the local MP at a presentation ceremony in the Council House.
- Two man working has now been introduced on 6 of the 8 refuse rounds.

Issues:

- Refuse vehicles continue to cause concern. They are considerably improved following recent work but are still well below the reliability levels that should be expected of this type of vehicle. This continues to have an impact on the cost of the service.

Revenue Budget summary

Service Head	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Car Parks	-718	-444	-485	-41	-760	-42
Cleansing	1283	753	657	-96	1156	-127
Depot – Miscellaneous	-19	22	179	156	-124	-106
Environmental Enhancements	7	5	-8	-13	-1	-8
Garage	151	74	102	28	252	101
Grounds Maintenance	592	343	340	-3	591	-1
Highways	262	173	189	17	315	52
Refuse Collection	2,791	1,796	1,747	-49	2,954	164

Travel Concessions	427	316	185	-131	450	23
TOTAL	4,777	3,039	2,907	-132	4,833	56

Financial Commentary

- The financial management arrangements within Street Scene are more robust than in previous years as the position at the second quarter is similar to that reported at end September 07.

The reasons for the current variations include:

- Additional Car Parking income generated to the anticipated budget.
- Cleansing – current and projected underspends due to vacant posts and improving the efficiency of the service by using less operatives.
- Highways – shortfalls on projected income as the Highways partnership no longer rent the Burcot Room together with income targets set for general highways and drainage work that is now undertaken by the County Council. These pressures will be addressed as part of the medium term financial plan review for 2008/09-2010/11.
- There is a current phased reduction in the number of operatives carrying out refuse collection and it is anticipated that the overspend on this area will reduce by year end.

Capital Budget summary April-December 2007/08

Service	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Car Parks	18	18	0	-18	18	0
Replacement Vehicles	1,479	933	705	-228	1,044	-435
Travel Concessions	20	20	0	-20	0	-20
TOTAL	1,517	971	705	-266	1,062	-455

Financial Commentary

- The 10 year Vehicle Replacement Programme has already incurred expenditure of £705k including multi lift vehicles, street cleaning vehicles and equipment, 4 second hand recycling vehicles and 3 chariot lawnmowers. There has been a budget saving of £180k on the purchase of the recycling vehicles.
- It is anticipated that the new car parking machines will be in place by the end of 2007/08.

Performance Summary

No. of PI's improving (I)	0	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	3	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	2
No. of PI's Stable (S)	3	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	1	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	1
No. of PI's worsening (W)	2	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	1	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	2

Achievements:

- Health and Safety** – The Council undertook its first Stress Survey of all employees towards the end of 2007 and generated some particularly pleasing results. We exceeded the HSE targets in 3 out of the 6 standards. This is an area in which the Council is able to say that it is leading the way compared to some of our neighbouring authorities.
- Budget** – Supporting the Finance Team and Council as a whole to manage the HR implications of the 2008/9 budget (34 redundancies/deletion of posts) in order to ensure that financial resources of the Council are aligned to the Council priorities. Positive and effective consultation with the recognised trade unions and BERR took place (with no major industrial relations issues arising from the proposals), and with just 1.5 compulsory redundancies projected to be the final number in April 2008 when all notice periods will have expired. We are also pleased to report, as projected, that 3 of the “at risk” individuals either have been, or will be, redeployed into more secure employment with the Council (one of whom has actually secure a promotion as a result of this process).
- Sickness** – Despite also being reported in the section relating to “issues” below (recognising that we will almost certainly miss our annual performance target for 2007), sickness absence levels are nevertheless considerably improved upon last year’s performance. To that extent, it is clearly an achievement.
- Two Tick Symbol Secure** – the two tick disability symbol is a signal to prospective job applicants that the Council welcomes applications from people with disabilities, thus taking a further step towards the achievement of a representative workforce, and supporting our corporate equalities agenda.
- Implementation of EDMS** (part of the Spatial project) in accordance with planned timescales – as the pilot department for implementation of EDMS across the whole Council it was critical that we delivered implementation on time and shared our learning with other departments.
- Shared Services Agenda** (efficiency improvements and financial savings) – Agreement to outsource the payroll function to Redditch Borough Council; representing an example of the Council’s willingness to support the wider Shared Services agenda. Arrangements are currently underway to ensure a smooth transition of the service for April 2008.

- **Single Status** – The job evaluation work has been completed and all data translated into the pay modeller. A proposed pay model has been “agreed in principle” with the unions and is projected to be approved by CMT in early February before communicating the results to all staff towards the end of February. Again, this particular project has benefited from successful partnership working between management and the recognised trade unions, with both sides working hard to understand each others respective position and find a solution that could be acceptable to both sides. Working relationships throughout this project have been extremely positive, with the expected outcome being that the unions will support and recommend the final package to their membership.

Issues:

- **Sickness absence** - as outlined above, sickness absence levels are expected to fall outside of the planned target for 2007. This appears to be attributable to short term absences as opposed to the long term absences which were a problem in the previous year. It is evident that there is no one single reason that can be attributed to these absences; it was however projected that the uncertainty, and subsequent reality, of the budget would have a negative effect upon absence levels.

Revenue Budget summary

Service Head	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Human Resources & Organisational Development	117	443	436	-8	128	10
TOTAL	117	443	436	-8	128	10

Financial Commentary

- The underspend to date is due to budgets on general supplies and services not fully used.
- There is an under-spend is on the corporate training budget and Councillors training budget – however it is anticipated that these budgets will be used fully during the remainder of 07/08.
- The projected out-turn for the financial year is over-spent due to some unexpected legal costs that have not been budgeted for.

Capital Budget summary April-December 2007/08

Service	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
HR & OD	30	0	0	0	0	-30
Total	30	0	0	0	0	-30

Financial Commentary

The £30k budget carried forward from 2006/07 is still unspent to date - this scheme has seen delays due to the organisational restructure in 2006/07. Research is still under way to identify the requirements of the new system and the link with the spatial project, before a tender specification can be prepared. It is likely that a request to carry forward the budget into 2008/09 will be made.

Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services

Quarter 3 (Dec 31st)
2007/08

Performance Summary

No. of PI's improving (I)	0	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	2	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	2
No. of PI's Stable (S)	2	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	0	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	0
No. of PI's worsening (W)	0	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	0	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	0

Achievements

Legal and Democratic

- Implementation of Civica Case Management System
- Introduction of new Procedure Rules for Standards Committee Hearings
- Consultation exercise concluded in respect of Constitution review
- Shared Service discussions progressed with County and other Districts
- Successful roll out of all Committee minutes and agendas on new corporate printing system
- Member training continues within timescales

Equalities and Diversity

- Disability Equality training continues to roll out corporately
- Disabled users Forum held first meeting in accordance with timescales
- Equalities and Diversity Forum involved in Participatory Budget sessions
- Royal Visit planned for January to celebrate success of joint County and District Venture
- Black History Society continues with Planning for Black History Month next year
- TES project continues within timescales

- Equality Officer working with Modern Member Steering Group to identify Member training and development requirements for quarter 4 of the training programme

Elections

- New Elections Manager began with the Council at the beginning of December
- Officers trained on New Elections System
- Work continues to implement new system in accordance with timescales

Assets Management

- Discussions with County in respect of managed service
- Assets management action plan continues in accordance with identified targets and in accordance with timescales

Issues

- Member Development programme has fallen behind in respect of the modules that relate to Top team, and Cabinet and Opposition mentoring. This has been as a consequence of the unavailability of agreed training provider.
- Member attendance at organised training events continues to be a problem. The Monitoring Officer and Chief Executive are working with the Leaders of the the groups within the context of the Modern Member Steering Group to address this issue.

Revenue Budget summary

Service Head	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Administration & Registration	947	365	327	-37	909	-38
Committee Services	0	158	158	1	2	2
Corporate Facilities	-5	40	36	-4	-2	3
Elections	97	54	124	70	167	70
Facilities Management	-97	405	357	-48	-101	-3
Legal Services	-19	248	249	0	-14	4
Valuation Services	0	58	60	2	3	3
TOTAL	923	1,328	1,311	-17	964	40

Financial Commentary

- This over-spend is mainly due to the additional expenditure required to undertake a successful election and bi-election during a period of limited staffing resource within the team.
- Additional income, however, has been generated by the legal team through contracts with BDHT.

Capital Budget Summary April-December 2007/08

Service	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Elections	22	22	24	2	24	2
Facilities Management	171	6	1	-5	1	-170
Legal Services	14	6	7	1	13	-1
TOTAL	207	34	32	-2	38	-169

Financial Commentary

- The under-spend that is showing to date, is mainly due to schemes still being in the planning and discussion stages – e.g being the Alterations at the Council House for DDA Improvements, whereby SCOPE have identified 218 priority 1 changes that need to be made. It is anticipated that these budgets will remain unspent until a clearer picture is available on the future of some of the Council's facilities. A request will be made to carry the £150k budget forward to 2008/09.
- The over-spend on the election system is due to contractual costs relating to the old system.

Financial Services	Quarter 3 (Dec 31st) 2007/08
---------------------------	--

Performance Summary

No. of PI's improving (I)	0	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	3	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	5
No. of PI's Stable (S)	2	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	3	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	1
No. of PI's worsening (W)	4	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	0	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	0

Achievements

- Invoices paid on time using the new process of turn round within 48 hours
- Further improvements in the processing times for new benefit claims
- Detailed costings of the financial impact of the identified pressures and savings in respect of the budget projections
- Professional advice and support to budget holders and members for the medium term financial plan 2008/09-2010/11.
- Continued support to the 3rd Age Project in conjunction with the County Council by the welfare officer.
- Support by the benefits team for the implementation of the local housing allowance – continued communication with the landlords forum
- Initial meetings with the new external auditors – Audit Commission
- Maintained collection rates on Council Tax and NNDR despite staffing shortages
- Significant improvement on the accuracy of benefit claims for the quarter (1 error -)
- Further implementation of the Government Procurement Card to reduce invoices
- Commencement of 2 year contract for Procurement Manager and in the provision of support to Redditch Council
- Presentation to the Audit Board in respect of the actions in relation to the Risk Registers
- Preparation and presentation of Value for Money action plan to members

Issues

- Recruitment to Accountancy Services Manager post with effect from March 08 – may have impact on the year end planning
- Unsuccessful recruitment to revenues officer - post covered by agency support to maintain performance towards year end
- Issues with printing of bills and benefit letters being addressed by ICT department
- Project Management of the POP project – delayed until Accountancy Services Manager in post

Revenue Budget summary

Service Head	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Benefit Administration	242	-11	85	96	273	32
Benefit Payments	48	36	-9	-45	48	0
Central Overheads	121	90	102	12	117	-4
Financial Services – Accountancy & Admin	60	367	245	-122	61	1
Financial Services – Internal Audit	0	105	100	-6	-3	-3
Grants & Donations	86	65	82	17	85	-1
Local Taxation	996	112	213	102	1,017	21
Revenues & Benefits System Control	1	148	112	-36	-5	-6
TOTAL	1,554	911	929	18	1,593	39

Financial Commentary

- The implementation of the restructure within Revenues and Benefits and the resulting unsuccessful recruitment campaign has led to an overspend in having to utilise agency staff to ensure performance continued to improve. The majority of posts are now filled and there will be a reduction in agency time following the main billing process in March.
- Vacancies within the accountancy team have been utilised to fund additional support to close final accounts within statutory deadlines.

Capital Budget summary April-December 2007/08

Service	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Accountancy & Audit	45	22	11	-11	45	0
Total	45	22	11	-11	45	0

Financial Commentary

- The Purchase Order Processing system is in pilot stages in accountancy and ICT departments. It is anticipated that the system will be rolled out to all sections of the Council by March 2008 commencing with Revenues and Benefits section and the CSC.
- The majority of this scheme was completed in 2006/07 and the budget for this year is mainly for the backfilling of staff.

Performance Summary

No. of PI's improving (I)	1	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	4	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	2
No. of PI's Stable (S)	0	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	0	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	1
No. of PI's worsening (W)	3	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	0	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	1

Achievements

Customer Service Centre

The queue management system is working well in the CSC and is used to manage the flow of customers. A large screen has been installed in front of the customer waiting area with information about the Council and Council services displayed on it.

The queue management system also monitors waiting times for face to face customers and provides management information about the types of enquiries being handled in the centre. Since October approx 4000 customers have been logged on the queue management system. The average wait time for customers in the CSC is 4 minutes and is well below the HUB performance target of 15 minutes. The average face to face customer serving time is 11 minutes.

Currently all CSC PI's are exceeding target:

- Resolution at first point of contact (all services) is showing a consistent trend of improvement and is exceeding the target by 11%.
- Resolution at first point of contact (telephone) is also above target at 94%
Resolution at first point of contact (face to face) is 98%. The queue management system mentioned above has had a direct positive impact on this PI.
- 80% of calls will be answered before the call is abandoned is above target at 84%

The Customer Panel results from last years survey indicated that 72% of our customers would recommend the CSC to a friend. Demonstrating a good level of satisfaction with the service delivered by the CSC. This measure has now been included in the E-Government & Customer Services Business Plan as an annual CSC performance indicator.

A Customer Access Strategy has been drafted and incorporated into the review of the Customer First Strategy. This document was reviewed by the Customer First Board and is due to go forward to Cabinet in early February. This group has also held Customer Clinics with departments to investigate and resolve customer service issues.

Information Communication Technology Services

Delivered training for departmental content authors for the website and intranet to enable each department to authorise their own web content. This will speed up the process of getting information published on the Council's website.

Installed and configured new servers ready for the IDOX software install for the Spatial Project.

The Revenues and Benefits system, Academy, was upgraded to the latest version ready for year end processing.
 The Environmental Health and Revenues printing systems have been moved to a more robust server reducing the risk of system failure.
 The first phase of new computers were installed at the Depot.
 Software packages were created to help speed up the installation of programs to support the Spatial Project.
 The last legacy systems have been migrated onto the current ICT infrastructure.
 A pilot project with a small group of Cllrs has been started to evaluate the use of Citrix thin client at home.

Spatial Project

Completed training and acceptance testing for Human Resources as part of the rollout of the Electronic Document Management System
 Human Resources went live with the Electronic Document Management (EDM) System
 Completed EDM workshops for Chief Executives and Leisure & Community Services Departments.
 The new Land & Property Business Applications have been loaded onto the IT Infrastructure ready for rolling out to departments during 2008.
 The Strand Elections Management software has been installed
 The web based Public Access Modules have been installed ready for implementation during 2008.
 Departmental presentations of the Land & Property Business Applications have been started.

Issues:

Staff sickness levels at the CSC are exceeding the departmental target. An action plan has been discussed with the CSC Manager to better manage this situation.

Revenue Budget summary

Service Head	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Customer Service Centre	61	252	256	4	37	-23
E-Government	86	1,314	1,277	-37	49	-37
TOTAL	147	1,566	1,533	-33	86	-60

Financial Commentary

The underspends are mainly due to managed savings within the section and the impact of vacancies within the Customer Service Centre

Capital Budget summary April-December 2007/08

Service	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
E-Government	537	318	141	-177	279	-258
Customer Services	30	30	25	-5	26	-4
TOTAL	567	348	166	-182	305	-262

Financial Commentary

- The majority of the schemes are now underway and the new 2007/08 scheme, with a budget of £75k for the Replacement of Desktop Printers of which have all been installed.
- The Provision of Queue management system at the CSC is now complete. This £30k scheme, has been delivered and installed and is now working.
- Talks are still on-going regarding the way forward for the Government Connect Scheme. It is expected that the budget will not be spent this year and a request will be made to carry forward the budget to 2008/09.
- It is projected that £200k will be spent on the £385k Spatial Project budget in 2007/08 and the carry forward of £185k to 2008/09 will be required.

Performance Summary

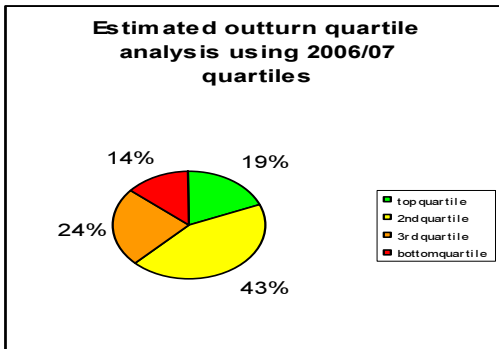
No. of PI's improving (I)	12	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	32	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	33
No. of PI's Stable (S)	12	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	6	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	3
No. of PI's worsening (W)	17	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	3	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	6

Achievements:

55% of PI's are Improving or Stable (83% at Q2)
 73% of PI's are achieving their Year To Date target (72% at Q2)
 75% of PI's are predicted to meet their target at year end (79% at Q2)

The considerable drop in the percentage of PI's improving or stable warrants further explanation. Of the 17 PI's where performance worsened in period 9 (compared to period 8) fifteen are on target year to date and are projected to meet year end target. For many of these PI's the decline in performance in December was marginal and not a cause for concern.

**Quartile analysis of estimated outturn
 Using 2006/07 quartiles**



NB not all BVPI indicators are gathered quarterly, so the pie chart does not give a full picture of the projected position at the year end

Revenue Budget summary

Service Head	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Corporate Services	998	794	804	10	994	-5
Culture & Community	3,154	1,542	1,625	83	3,255	101
E-Government & Customer Services	147	1,566	1,533	-33	86	-60
Financial Services	1,554	911	929	18	1,593	39
Legal & Democratic	923	1,328	1,311	-17	964	40
Human Resources & Organisational Development	117	443	436	-8	128	10
Planning & Environment Services	5,824	1,494	1,376	-119	5,799	-24
Street Scene & Waste Management	4,777	3,039	2,907	-132	4,833	56
TOTAL	17,493	11,117	10,920	-198	17,652	157

Financial Commentary

The Council is significantly underspent in the third quarter due to the impact of vacant posts. Due the majority of these posts being filled the budget holders together with the reported shortfalls in income at the Dolphin Centre and land charges services it is anticipated that there will be a £157k overspend at year end.

This will be offset by the additional income generated from investments of £602k. This is presented later in this report and is mainly due to a combination of underspends on the capital programme resulting in more funds available to be invested and the interest rates being much higher than anticipated due to the current state of the market

The revised net position would be an underspend of £445k. The underspend would be transferred to balances as reported in the Medium Term financial plan.

Capital Budget summary April-December 2007/08

Department	Revised Budget £'000	Profiled budget YTD £'000	Actual spend YTD £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected variance £'000
Corporate Services	45	-	-	-	35	-10
Culture & Community	2,077	634	395	-239	1,329	-748
E-Government & Customer Services	567	348	166	-182	305	-262
Financial Services	45	22	11	-11	45	-
Legal, Equality & Democratic Services	207	34	32	-2	38	-169
Human Resources & Organisational Development	30	-	-	-	-	-30
Planning & Environment	3,626	1,367	1,227	-140	2,156	-1,470
Street Scene and Waste Management	1,517	971	705	-266	1,062	-455
Budget for Support Services Recharges	127	-	-	-	127	-
TOTAL	8,241	3,376	2,536	-840	5,097	-3,144
Financial Commentary						
Underspends mainly due to Disabled Grants, Gilbert Court, Spatial Project, Dolphin Centre, and purchase of vehicles as in the main report above.						

4.2 Carry Forward of unspent capital budgets 2007/08

4.2.1 Monitoring of capital budgets takes place monthly and the position is reported regularly to Performance Management Board and Executive Cabinet. The position at December 2007 shows that many schemes have been delayed for a variety of reasons and will require the remaining budgets to be carried forward to 2008/09 to allow for progression and completion. It is now recommended that approval be given for the estimated budget carry forwards as part of the monitoring and reporting process.

4.2.2 The total of budgets which require carrying forward is £2.250m and the full schedule showing individual schemes can be seen on Appendix 5

4.3 Sundry Debtors

4.3.1 Sundry Debt is raised by the Council to ensure effective recovery of debts owing. The outstanding balance at 31/12/07 was £260k which includes £34k of car parking fines, £30k S106 fund, £20k lifeline debts, £54k rents/ hire charges, £22k building regulations and £40k in respect of services provided by the Council to other organisations (eg contracts with BDHT for legal work).

5.0 TREASURY MANAGEMENT

5.1 Investment Interest

5.1.1 For the period to 31st December 2007 the Council received net investment income amounting to £1,013k against predicted year to date receipts of £569k. This income is a combination of interest earned on in-house managed funds (cash currently surplus to cash flow requirements that is placed on short-term deposit) and the investment income arising on the externally managed funds (Invesco and HSBC fund managers). The increased interest has arisen due to slippage on the capital programme which has made additional surplus cash available for deposit, combined with enhanced interest rates achieved as a result of the recent market conditions. The estimated position at year end is an additional £602k to that included within the budget.

5.1.2 Details on the individual fund managers' performance is detailed below.

5.2 INVESCO

5.2.1 Investment Update

As part of our investment strategy funds held with Invesco were recalled in the quarter to December 2007. The funds will be managed in-house thereby saving management fees of approximately £23k per annum net.

5.2.2 Portfolio Performance

At 1 April 2007 the Council's investment was valued at £10.886 million. The majority of the funds were recalled in early October with one investment left to run to maturity in mid-November. In this period the investments earned income amounting to £304k and management fees applied to the portfolio for the period totalled £13k.

5.3 HSBC

5.3.1 Investment Objectives/Level of Risk

The investment objective is set out in the Client Agreement with HSBC with a portfolio mandate of short maturity with a medium level of risk.

5.3.2 Portfolio Performance

At 1 April 2007 the Council's investment was valued at £10.422 million. In the period to December the investment earned income amounting to £540k. Management fees applied to the portfolio for the period totalled £19k. The market value of the funds invested with HSBC was £10.942 million as at 31st December 2007.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None

7. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

- Decline in performance within the departments
- Significant overspends across the Council

8.2 These risks are being managed as follows:

- Decline in performance

Risk Register: all departmental and corporate registers

Key Objective Ref No: all objectives which link to delivery of BVPI and LPI as detailed in departmental business plans

Key Objective: Delivery of Performance Indicators as presented in Business Plans

- Significant Overspends across the Council :

Risk Register: Financial Services

Key Objective Ref No: 6

Key Objective: To provide an efficient and effective accountancy service to support the financial management across the Council

9. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

10. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

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

12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

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

Portfolio Holder	
Chief Executive	Yes
Corporate Director (Services)	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	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	No

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Performance Summary for December 2007
- Appendix 2 Detail Performance report for December 2007
- Appendix 3 Detailed figures to support the performance report
- Appendix 4 Detail breakdown of sickness figures
- Appendix 5 Slippage schedule for capital programme

CONTACT OFFICERS

Hugh Bennett, Assistant Chief Executive

Jayne Pickering, Head of Financial services

John Outhwaite, Senior Policy & Performance Officer

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY - Period 6 (September) 2007/08					
Monthly (September) performance					
	No.	%		No.	%
Improving or stable.	39	83%	On target	34	72%
Declining	8	17%	Missing target by less than 10%	9	19%
No data	0	0%	Missing target by more than 10%	4	9%
			No data	0	0%
Total Number of Indicators	47	100%	Total Number of Indicators	47	100%

SUMMARY - Period 6 (September) 2007/08					
Estimated Outturn					
	No.	%		No.	%
On target	37	79%	1st quartile	6	25%
Missing target by less than 10%	5	11%	2nd quartile	12	50%
Missing target by more than 10%	5	11%	3rd quartile	5	21%
No data	0	0%	4th quartile	1	4%
			(2006/07 quartiles used)		
total	47	100%	total*	24	100%

* only BVPI's with quartile data are counted

SUMMARY - Period 7 (October) 2007/08					
Monthly (October) performance					
	No.	%		No.	%
Improving or stable.	19	56%	On target	24	71%
Declining	15	44%	Missing target by less than 10%	9	26%
No data	0	0%	Missing target by more than 10%	1	3%
			No data	0	0%
Total Number of Indicators	34	100%	Total Number of Indicators	34	100%

SUMMARY - Period 7 (October) 2007/08					
Estimated Outturn					
	No.	%		No.	%
On target	26	76%	1st quartile	4	29%
Missing target by less than 10%	6	18%	2nd quartile	7	50%
Missing target by more than 10%	2	6%	3rd quartile	2	14%
No data	0	0%	4th quartile	1	7%
			(2006/07 quartiles used)		
total	34	100%	total*	14	100%

* only BVPI's with quartile data are counted

SUMMARY - Period 8 (November) 2007/08					
Monthly (November) performance					
	No.	%		No.	%
Improving or stable.	29	78%	On target	30	81%
Declining	8	22%	Missing target by less than 10%	4	11%
No data	0	0%	Missing target by more than 10%	3	8%
			No data	0	0%
Total Number of Indicators	37	100%	Total Number of Indicators	37	100%

SUMMARY - Period 8 (November) 2007/08					
Estimated Outturn					
	No.	%		No.	%
On target	30	81%	1st quartile	4	21%
Missing target by less than 10%	4	11%	2nd quartile	9	47%
Missing target by more than 10%	3	8%	3rd quartile	4	21%
No data	0	0%	4th quartile	2	11%
			(2006/07 quartiles used)		
total	37	100%	total*	19	100%

* only BVPI's with quartile data are counted

SUMMARY - Period 9 (December) 2007/08					
Monthly (December) performance					
	No.	%		No.	%
Improving or stable.	24	55%	On target	32	73%
Declining	17	39%	Missing target by less than 10%	6	14%
No data	3	7%	Missing target by more than 10%	3	7%
			No data	3	7%
Total Number of Indicators	44	100%	Total Number of Indicators	44	100%

SUMMARY - Period 9 (December) 2007/08					
Estimated Outturn					
	No.	%		No.	%
On target	33	75%	1st quartile	4	19%
Missing target by less than 10%	3	7%	2nd quartile	9	43%
Missing target by more than 10%	6	14%	3rd quartile	5	24%
No data	2	5%	4th quartile	3	14%
			(2006/07 quartiles used)		
total	44	100%	total*	21	100%

* only BVPI's with quartile data are counted

Performance Indicators Period 09 (December) 2007/08 - Cumulative Year to Date figures

APPENDIX 2

Ref	Description	Reported?	Cum or Snap?	2006/07				2007/08										Comments						
				Quartile Data (06/07 quartiles)		Sep. Target	Sep. Actual	Target & Trend	Oct Target	Oct Actual	Target & trend	Nov Target	Nov Actual	Target & trend	Dec Target	Dec Actual	Target & trend		Target	Est. Outturn	E. O.Target &Trend	Est. Outturn Quartile		
				Actuals	Quartile																		Higher or lower	Median
Chief Executive's Department																								
LPI CEOACE	% of press articles which enhance our reputation	M	C	84.00	n/a	n/a	n/a	80.00	75.43	W	80.00	73.20	W	80.00	70.76	W	80.00	70.76	I	80.00	70.00	W	n/a	December saw an increase in performance, despite the unavoidable negative stories from the council e.g. job losses and cessation of green waste collection and subsequent letters to the media. Predicted negative stories in the run up to the budget in March mean that the figure is unlikely to improve over current performance
Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services																								
BV174	The number of racial incidents reported to the Council per 100,000 population	M	C	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.00	0.00	S	0.00	0.00	S	0.00	0.00	S	0.00	0.00	S	0.00	0.00	S	n/a	Still on target
BV175	The percentage of those racial incidents that have resulted in further action	M	C	100	4	H	100	100.00	100.00	S	100.00	100.00	S	100.00	100.00	S	100.00	100.00	S	100.00	100.00	S	1	No incidents have been reported
Human Resources & Organisational Development																								
BV12	The average number of working days lost due to sickness.	M	C	10.66	4	L	9.35	4.38	4.31	I	5.11	5.24	W	5.84	6.13	W	6.57	7.00	W	9.00	9.36	W	3	There was a significant decrease (circa 10%) in the number of reported absences for December, so overall the Council remains Amber
BV14	The percentage of employees retiring early (excluding ill-health)	Q	C	0.90	3	L	0.50	0.80	0.58	W							0.80	0.58	S	0.80	0.58	S	3	No employees retired early in the quarter
BV15	The percentage of employees retiring on grounds of ill-health	Q	C	0.30	3	L	0.18	0.20	0.25	I							0.20	0.25	S	0.20	0.25	S	3	No employees retired on ill-health in the quarter
BV16a	The percentage of employees with a disability	Q	S	1.97	4	H	3.60	1.80	3.85	I							1.80	2.18	W	1.80	2.18	W	4	There are currently 9 members of staff who consider they have a disability
BV17a	The percentage of employees from minority ethnic communities	Q	S	1.23	3	H	1.60	2.00	1.92	I							2.00	1.70	S	2.00	1.92	S	2	There are currently 7 members of staff from ethnic minorities

Ref	Description	Reported?	Cum or Snap?	2006/07				2007/08										Comments						
				Quartile Data (06/07 quartiles)				Sep. Target	Sep. Actual	Target & Trend	Oct Target	Oct Actual	Target & trend	Nov Target	Nov Actual	Target & trend	Dec Target		Dec Actual	Target & trend	Target	Est. Outturn	E. O.Target &Trend	Est. Outturn Quartile
				Actuals	Quartile	Higher or lower	Median																	
LPI Human Resources	% of posts vacant	Q	S	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a		4.87													n/a	There were 38 vacancies across the organisation at the end of December.	

Financial services

BV78a	The average number of days taken for processing new claims.	M	C	32.05	3	L	28.00	28.00	29.56	I	28.00	28.90	W	28.00	28.19	I	28.00	27.71	W	28.00	28.00	S	2	Improvement on YTD last month. DWP standard is 30 days target BDC 28 days target. Good position and being maintained. Year end preparation to commence February.
BV78b	The average number of days taken for processing changes in circumstances	M	C	8.30	2	L	9.80	10.00	7.61	I	10.00	7.44	W	10.00	7.36	W	10.00	7.34	W	9.00	9.00	S	2	Improvement on YTD last month - this PI has been below DWP and BDC target since April 2007
BV79a	The percentage of cases for which the amount of benefit due was calculated correctly.	Q	C		4	H	98.40	99.00	97.20	I													4	Quarterly stat Q3/2007 will not be known until end of January 2008
BV79b	The percentage of recoverable HB (all-years outstanding) overpayments recovered.	M	C	30.99	3	H	33.22	15.00	17.20	I	17.50	19.28	I	20.00	21.36	I	22.50	22.26	W	30.00	30.00	S	3	Overpayment cash postings on 19.12.07 totalling £1000.00+ not able to post due to problem with IT. This has effected the target.
BV8	Percentage of invoices paid on time	M	C	94.74	3	H	95.92	97.00	96.36	I	97.00	96.86	I	97.00	97.28	I	97.00	97.43	W	97.00	97.50	S	2	Year to date figure is now above target. The revised system will be kept in place until the end of 2007/08
BV9	Percentage of Council Tax collected	M	C	98.40	2	H	98.20	59.40	59.15	S	69.13	68.73	S	78.60	78.20	S	87.61	87.40	S	98.70	98.09	S	2	Correspondence up to date. Target stable. Two full time staff still down. Selected a successful applicant for Trainee Revenue Officer start date note yet given. Revenue Officer not filled due to no suitable candidates, meanwhile one agency staff still employed to the 8.2.2008.
BV10	Percentage of Non-Domestic Rates collected.	M	C	98.20	4	H	99.02	59.78	60.70	I	71.43	70.14	S	78.43	78.80	S	87.48	87.20	S	98.70	98.70	S	2	As above - Correspondence up to date. Target stable. Two full time staff still down. Selected a successful applicant for Trainee Revenue Officer start date note yet given. Revenue Officer not filled due to no suitable candidates, meanwhile one agency staff still employed to the 8.2.2008.

E-Government & Customer Services

Ref	Description	Reported?	Cum or Snap?	2006/07				2007/08										Comments											
				Actuals	Quartile	Higher or lower	Median	Sep. Target	Sep. Actual	Target & Trend	Oct Target	Oct Actual	Target & trend	Nov Target	Nov Actual	Target & trend	Dec Target		Dec Actual	Target & trend	Target	Est. Outturn	E. O.Target &Trend	Est. Outturn Quartile					
CSC	Monthly Call Volumes Customer Contact Centre	M	S	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a		7,483				7,676				7,089					5,487			-			n/a	Calls to the contact centre have fallen by 23% compared to last month trend expected at this point the year
CSC	Monthly Call Volume Council Switchboard	M	S	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a		5,888				5,946				5,573					3,791			-			n/a	Calls to the council switchboard fell by 32% compared to last month which is expected during the holiday period
CSC	Resolution at First Point of Contact all services (percentage)	M	S	83.00	n/a	n/a	n/a	85.00	95.00	I	85.00	86.40	W	85.00	95.00	I	85.00	94.00	W	85.00	90.00	S	n/a		85.00	90.00	S	n/a	Overall resolution continues to exceed target. Performance is comparable with last month and is consistent with the performance throughout the year
CSC	Average Speed of Answer (seconds)	M	S	48	n/a	n/a	n/a	35.00	55.00	I	35.00	31.00	I	35.00	31.00	S	35.00	34.00	W	35.00	40.00	S	n/a		35.00	40.00	S	n/a	Performance continues to exceed target although has shown a marginal drop compared to last month associated with staff sickness and leave on the capacity of the contact centre
CSC	% of Calls Answered	M	S	76	n/a	n/a	n/a	80.00	79.00	I	80.00	86.00	I	80.00	86.00	S	80.00	84.00	W	80.00	75.00	S	n/a		80.00	75.00	S	n/a	Performance continues to exceed target although has shown a marginal fall compared to last month.
LPI IT Services	% of helpdesk call closed within timescales	M	C	83.99	n/a	n/a	n/a	85.00	92.51	I	85.00	91.81	W	86.00	90.17	W	86.00	89.11	I	86.00	92.00	S	n/a		86.00	92.00	S	n/a	Performance improved in December, but was still below target for the month, due to the reduced number of staff available over the Christmas period plus the need to focus on work critical to the Spatial project. Performance for the year to date remains above target

Street Scene & Waste Management

BV82ai	The percentage of household waste that has been recycled	M	C	21.42	2	H	19.98	19.70	19.08	I	19.57	19.25	I	19.77	20.06	I	20.21	20.41	I	21.50	21.50	S	2		21.50	21.50	S	2	On target to reach 21.5% by year end with decrease in green waste
BV82bi	The percentage of household waste that has been composted	M	C	19.81	1	H	11.20	25.00	30.25	W	27.17	29.57	W	26.51	28.55	W	24.29	26.05	W	19.60	20.00	S	1		19.60	20.00	S	1	No collections of green for Dec - Mar
BV218a	The percentage of new reports of abandoned vehicles investigated within 24 hours of notification	M	C	95.00	2	H	92.00	95.00	100.00	S	95.00	100.00	S	95.00	100.00	S	95.00	100.00	S	95.00	100.00	S	1		95.00	100.00	S	1	14 vehicles reported and inspected within timescale

Ref	Description	Reported?	Cum or Snap?	2006/07				2007/08										Comments						
				Actuals	Quartile	Higher or lower	Median	Sep. Target	Sep. Actual	Target & Trend	Oct Target	Oct Actual	Target & trend	Nov Target	Nov Actual	Target & trend	Dec Target		Dec Actual	Target & trend	Target	Est. Outturn	E. O.Target &Trend	Est. Outturn Quartile
BV218b	The percentage of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours of legal entitlement	M	C	95.00	2	H	88.00	95.00	100.00	S	95.00	100.00	S	95.00	100.00	S	95.00	100.00	S	95.00	100.00	S	1	4 vehicles instructed and removed within timescale
LPI Depot	% animal/debris cleared within timescales	M	C	82.00	n/a	n/a	n/a	95.00	100.00	S	95.00	100.00	S	95.00	100.00	S	95.00	100.00	S	95.00	100.00	S	n/a	5 animals of which 5 were removed within timescale
LPI Depot	% of flytips dealt with in response time	M	C	96.00	n/a	n/a	n/a	95.00	99.46	S	95.00	99.56	S	95.00	99.64	S	95.00	99.51	W	95.00	99.51	W	n/a	123 incidents of which 121 were dealt with within timescale, 2 exceeded timescale due to disposal location i.e.. fridges
LPI Depot	Number of missed household waste collections	M	C	1630	n/a	n/a	n/a	798	593	I	931	717	W	1,064	813	I	1,197	887	I	1,596	1,010	I	n/a	74 missed bins this month
LPI Depot	Number of missed recycle waste collections	M	C	748	n/a	n/a	n/a	396	176	I	462	200	W	528	220	I	594	232	I	800	237	I	n/a	12 missed recycling collections this month
LPI Depot	Number of written complaints	M	C	334	n/a	n/a	n/a	132	75	I	154	89	W	176	100	I	197	106	I	264	124	I	n/a	6 letters of complaint
LPI Transport Service	% responses to Excess Charge appeals in 10 days	M	C	94.00	n/a	n/a	n/a	95.00	93.36	I	95.00	97.54	I	95.00	97.87	I	95.00	97.60	W	95.00	97.60	W	n/a	41 appeals of which 38 were dealt with within time%

M = in the month when available (3 times per year)

Planning & Environment Services

BV109a	The percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks	M	C	73.00	3	H	74.19	55.00	100.00	S	55.00	100.00	S	55.00	100.00	S	55.00	100.00	S	60.00	75.00	S	2	4/4 =100% Performance has been maintained at this level since April and as a result Bromsgrove has been sited on the DCLG website as one of 64 authorities with improving performance in this category since year end March 2007.
BV109b	The percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks	M	C	72.00	3	H	77.33	77.00	92.00	W	77.00	91.00	I	77.00	91.00	I	77.00	91.00	W	65.00	80.00	S	2	Two applications went over, one as a result of a councillor calling application to committee (Taxi rank in New Road, Rubery) and one as result of delay in erecting site notice (Replacement dwelling, Astwood Lane, Stoke Prior). The fact that there were only 16 applications in this category for this month (as opposed to Nov when there were 22) means two applications going over has a more significant effect.
BV109c	The percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks	M	C	84.00	4	H	89.13	89.00	94.00	W	89.00	94.00	I	89.00	94.00	W	89.00	94.00	I	80.00	85.00	S	4	There were significantly less applications in this category as say Nov 70 or Oct 85, but only one went out of time, when considering holiday periods etc this is pleasing.

Ref	Description	Reported?	Cum or Snap?	2006/07				2007/08										Comments						
				Actuals	Quartile	Higher or lower	Median	Sep. Target	Sep. Actual	Target & Trend	Oct Target	Oct Actual	Target & trend	Nov Target	Nov Actual	Target & trend	Dec Target		Dec Actual	Target & trend	Target	Est. Outturn	E. O.Target &Trend	Est. Outturn Quartile
BV204	The percentage of planning appeal decisions allowed	M	C	27.80	1	L	31.80	40.00	25.00	S	40.00	21.00	I	40.00	33.00	W	40.00	23.00	I	33.00	33.00	S	3	4/5 appeals dismissed
LPI Planning	Score on Building Control performance matrix	Q	S		n/a	n/a	n/a	60.00	74.50	S							60.00	74.50	S	60.00	75.00	S	n/a	We have maintained the high PI score of 74.5 for this quarter, and the figures used to achieve this score suggested that there is a slight improvement of performance although not sufficient to alter the score.
LP Housing	Additional units of affordable housing delivered	Q	C	72				40	38	S							80.00	44.00	W	80	64	S	n/a	To achieve this target we are reliant on RSL's being able to start on site & deliver the properties on time. There has been a delay on one large site due to a wildlife issue which has postponed a development of 26 properties which will now be delivered in 2008/9. Our new projection is 64 properties in 2007/8
LP Housing	Total number of households occupying temporary accommodation	Q	S	63				44.00	50.00	I							44.00	33.00	I	44.00	44.00	I	n/a	The recruitment of a temporary accommodation officer at BDHT, funded by BDC, has lead to closer monitoring of T/A & has meant that we have achieved a significant reduction in the no of clients in T/A. We have reached the governments 2010 target to reduce the use of T/A by 50% 2 years early. In addition better prevention work had has also had a significant impact.
LPI	Number of small business start ups	Q	C		n/a	n/a	n/a	6	6	W										30	30	S	n/a	No performance data supplied

Culture & Community Services

BV126 (proxy)	The number of domestic burglaries	M	C		n/a	n/a	n/a	201	182	I	235	205	W	269	253	W	302	279	I	404	396	S	n/a	Domestic Burglaries fell during month against target. This was due to a combination of media awareness campaign asking residents not to leave presents on view and robust policing.
BV127a (proxy)	The number of violent crimes	M	C		n/a	n/a	n/a	557	574	I	649	683	W	742	770	I	835	840	I	1114	1122	S	n/a	Violent Crimes significantly reduced in December due to very proactive policing (Operation Christmas Presence) and support from taxi drivers. In Bromsgrove Town Centre there were only 3 violent crimes recorded in December.

Ref	Description	Reported?	Cum or Snap?	2006/07				2007/08										Comments						
				Quartile Data (06/07 quartiles)				Sep. Target	Sep. Actual	Target & Trend	Oct Target	Oct Actual	Target & trend	Nov Target	Nov Actual	Target & trend	Dec Target		Dec Actual	Target & trend	Target	Est. Outturn	E. O.Target &Trend	Est. Outturn Quartile
				Actuals	Quartile	Higher or lower	Median																	
BV127b (proxy)	The number of robberies	M	C		n/a	n/a	n/a	21	35	S	24	43	W	28	50	S	31	55	I	42	72	S	n/a	Robberies all still at low numbers are still over target (5 in December). A meeting between Police and Hugh Bennett enabled briefing for PMB to be produced outlining issues.
BV128 (proxy)	The number of vehicle crimes	M	C		n/a	n/a	n/a	458	367	I	534	420	I	611	472	I	687	528	W	917	720	S	n/a	Vehicle Crime reported crime continues to be under annual target due to media awareness campaign and high visibility patrolling by Officers and Neighbourhood Wardens.
LPI Community Services	Number of attendances at arts events	M	C	18,515	n/a	n/a	n/a	14,675	15,270	W	15,275	15,870	W	22,275	24,620	I	24,696	24,700	W	25,000	25,025	S	n/a	
LPI Sports Services	Sports Centres Usage	M	C		n/a	n/a	n/a	351,684	348,558	I	411,604	401,962	W	468,718	458,550	I	497,694	487,145	W	621,600	578,769	S	n/a	Down on Dolphin Target for month due to changes in dates for pool closure from Nov/Dec to Jan, many users thought pool was closed - and any pool booking were cancelled because of this in advance and not re-booked when dates changed. Sports hall also close at Dolphin Centre for 5 days due to floor re-surfacing w/c 17th December. Good month for Haybridge Sports Centre - improved sports hall usage - regular booking - trampoline club. High number of sports hall parties during month. Sports hall also close for 4 days re-surfacing.

Monthly Performance detailed figures

Ref	Description	Freq	C or S	2007/08 Monthly Performance figures											
				Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.

Chief Executive's Department

LPI CEOACE	% of press articles which enhance our reputation	M	C	Target	80.00	80.00	80.00	80.00	80.00	80.00	80.00	80.00	80.00	80.00	80.00	80.00
				Actual	73.84	64.78	79.37	84.00	76.07	74.03	63.10	60.58	70.73			

Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services

BV174	The number of racial incidents reported to the Council per 100,000 population	M	C	Target	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00			
				Actual	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00			
BV175	The percentage of those racial incidents that have resulted in further action	M	C	Target	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00			
				Actual	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00			

Human Resources & Organisational Development

BV12	The average number of working days lost due to sickness.	M	C	Target	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.81	0.81	0.81
				Actual	0.65	0.84	0.72	0.87	0.77	0.48	0.91	0.93	0.83		
BV14	The percentage of employees retiring early (excluding ill-health)	Q	C	Target	n/a	n/a	0.80			0.80					
				Actual			0.25			0.58			0.00		
BV15	The percentage of employees retiring on grounds of ill-health	Q	C	Target			0.20			0.20					
				Actual			0.00			0.00			0.00		
BV16a	The percentage of employees with a disability	Q	S	Target			1.80			1.80					
				Actual			1.99			3.85			2.18		
BV17a	The percentage of employees from minority ethnic communities	Q	C	Target			2.00			2.00					
				Actual			1.74			1.92			1.70		
LPI Human	% of posts vacant	C	C	Target											

Monthly Performance detailed figures

Ref	Description	Freq	C or S		2007/08 Monthly Performance figures											
					Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
Resources	% of posts vacant	Q	S	Actual			7.60			4.87			8.99			

Monthly Performance detailed figures

Ref	Description	Freq	C or S	2007/08 Monthly Performance figures												
				Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	
Financial Services																
BV78a	The average number of days taken for processing new claims.	M	C	Target	28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00			
				Actual	34.10	36.44	33.57	22.06	25.21	20.89	23.97	22.93	23.02			
BV78b	The average number of days taken for processing changes in circumstances	M	C	Target	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00			
				Actual	14.31	6.14	7.86	5.68	6.09	4.80	6.42	6.87	7.16			
BV79a	The percentage of cases for which the amount of benefit due was calculated correctly.	Q	C	Target												
				Actual												
BV79bii	The percentage of recoverable HB (all-years outstanding) overpayments recovered.	M	C	Target	25.00	25.00	25.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00			
				Actual	2.85	7.27	9.80	12.41	15.14	17.20	19.28	21.36	22.26			
BV8	Percentage of invoices paid on time	M	C	Target	97.00	97.00	97.00	97.00	97.00	97.00	97.00	97.00	97.00			
				Actual	94.74	96.89	97.07	97.53	96.23	97.40	99.34	99.87	99.17			
BV9	Percentage of Council Tax collected	M	C	Target	11.07	20.51	30.36	30.36	49.45	59.40	69.13	78.60	87.61			
				Actual	12.00	20.83	30.16	39.70	49.55	59.15	68.73	78.20	87.40			
BV10	Percentage of Non-Domestic Rates collected.	M	C	Target	9.70	18.64	27.98	37.48	50.10	59.78	71.43	78.43	87.48			
				Actual	9.50	20.46	31.19	40.65	51.93	60.70	70.14	78.80	87.20			

Monthly Performance detailed figures

Ref	Description	Freq	C or S	2007/08 Monthly Performance figures											
				Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.

E-Government & Customer Services

CSC	Monthly Call Volumes Customer Contact Centre	M	S	Target												
				Actual	8,410	6,399	7,628	7,819	8,855	7,483	7,676	7,089	5,487			
CSC	Monthly Call Volume Council Switchboard	M	S	Target												
				Actual	7,718	7,310	7,060	7,270	6,995	5,888	5,946	5,573	3,791			
CSC	Resolution at First Point of Contact all services (percentage)	M	S	Target	85.00	85.00	85.00	85.00	85.00	85.00	85.00	85.00	85.00			
				Actual	90.77	90.00	92.00	95.00	90.20	95.00	86.40	95.00	94.00			
CSC	Average Speed of Answer (seconds)	M	S	Target	20.00	20.00	20.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00			
				Actual	67.00	47.00	53.00	48.00	55.00	53.00	31.00	31.00	34.00			
CSC	% of Calls Answered	M	S	Target	85.00	85.00	85.00	75.00	75.00	75.00	80.00	80.00	80.00			
				Actual	60.00	81.00	79.00	80.00	77.00	79.00	86.00	86.00	84.00			
LPI IT Services	% of helpdesk call closed within timescales	M	C	Target	86.00	86.00	86.00	86.00	85.00	85.00	86.00	86.00	86.00			
				Actual	92.88	95.45	89.85	95.23	88.17	93.50	87.62	78.65	80.60			

Monthly Performance detailed figures

Ref	Description	Freq	C or S	2007/08 Monthly Performance figures												
				Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	
Street Scene & Waste Management																
BV82ai	The percentage of household waste that has been recycled	M	C	Target	17.00	17.00	17.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	19.77	24.00	26.00	26.00	26.00
				Actual	17.44	18.81	18.75	18.62	19.67	20.47	20.62	23.81	24.11			
BV82bi	The percentage of household waste that has been composted	M	C	Target	30.00	30.00	30.00	24.00	23.00	24.00	22.00	26.51	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
				Actual	33.78	30.29	31.73	31.35	29.59	26.15	24.12	19.24	0.00			
BV199a	The proportion of land & highways assessed as having unacceptable levels of litter and detritus	M*	C	Target	NA	NA	NA		NA	37.54		17.00	NA			
				Actual	NA	NA	NA	16.83	NA	36.79		16.00	NA			
BV199b	The proportion of land & highways assessed as having unacceptable levels of graffiti visible	M*	C	Target	NA	NA	NA		NA	-0.08		4.00	NA			
				Actual	NA	NA	NA	5.56	NA	-5.45		5.00	NA			
BV199c	The proportion of land & highways assessed as having unacceptable levels of fly-posting visible	M*	C	Target	NA	NA	NA		NA			1.00	NA			
				Actual	NA	NA	NA	0.98	NA			1.00	NA			
BV218a	The percentage of new reports of abandoned vehicles investigated within 24 hours of notification	M	C	Target	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00			
				Actual	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00		
BV218b	The percentage of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours of legal entitlement	M	C	Target	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00			
				Actual	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00		
LPI Depot	% animal/debris cleared within timescales	M	C	Target	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00			
				Actual	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00		
LPI Depot	% of flytips dealt with in response time	M	C	Target	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00			
				Actual	97.50	100.00	98.47	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	98.37			

Monthly Performance detailed figures

				2007/08 Monthly Performance figures												
Ref	Description	Freq	C or S		Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
LPI Depot	Number of missed household waste collections	M	C	Target	133	133	133	133	133	133	133	133	133			
				Actual	99	73	139	74	135	73	124	96	74			
LPI Depot	Number of missed recycle waste collections	M	C	Target	66	66	66	66	66	66	66	66	66			
				Actual	31	30	48	24	29	14	24	20	12			
LPI Depot	Number of written complaints	M	C	Target	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22			
				Actual	27	11	6	14	10	7	14	11	6			
LPI Transport Services	% responses to Excess Charge appeals in 10 days	M	C	Target	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00			
				Actual	96.00	96.12	92.42	96.04	87.64	97.62	99.08	100.00	92.68			

M* = in the months when available (3 times per year)

Planning & Environment Services

BV109a	The percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks	M	C	Target	55.00	55.00	55.00	55.00	55.00	55.00	55.00	55.00	55.00			
				Actual	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00			
BV109b	The percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks	M	C	Target	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00			
				Actual	91.00	76.47	100.00	100.00	100.00	73.00	82.00	95.00	88.00			
BV109c	The percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks	M	C	Target	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00			
				Actual	100.00	90.90	96.30	90.00	96.00	88.00	93.00	91.00	98.00			
BV204	The percentage of planning appeal decisions allowed	M	C	Target	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00			
				Actual	0.00	0.00	0.00	75.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	25.00	20.00			
LPI Planning	Score on Building Control performance matrix	Q	S	Target			60.00			60.00						
				Actual			74.50			74.50		74.50				
LP Housing	Additional units of affordable housing delivered	Q	C	Target						40						
				Actual						38			6			
LP Housing	Total number of households occupying temporary accommodation	Q	S	Target						44						
				Actual			58			50			33			
LPI	Number of small business start ups	Q	C	Target			6			6						
				Actual			8			6						

Monthly Performance detailed figures

Ref	Description	Freq	C or S	2007/08 Monthly Performance figures											
				Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.

Culture & Community Services

BV126 (proxy)	The number of domestic burglaries	M	C	Target	33	34	33	33	33	33	33	33	33			
				Actual	32	34	34	40	26	21	23	48	26			
BV127a (proxy)	The number of violent crimes	M	C	Target	92	93	93	92	92	92	92	92	92			
				Actual	102	84	101	91	104	100	111	87	76			
BV127b (proxy)	The number of robberies	M	C	Target	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3			
				Actual	5	8	8	3	5	5	8	7	6			
BV128 (proxy)	The number of vehicle crimes	M	C	Target	76	77	76	76	76	76	76	76	76			
				Actual	72	58	56	62	69	55	54	53	57			
LPI Communit y Services	Number of attendances at arts events	M	C	Target	250	525	500	800	12,000	600	600	7,000	2,421			
				Actual	265	275	510	665	12,905	650	600	8,750	80			
LPI Sports Services	Sports Centres Usage	M	C	Target	64,171	61,786	47,953	61,936	57,340	58,498	59,920	57,114	28,976			
				Actual	65,143	63,932	52,186	60,220	51,026	56,051	53,404	56,588	28,595			
LPI Community Safety	Respond to emergency calls in 30 secs (percentage)	Q	C	Target	n/a	n/a	80.00			80.00						
				Actual	n/a	n/a	98.54			98.67						

Sickness Figures for 2007/2008 by Service

APPENDIX 4

Total FTE @ March 07	Actual no of employees - August	SERVICE	Total Sickness days April 07 & on	Days per FTE - Year to Date	Projected - per FTE	Sickness Target 2007/08	Apr-07	May-07	Jun-07	Jul-07	Aug-07	Sep-07	Oct-07	Nov-07	Dec-07	Jan-08	Feb-08	Mar-08
27.00	4.00 0.00	Legal & Democratic Short term Absences up to 28 days Long term Absences 29 days+	90.50 52.50 38.00	3.35 1.94 1.41	4.47	6.0	3.00 12.00	7.00 14.00	18.50 12.00	2.50 0.00	1.00 0.00	0.00 0.00	9.50 0.00	4.00 0.00	7.00 0.00			
11.00	1.00 0.00	CEO & Policy Short term Absences up to 28 days Long term Absences 29 days+	30.50 30.50 0.00	2.77 2.77 0.00	3.70	5.0	0.00 0.00	2.00 0.00	3.00 0.00	5.00 0.00	2.00 0.00	5.00 0.00	1.00 0.00	10.50 0.00	2.00 0.00			
56.00	12.00 2.00	Culture & Community Short term Absences up to 28 days Long term Absences 29 days+	382.00 295.00 87.00	6.82 5.27 1.55	9.10	8.0	33.00 0.00	28.00 0.00	32.50 0.00	18.00 21.00	16.00 0.00	27.00 0.00	53.50 12.00	35.50 19.00	51.50 35.00			
30.00	7.00 1.00	Egovernment & Customer Services Short term Absences up to 28 days Long term Absences 29 days+	157.00 133.00 24.00	5.23 4.43 0.80	6.98	4.0	9.00 0.00	8.00 0.00	9.50 0.00	20.50 0.00	33.00 0.00	1.50 17.00	21.50 0.00	23.50 0.00	6.50 7.00			
47.00	7.00 3.00	Finance Short term Absences up to 28 days Long term Absences 29 days+	520.50 187.50 333.00	11.07 3.99 7.09	14.77	8.0	5.50 21.00	28.00 20.00	13.00 42.00	39.50 44.00	20.00 38.00	15.00 20.00	20.00 46.00	19.00 56.00	27.50 46.00			
12.00	4.00 0.00	HROD Short term Absences up to 28 days Long term Absences 29 days+	34.00 34.00 0.00	2.83 2.83 0.00	3.76	4.25	7.00 0.00	2.00 0.00	1.00 0.00	3.00 0.00	4.00 0.00	2.00 0.00	0.00 0.00	10.00 0.00	5.00 0.00			
62.00	12.00 1.00	Planning & Environment Services Short term Absences up to 28 days Long term Absences 29 days+	358.50 229.50 129.00	5.78 3.70 2.08	7.71	7.5	11.00 0.00	20.50 20.00	20.00 21.00	24.50 25.00	9.00 0.00	17.00 0.00	46.00 23.00	52.50 22.00	29.00 18.00			
114.00	12.00 2.00	Street Scene & Waste Management Short term Absences up to 28 days Long term Absences 29 days+	941.50 483.50 458.00	8.26 4.24 4.02	11.01	12.0	45.00 86.00	55.00 98.00	47.50 37.00	61.00 47.00	89.00 65.00	27.00 40.00	63.50 35.00	56.50 26.00	39.00 24.00			

Total Short Term Absence YTD	1445.50	113.50	150.50	145.00	174.00	174.00	94.50	215.00	211.50	167.50	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Long Term Absence YTD	1069.00	119.00	152.00	112.00	137.00	103.00	77.00	116.00	123.00	130.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL Days lost YTD	2514.50	9.34	302.50	257.00	311.00	277.00	171.50	331.00	334.50	297.50	0.00	0.00	0.00

TARGET sick days per FTE per month	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.81	0.81	0.81
BVPI 12 Sick Days Per FTE in Month	0.65	0.84	0.72	0.87	0.77	0.48	0.92	0.93	0.83							
TARGET sick days per FTE YTD	0.73	1.46	2.19	2.92	3.65	4.38	5.11	5.84	6.57	7.38	8.19	9.00				
BVPI 12 - Sick Days per FTE YTD	0.65	1.49	2.21	3.07	3.84	4.32	5.24	6.18	7.00							
BVPI 12 Projected Outturn	7.77	8.94	8.82	9.22	9.23	8.64	8.99	9.26	9.34							

2003-04	4309.83	737.50	1112.50	1500.20	959.63
2004-05	3074.99	735.67	875.43	836.52	627.17
2005-06	3570.58	695.38	949.95	883.98	1041.27
2006-07	3806.00	1067.00	959.50	951.00	828.50
2007-08	2514.50	792.00	759.50	963.00	0.00
Year	Annual	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4

FTE March 07 359.00
FTE March 08
of Months 9

Key: more than 10% worse than target worse than target, but within 10% on or better than target

Page 239

This page is intentionally left blank

Estimate of Capital Budgets for 2007/08 Requiring Carry Forward to 2008/09

MONITORED AGAINST THE 2007/08 REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET			REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET 2007/08 £	PROJECTED YEAR END EXPENDITURE £	ESTIMATED CARRY FORWARD TO 2008/09 £	BUDGET HOLDER REASONS FOR MAJOR VARIANCES
Capital Code	Funding	2007/08 Schemes				
LEGAL EQUALITIES & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES						
GC1188	Capital Receipts	Alterations to Council Buildings in compliance with DDA	150,000	0	(150,000)	In 2006/07 SCOPE identified 848 findings for DDA improvements of which 218 were classed as priority 1. The Asset Management Group has tasked the Facilities Management Group to review all priority 1 findings and report back with proposals once complete. A meeting was held in October 2007 where these proposals were discussed. At present, it is unlikely that this Budget will be spent in this financial year because of the uncertainty facing some of the Council's facilities.
GC1211	Capital Receipts	CCTV Provision at Council House	20,000	0	(20,000)	Proposals are still under consideration for this scheme and further discussions are being undertaken to know how is best to proceed with this Scheme. The size of the budget will only provide limited CCTV facilities and it is felt that the Budget could be used elsewhere on higher priority schemes. At present it is unlikely that this Budget will be spent in this financial year.
TOTAL FOR LEGAL EQUALITIES & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES					(170,000)	
HUMAN RESOURCES & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT						
GC1010	Capital Receipts	New HR Information & Management System	30,000	0	(30,000)	We are currently researching the requirements for the scope of the new HR system in light of future Council plans and the implementation of ECLIPSE Electronic Data Management System. It is very unlikely there will be any expenditure in 2007/08 and a request will be made in due course to carry the budget forward to 2008/09. There is a possibility that the full £30k will no longer be required.
TOTAL FOR HUMAN RESOURCES & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT					(30,000)	
POLICY & PERFORMANCE						
GC1213	Capital Receipts	Contribution towards Stages 3 & 4 of Bromsgrove station re-development	25,000	15,000	(10,000)	Executive Cabinet recommended approval on 1st August 2007 of £25k capital contribution towards stages 3 & 4 of Bromsgrove station redevelopment. Payment of £15k is expected in quarter 4 with the balance early in 2008/09. The result of this is that approval will be sought from Executive Cabinet to carry the remaining budget forward to 2008/09. To be funded by existing capital receipts.
TOTAL FOR POLICY & PERFORMANCE					(10,000)	

Estimate of Capital Budgets for 2007/08 Requiring Carry Forward to 2008/09

MONITORED AGAINST THE 2007/08 REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET			REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET 2007/08 £	PROJECTED YEAR END EXPENDITURE £	ESTIMATED CARRY FORWARD TO 2008/09 £	BUDGET HOLDER REASONS FOR MAJOR VARIANCES
Capital Code	Funding	2007/08 Schemes				
E-GOVERNMENT & CUSTOMER SERVICES						
GC1111	Capital Receipts	Internet/Intranet Development (funded from IEG Grant)	3,640	1,140	(2,500)	<p>The budget of £3,640 has been carried forward from 2006/07. This project was delayed in 2006/07 due to contract agreements with external suppliers. The project has now delivered a new corporate intranet and website, but there are still outstanding works to be done.</p> <p>Outstanding work includes the further development of technologies to continue the development of the Council's Web services, and the purchase of additional hardware, to complete the project.</p> <p>Expenditure in this year is now expected to be just over £1k and it will therefore be necessary to carry forward the remaining budget of £2.5k to the next financial year 2008/09.</p>
GC1161	Capital Receipts	Corporate Budget for IT Upgrades - Increased Resources (2006/07) and (2007/08)	43,362	0	(43,362)	<p>This project was linked to the Corporate IT upgrades £3,362 of the budget was carried forward from 2006/07 to make a total of £43,362 for the year.</p> <p>The budget is for a rolling programme of upgrades across the organisation. No expenditure is expected in this financial year and it will be necessary to carry the budget forward to 2008/09 to continue the programme of desktop replenishment which includes new screens and desktop processors to upgrade from the old type of visual display units. This work is essential to ensure local IT facilities are at a suitable high standard to allow for future service developments.</p>
GC1110	Capital Receipts	Government Connect Scheme	30,000	0	(30,000)	<p>On 21st February 2007 Executive Cabinet approval was obtained to carry forward £30k to financial year 2007/08.</p> <p>This project could not be completed within 2006/07 due to delays from Central Government in defining the exact configuration of the "Government Connect Scheme" and in 2007/08 we are still awaiting clarification of the scheme. Talks are still on-going regarding the way forward for this project. It is expected that the budget will not be spent this year and a request will be made to carry forward the budget to 2008/09</p>

Estimate of Capital Budgets for 2007/08 Requiring Carry Forward to 2008/09

MONITORED AGAINST THE 2007/08 REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET			REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET 2007/08 £	PROJECTED YEAR END EXPENDITURE £	ESTIMATED CARRY FORWARD TO 2008/09 £	BUDGET HOLDER REASONS FOR MAJOR VARIANCES
Capital Code	Funding	2007/08 Schemes				
GC1157	Capital Receipts	Spatial Project	384,818	200,000	(184,818)	<p>The Spatial Project is a modernising programme involving the procurement of new integrated software to enable the transformation of service delivery and the achievement of full compliance with national E-Government priority outcomes. The scheme received approval from Executive Cabinet on 2nd August 2006.</p> <p>There was a £500k capital budget included in 2006/07 for the purchase of hardware such as new IT servers etc. which will need to be phased across the life of the project. On 21st February 2007 Executive Cabinet approval was obtained to carry forward £325k of budget to 2007/08, and an additional amount of £59,818 was also approved by Executive Cabinet on 27th June 2007 making a total budget carry forward of £384,818.</p> <p>In June 2007 Corporate Management Team agreed that £30k of the budget be used to fund a Project Manager to deliver the Spatial Project.</p> <p>It is expected that £200k of this budget will be spent in 2007/08 and it will be necessary to carry the balance forward to 2008/09.</p>
TOTAL FOR E-GOVERNMENT & CUSTOMER SERVICES					(260,680)	
STREET SCENE & WASTE MANAGEMENT						
GC1200	Capital Receipts	Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Refuse Collection)	63,000	12,000	(51,000)	A review is being undertaken of the refuse collection fleet of vehicles and a request will therefore be made to Executive Cabinet to carry forward £40k for a contribution to Faun and £11k for refuse containers to year 2008/09.
GC1205	Capital Receipts	Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Grounds)	123,000	74,000	(49,000)	3 Chariot lawnmowers @ £6k each have been delivered so far this year. Following a review of the condition of existing grounds maintenance equipment the replacement of a supervisors van, gang mower, and the John Deere mower have been deferred until year 2008/09 and Executive Cabinet approval to carry this part of the budget forward will be requested at closedown of this year's accounts.
TOTAL FOR STREET SCENE & WASTE MANAGEMENT					(100,000)	
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT						

Estimate of Capital Budgets for 2007/08 Requiring Carry Forward to 2008/09

MONITORED AGAINST THE 2007/08 REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET			REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET 2007/08 £	PROJECTED YEAR END EXPENDITURE £	ESTIMATED CARRY FORWARD TO 2008/09 £	BUDGET HOLDER REASONS FOR MAJOR VARIANCES
Capital Code	Funding	2007/08 Schemes				
GC1176	Capital Receipts	4 Houses on garage sites (Grafton, Foxwalks)- Foxwalks (see also GC1036)	55,200	36,800	(18,400)	Work did not commence in 2006/07 and carry forward of an additional £36,200 to that agreed by Executive Cabinet on 21st February 2007.(£19k) was required. Planning permission is in place and it is expected that approximately £37k will be spent in this financial year and £18k will be required to carry forward to 2008/09. The scheme is committed.
GC1139	Hsg Capital Receipts £160k, Low cost Hsg Capital Receipts £11k , Low Cost Hsg Capital Receipts Debt Free £11k	Grants to RSL's - Low Cost Housing/Shared Ownership	182,000	50,000	(132,000)	Executive Cabinet approved the carry forward of the budget of £160,000 to 2007/08. A scheme is being developed to supplement the limited Capital resources. This budget monitoring statement includes budget virements to fund the latest Strategic Housing Schemes and Executive Cabinet has approved the movement of funds. It is expected that approximately £50k will be spent in this financial year and a further £25k has been committed so the remaining budget of £132k will need to be carried forward to financial year 2008/09.
GC1208	Hsg Capital Receipts (Low cost)	Redgrove School - Grant to BDHT - £96k	96,000	0	(96,000)	The scheme is committed but it is expected that there will be no expenditure in this financial year and the unspent budget will therefore need to be carried forward to financial year 2008/09.

Estimate of Capital Budgets for 2007/08 Requiring Carry Forward to 2008/09

MONITORED AGAINST THE 2007/08 REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET			REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET 2007/08 £	PROJECTED YEAR END EXPENDITURE £	ESTIMATED CARRY FORWARD TO 2008/09 £	BUDGET HOLDER REASONS FOR MAJOR VARIANCES
Capital Code	Funding	2007/08 Schemes				
GC1141	Hsg Capital Receipts Low Cost £40k, Cap Grants (Strat Hsg pot) £37k	Grants to RSL's - General	77,000	0	(77,000)	<p>This is part of a 3 year rolling programme and a new scheme is being developed. This meant that the Budget was not spent in 2006/07. It was reported to Executive Cabinet on 1st November and approval was obtained to carry forward £40k to 07/08 to supplement the limited Capital resources available in 2007/08.</p> <p>Budget reduced by a budget virement of £40k to Hostel Re-modelling GC1193. Budget increased by a budget virement from code GC1197 for £37k.</p> <p>This budget monitoring statement includes the above budget virements to fund the latest Strategic Housing Schemes and Executive Cabinet has given approval.</p> <p>This budget has not yet been committed to a scheme and will require carry forward to financial year 2008/09.</p>
GC1174	Hsg Capital Receipts (Debt Free)	Improvements to Houndsfield Lane Caravan Park	20,000	0	(20,000)	<p>£10k Budget Virement from GC1075 actioned Feb 2007.</p> <p>In addition to an approved carry forward of £7,400 Executive Cabinet approved an extra £2,600 on 27th June 2007</p> <p>No work will be completed in 2007/08 and capital virements have been made to increase the budget by a further £10k with the view of working with Worcestershire County Council on the site in 2008/09. It will therefore be necessary to carry the budget forward to 2008/09.</p>
GC1163	Housing Strategic Gov't Grant	Grant to BDHT to enable development of 17 Flats (Flavel Rd, Charford)	100,000	0	(100,000)	<p>Approval was granted by Executive Cabinet on 27th June 2007 to carry forward the budget underspends to financial year 2007/08.</p> <p>The scheme is committed but It is expected that there will be no expenditure in this financial year and a budget carry forward to the next financial year (2008/09) will be required.</p>
GC1166	Housing Strategic Gov't Grant	Grants to owners of Houses in Multiple Occupation (regulatory standard in Fire Precautions and Energy Efficiency)	25,000	0	(25,000)	<p>Approval was agreed to carry forward £25k of this budget on 21st February 2007 by Executive Cabinet to financial year 2007/08 and an additional amount of £5k was approved at Executive Cabinet at 27th June 2007.</p> <p>A £5k virement has been made to Houndsfield Lane Caravan Site.</p> <p>Scheme is for use on demand from appropriate cases, therefore a potential underspend & carry forward to 2008/09.</p>

Estimate of Capital Budgets for 2007/08 Requiring Carry Forward to 2008/09

MONITORED AGAINST THE 2007/08 REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET			REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET 2007/08 £	PROJECTED YEAR END EXPENDITURE £	ESTIMATED CARRY FORWARD TO 2008/09 £	BUDGET HOLDER REASONS FOR MAJOR VARIANCES
Capital Code	Funding	2007/08 Schemes				
GC1167	Housing Strategic Gov't Grant	Choice Based Lettings Capital Implementation Cost	37,000	0	(37,000)	Approval was agreed to carry forward this budget on 21st February 2007 by Executive Cabinet to financial year 2007/08. Scheme will be complete by January 2008. £25k budget increased by a £12k virement from Grant of BDHT for conversion of Temporary accommodation units at Wythall. Completion of this scheme is slipping to July 2008 so it may be necessary to carry all or some of the budget into 2008/09.
GC1170	Housing Strategic Gov't Grant	Energy efficiency Home Insulation Project	25,000	5,000	(20,000)	Approval was agreed to carry forward £25k of this budget on 21st February 2007 by Executive Cabinet to financial year 2007/08 and an additional £5k was approved by Executive Cabinet on 27th June 2007. A £5k virement has been made to code Houndsfield Lane Caravan Site. It is highly unlikely that the budget will be fully spent in Financial Year 2007/08. A request will be made to carry forward the budget to 2008/09.
GC1193	Various	Homeless Hostel Re-modelling Scheme This scheme is now being financed from the following resources:- Capital Receipts £325k Hsg CR Debt Free (ex GC1081) £19k Hsg CR Capital Allowance (ex GC1140) £35k S106 (ex GC1140) £50k Hsg CR Low Cost (ex GC1141) £40k Gov't Grant (Strategic Hsg pot) (ex GC1197) £46k S106 (ex GC1195) £250k	765,000	702,000	(38,000)	Budget was based upon the sale of hostel at Wythall Hostel - this is expected to now be £300k and not £325k as expected. With the addition of the virements the budget will now total £740k Virements of : £19k from code GC1081 £85k from code GC1140 £40k from code GC1141 £250k from code GC1195 £46k from code GC1197 This budget monitoring statement includes budget virements to fund the latest Strategic Housing Schemes and Executive Cabinet has approved the movement of funds. It is expected that approximately £702k will be spent into his Financial Year and a carry forward of £38k to Financial Year 2008/09 will be required. (This takes into account the reduction to the budget of £25k due to the sale of the hostel not realising as much as predicted)
GC1194	Capital Receipts	Extra Care Sheltered Housing- Gilbert Court, Charford	1,000,000	500,000	(500,000)	Work started on site in September 2007 but completion will be in Financial Year 2008/09. The first payment of 50% of the budget has been made and the balance will be in 2008/09. A budget carry forward will therefore be required.

Estimate of Capital Budgets for 2007/08 Requiring Carry Forward to 2008/09

MONITORED AGAINST THE 2007/08 REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET			REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET 2007/08 £	PROJECTED YEAR END EXPENDITURE £	ESTIMATED CARRY FORWARD TO 2008/09 £	BUDGET HOLDER REASONS FOR MAJOR VARIANCES
Capital Code	Funding	2007/08 Schemes				
TOTAL FOR PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT					(1,063,400)	
CULTURE & COMMUNITY						
GC1094	Capital Receipts	Restoration of Memorial Headstones in Bromsgrove Cemetery	15,000	8,000	(7,000)	Work commenced in March 2007 but was not completed in the financial year 2006/07. The total cost of the project has been reduced to £19,650 leaving an additional £4,000 request to carry forward to 2007/08 over that approved on 21st February. The additional £4k was approved by Executive Cabinet on 27th June 2007. It is expected that works will not be complete by year end and therefore a request will be made to carry forward £7k to Financial Year 2008/09.
GC1096	Section 106	Wythall Teenage Sports Facility Scheme	80,000	55,000	(25,000)	An evaluation is complete and BDC are now entering into discussions with Local Community Association for siting the facilities on their land. A request was agreed to carry forward the budget to 2007/08 by Executive Cabinet on 27th June 2007. An amount of £15k has been vired from Bromsgrove Youth Scheme. Expenditure of £55k is anticipated in this year and £25k will be required to be carried forward to 2008/09 to supplement the scheme being funded by the BIG Lottery Fund.
GC1093	Capital Receipts	Replacement of Dolphin Centre Pool Plant	55,000	0	(55,000)	The work will be carried out at the same time as the Phase II Upgrade to avoid closing the pool more than once. As the Dolphin Centre upgrade could not be completed in 2006/07 it was necessary to carry forward this budget to 2007/08. It was reported to Executive Cabinet on 21st February 2007 and approval was obtained to carry forward £55k to 2007/08. Work has now started but it is anticipated that this element will not be complete until the new Financial Year. A request will be made to carry forward the £55k to Financial Year 2008/09.
GC1214	Capital Receipts	Upgrade to Dolphin Centre Fitness Suite (Revised 2007/08 Scheme)	850,000	425,000	(425,000)	Executive Cabinet recommended approval on 1st August 2007 of £850k capital works at Dolphin Centre to upgrade the fitness suite. To be funded by existing capital receipts. There is expected to be expenditure of £425k in this year so it will be necessary to carry forward £425k into next year 2008/09.

Estimate of Capital Budgets for 2007/08 Requiring Carry Forward to 2008/09

MONITORED AGAINST THE 2007/08 REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET			REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET 2007/08 £	PROJECTED YEAR END EXPENDITURE £	ESTIMATED CARRY FORWARD TO 2008/09 £	BUDGET HOLDER REASONS FOR MAJOR VARIANCES
Capital Code	Funding	2007/08 Schemes				
GC1190	Section 106	Alvechurch Youth Scheme	90,000	0	(90,000)	This scheme is subject to The Neighbourhood Management Pilot and officers are waiting for confirmation of the location following local consultation, the installation is due to commence in April 08 subject to a suitable location being agreed. A request will be made to carry forward the budget to 2008/09.
GC1191	Section 106	Bromsgrove Youth Scheme	70,000	56,000	(14,000)	Based upon the upcoming PPG17 (Survey of open space/play areas etc) Officers have yet to identify the local need across the district. An amount of £15k has been vired from this code to code Wythall Teenage Sports Facility Expenditure of £56k is anticipated in this financial year and £14k will need to be carried forward to 2008/09. It was approved by Executive Cabinet on 3rd October 2007 that £55k of the budget be used to fund a Multi Use Games Arena (MUGA) (including access) in Catshill, and £14k for part funding of the Wythall Adventure Play (with £40k from the BIG Childrens Programme Lottery award).
TOTAL FOR CULTURE & COMMUNITY					(616,000)	
GRAND TOTALS			4,415,020	2,139,940	(2,250,080)	

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5TH MARCH 2008

CAPITAL STRATEGY 2008- 2011

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Financial Services

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report is to present to Members the updated Capital Strategy for Bromsgrove District Council for 2008-2011. The Strategy brings together the work undertaken by the Council in recent years on the Sustainable Community Strategy and Council Plan, which together set out a vision for Bromsgrove for 2008 and beyond.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that Executive Cabinet recommend the Capital Strategy to Council for approval.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Capital Strategy document sets out how Bromsgrove District Council aims to use its capital resources to achieve its vision for Bromsgrove of 'Working together to build a district where people are proud to live and work, through community leadership and excellent services', and the key strategic policies, values, objectives and priorities agreed in the Sustainable Community Strategy, Council Plan, Improvement Plan, and Council Results.
- 3.2 Within the Capital Strategy the Council wishes to see cross cutting themes to improve the social, economic and environmental well being of the area by creating opportunities for improving health, reducing crime, providing high quality employment and developing leisure and tourism in the District.
- 3.3 The Council's approved Capital Programme for 2008/09 – 2010/11 reflects the key aims and objectives of the Council and asserts the Council as community leaders to lever in additional investment and add value to the programme.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The financial implications of the Capital Programme as identified in this report are included in the Medium Term Financial Plan 2008/09 - 2010/11 which was approved by Council on 16th January 2008.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications.

6. Council Objectives

- 6.1 Those projects described in the Capital Strategy which have been included within the Capital Programme have been aligned to the corporate objectives and priorities as part of the approval process. Schemes included in the Capital Strategy are intended to improve and widen the services provided, and improve the operational efficiency of the Council.

7. Risk Management

- 7.1 The risks associated with all approved projects are identified as part of the detailed project proposals and will therefore be managed by the sponsoring department.

8. Customer Implications

- 8.1 Approved capital projects have been assessed in line with Council objectives and priorities, and demonstrate improvements in customer service where appropriate.

9. Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 9.1 There are no direct equalities and diversity implications for the Capital Strategy document. All capital schemes included in the Capital Programme are selected to achieve the strategic policies, values, objectives and priorities agreed in the Sustainable Community Strategy, Council Plan, and Improvement Plan. The consultation which is carried out with those persons and organisations representing the residents of the District in the formulation of the Sustainable Community Strategy and Council Plan will therefore have included the implications for equalities and diversity.

10. Value for Money Implications

- 10.1 There are no direct value for money implications for the Capital Strategy document. However each individual new capital scheme is subject to the approval of a robust business case which has to demonstrate that value for money is being achieved before commencement.

11. Other Implications

Procurement Issues – All expenditure relating to the approved projects included in the Capital Strategy will be subject to the Council procurement rules.
Personnel Implications – Implications are included as part of all detailed project proposals.
Governance/Performance Management - Implications are included as part of all detailed project proposals.
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 - Implications are included as part of all detailed project proposals.
Policy - Implications are included as part of all detailed project proposals.
Environmental - Implications are included as part of all detailed project proposals.
Equalities and Diversity - Implications are included as part of all detailed project proposals.

12. Others Consulted on the Report

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

13. Wards Affected

13.1 All wards.

14. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Capital Strategy 2008 - 2011

Background Papers

Capital Programme 2008/09 – 2010/11
Medium Term Financial Plan 2008/09 – 2010/11
Departmental Service Plans

Contact officers

Name: Jayne Pickering – Head of Financial Services

E Mail: j.pickering@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Tel: 01527 881207

Name: Ken Whitehouse – Principal Accountant

E Mail: k.whitehouse@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Tel: 01527 881290

Bromsgrove

Capital Strategy 2008-2011



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Capital Strategy 2008 – 2011

CONTENTS

1.	The Purpose of the Capital Strategy.....	3
2.	Background	4
	Comprehensive Performance Assessment.....	4
	Organisational Structure.....	5
3.	The Planning Process.....	5
	The Sustainable Community Strategy.....	5
	The Council Plan.....	6
	The Council Results.....	6
	Annual Service Business Plans.....	6
	Asset Management Plan.....	6
	Management Development Strategy.....	6
4.	Prioritising Capital Investment.....	7
	Vision, Objectives, Priorities and Values.....	7
	Regeneration.....	7
	Improvement.....	8
	Sense of Community and Well Being.....	8
	Environment.....	9
	Council Values.....	9
5.	Capital Strategy Priorities 2008/09 – 2010/11.....	10
6.	Corporate Capital Finance Strategy.....	11
	Prudential Code.....	12
	Asset Management.....	13
7.	Departmental Services Strategies.....	15
8.	The Capital Investment Process.....	15
	The Capital Programme.....	15
	Scheme selection and prioritisation.....	16
	Project Management.....	17
	Financial Monitoring of Capital Schemes.....	18
	Bench Marking.....	18
	Performance Management.....	18
9.	Key Partners in the Development of this Strategy.....	19
	The Bromsgrove Partnership.....	19
	Examples of Partnership Working.....	21
	Local Area Agreements.....	21
10.	Corporate Procurement Strategy.....	22

11.	Consultation.....	23
	Housing.....	23
	Culture & Community.....	24
	Community Safety.....	24
12.	Review of the Capital Strategy.....	25
13.	Appendix 1 – Council Vision Objectives Priorities & Values	
	Appendix 2 – Projected Use of Capital Resources	
	Appendix 3 – Capital Programme 2008 to 2011	
	Appendix 4 – Terms of Reference for Asset Management Group	
	Appendix 5 – Departmental Service Strategies	
	Appendix 6 – Project Initiation Document	
	Appendix 7 – Local Strategic Partnership Board	

The Purpose of the Capital Strategy

The Capital Strategy document sets out how Bromsgrove District Council aims to use its capital resources to achieve its vision for Bromsgrove of 'working together to build a district where people are proud to live and work, through community leadership and excellent services', and the key strategic policies, objectives, and priorities, agreed in the Sustainable Community Strategy, Council Plan, Improvement Plan, and Council Results.

This document outlines the framework of consultation, strategic partnership working, management planning, and monitoring which takes place to ensure the Council's planned capital expenditure decisions deliver quality local services in Bromsgrove District. It seeks to show how these are integral to the process of assessing the needs of the community with corporate financial and service planning through Member, community and partner involvement. The Capital Strategy reflects the Council's priorities and key deliverables as set out in the Council Plan 2008 – 2011.

This document therefore describes Bromsgrove's capital finance strategy and capital investment process, setting out:-

- the planning process;
- the priorities for capital investment;
- how the Council's assets are managed;
- the departmental service strategies;
- how schemes are selected and resources allocated;
- how progress on schemes is monitored and evaluated;
- how progress in implementing the capital programme is monitored;
- how performance is reviewed;
- the Council's arrangements for partnership working;
- the Council's procurement strategy; and
- how the Council consults for service and strategic planning purposes.

Council expenditure falls into two types which are capital and revenue. Capital resources are used to provide the new assets, and the enhancement of existing assets, which the Council requires to enable it to deliver its services to the citizens of the District, and which includes expenditure on land, buildings, and vehicles plant and equipment.

Examples of capital expenditure include major improvements to Council owned buildings, recreation grounds, cemeteries, car parks, public conveniences, closed circuit television systems (CCTV), refuse and recycling freighters etc. Also included are grants to registered social landlords for the provision of affordable housing.

On the other hand revenue expenditure comprises the Council's day to day operating costs such as salaries, wages, energy, printing, stationery, and maintenance etc. The Capital Strategy is therefore only concerned with the planned use of capital resources.

Background

Bromsgrove District covers an area of approximately 83.8 square miles and lies to the south of the West Midlands conurbation bounded by Birmingham, Dudley Solihull, Redditch, Wyre Forest and the largely rural districts of Wychavon and Stratford-upon-Avon.

Whilst it is only 14 miles from central Birmingham, the Clent and Lickey hills provide an important dividing line between the industrial Midlands and the rural landscape of North Worcestershire. The area is visibly dominated by agriculture, although it supports a varied economy based on a range of small and medium sized businesses. The District has a resident population of 91,600.

The Council is an enthusiastic and committed community leader, with a clear understanding of issues that need to be translated into actions either, directly by the Council, in partnership with others, or by enabling others to act. The Council facilitates the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) which has been created and this will help to strengthen the existing partnership working which exists to deliver successful outcomes for local people. Continued development of the LSP will contribute towards better use of resources throughout the District.

Within the Capital Strategy the Council wish to see cross cutting themes to improve the social, economic and environmental well being of the area by creating opportunities for improving health, reducing crime, providing high quality employment and developing leisure and tourism in the District.

The annual Council Results document and the Council Plan are supported by a series of other specific strategy documents including the Housing Strategy, the Local Development Framework, and Service Business Plans etc. The Capital Strategy brings together the interrelationship of the capital elements of such documents.

The Council's Capital Programme for 2008 – 2011 reflects the key aims and objectives of the Council and asserts the Council as community leaders to lever in additional investment and add value to the programme.

Comprehensive Performance Assessment

In 2002 the Government introduced universal inspections of Local Authorities throughout England. The process, known as Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), was designed to encourage councils to improve their corporate governance arrangements and to deliver service improvements on a continuous basis to local people. Councils would be judged and placed within one of five categories, poor, weak, fair, good or excellent.

On 3rd June 2004 Bromsgrove District Council decided to request Voluntary Engagement through the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) (now the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)). This enabled the Council to focus its endeavours on improvement rather than deflect effort in preparing for CPA, and secure guidance and support towards achieving progressive improvement in the performance of the Council. As a consequence, the CPA process scheduled for September 2004 was deferred.

The Council's request for Voluntary Engagement was accepted and in September 2004 the process of developing the Recovery Plan began. This was seen as a key priority for the Council and was subsequently reviewed and approved by Government Ministers at the ODPM.

The Recovery Plan included a clear integrated plan for wholesale improvement and change which is now enabling the Council to start providing cost efficient value for money services at a price our customers want to pay.

As a further part of the Recovery Plan the Council has undergone an organisational restructure which has provided a range of measures and initiatives which have created a framework to enable dynamic change to take place.

The Council completed its Recovery Plan in June 2006 which was largely focused on the Resources Directorate. A new Improvement Plan was approved in August 2006 which focused on external issues such as performance indicators, customer service and regeneration of the Town Centre and the MG Rover site at Longbridge.

The Audit Commission carried out a Comprehensive Performance Assessment of the Council during late February/ early March 2007 which was based on levels of performance in the year 2005/06. The results were published in June 2007, and as expected the Council was given an official CPA rating of 'Poor'. A new Improvement Plan which took into account the comments received from the Audit Commission was approved in July 2007. Based on the progress we are continuing to make, together with feedback from Central Government we fully expect to be CPA rated 'Fair' when we are next assessed in late 2008.

Organisational Structure

Direct Management Responsibility

Chief Executive

Assistant Chief Executive

Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance

Executive Director (Services)

Financial Services, Street Scene & Waste Management, Legal Equalities & Democratic Services, Human Resources & Organisational Development, and E-Government & Customer Services

Executive Director
(Partnerships & Projects)

Planning & Environment, Culture & Community, and key partnerships and projects

The Planning Process

The **Sustainable Community Strategy 2007-2010** was published in November 2007 and it focuses on the way in which services are delivered and how they can be improved for everyone's benefit. The Strategy was compiled by key strategic partners in response to the outcomes of extensive consultation undertaken across the District and the Strategy sets out the vision of partners representing the community of Bromsgrove District. The delivery of the Sustainable Community

Strategy is managed by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), whose membership consists of key senior representatives from the public, private and voluntary and community sectors. (See page 19 for a list of partners).

The Strategy is a developmental, rolling document and the priorities identified may change over time as improvements are realised and new issues emerge. Changes will be reflected in subsequent editions of the Strategy and it will be updated every three years, with the next revision being in 2010.

The new **Council Plan 2008 – 2011** is currently under preparation and forms the Council's response to the Sustainable Community Strategy in terms of delivery. Covering a three-year period, it highlights our strategic aims and objectives as well as the more inspirational vision statement and values that we work towards, and is updated on an annual basis. The key plans and strategies which influence the objectives of the Council Plan are:

➤ **The Council Results:**

- focuses on the results of the key performance indicators which impact on the achievement of the Council's Vision, Objectives, and Priorities (see **Appendix 1**);
- spells out information on things we said we would do, the things we have achieved and what our objectives are for the future;
- allows the Council to demonstrate how cross-cutting issues are being addressed through the combined efforts of the different service areas.

➤ **Annual Service Business Plans:**

- produced by each of our service areas;
- detail how the specific services will work towards delivering the Council's strategic aims and priorities, as set out in the Council Plan;
- links with our Medium Term Financial Plan.

➤ **Asset Management Plan:**

- provides a framework to optimise the use of property assets in terms of service benefits and financial return in order to support the Council's priorities and corporate objectives;
- provides regular condition surveys to highlight areas where capital investment is required.

➤ **Management Development Strategy:**

- the Modern Manager Framework and 'Bromsgrove Way' have been introduced setting out a framework for staff management and development as part of our aim to be an improving Council.

Prioritising Capital Investment

Vision, Objectives, Priorities and Values

In September 2006 the Council approved a new Vision for the future which is:

“Working together to build a district where people are proud to live and work, through community leadership and excellent services”

The Vision has then been further developed into four objectives. The objectives and the description of what they include are set out. The objectives are designed to be broad. From these broad objectives, specific priorities have then been identified. The four objectives are:

- Regeneration
- Improvement
- Sense of Community and Well Being
- Environment

The rationale for selecting each priority is:

Regeneration

This Council Objective can be defined as:-

- Improving the physical fabric of the District, in particular, the town centre.
- Improving the living environment of the vulnerable, in particular, eliminating fuel poverty, reducing the gap in serious accidental injury and the indoor living environment in so far as it affects respiratory health (cold, damp, indoor pollution).
- Ensuring quality and choice in the local housing market across all tenures with the availability of sufficient decent, affordable and sustainable housing to meet the needs of all of the District’s residents including those with special housing needs.
- Ensuring a strong, prosperous and competitive local economy which creates wealth in order to support the level of investment required to close the gap of inequality; contributes to the region’s economy and enable people to improve their quality of life.
- Securing public and private investment in the above factors in order to lever in sufficient investment to tackle these issues.
- Improving household incomes through increasing economic activity by promoting enterprise and entrepreneurship and the take up of employment opportunities through improved access to jobs, employment growth (both public and private) and improving people’s skills (both young people’s and adults). Where people are genuinely unable to work ensuring that people take up the full benefits to which they are entitled.

The following two priorities have been identified for this Council Objective:-

- *Town Centre*
- *Housing*

Improvement

This Council Objective can be defined as:-

- Providing an excellent customer experience including choice where possible.
- Maintaining a clear focus on our citizens' priorities.
- Making the best use of new technologies to improve services whilst reducing costs.
- Driving out efficiency savings and making the best use of our assets in order to further invest in our priorities.
- Making appropriate use of management systems e.g. risk management, performance management and project management.
- Ensuring we recruit the right staff and retain and develop their skills.
- Achieving public confidence in our prudent financial management, service delivery and corporate governance through positive external audit and inspection feedback.
- Maintaining a level of council tax from which the public feel we make good use of the money we spend and reflects the quality of services they receive.
- Ensuring we seek out, listen, respect and represent the views of our diverse citizens and communities.
- Communicating consistently to our citizen's and communities.
- Actively involve our citizens and communities in the design and delivery of our policies, strategies, plans and services.
- Joining up and integrating services both within the Council and with our partners making the best use of new technologies.
- Tailoring the mix of customer service, community leadership and democratic engagement to fit the particular circumstances of each community.

The following priority has been identified for this Council Objective:-

- *Customer Service*

Sense of Community and Well Being

This Council Objective can be defined as:-

- Ensuring the District's residents have a good cultural "offer" which encourages a sense of community.
- Providing effective community leadership.
- Promoting active citizen engagement in the democratic process.
- Ensuring people are able to access services whatever their circumstances.
- Ensuring the value and contribution of the diverse communities in our District is recognised and celebrated.
- Improving the social capital of our communities and developing sustainable and cohesive communities.

- Enabling people to enjoy a high quality independent life in their own homes and communities for as long as possible and when this is no longer possible ensuring more intensive care is available.
- Ensuring the Council fully embraces the “Every Child Matters” Agenda: that our children and young people are: healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, achieve economic well being and can access services.
- Reducing crime and the fear of crime within our communities.
- Ensuring access to lifelong learning opportunities for learning and creativity to help everyone achieve their potential for quality of life and prosperity.

The following priority has been identified for this Council Objective:-

- *Sense of Community*

Environment

This Council Objective can be defined as:-

- Ensuring the District offers a quality living environment for everyone, with access to good facilities including clean and attractive open spaces.
- Sustaining this quality living environment for future generations.
- Waste collection, recycling and disposal.
- Maintaining and fostering the District’s biodiversity.
- Maintaining our rural communities.
- Balancing our green belt whilst responding to the economic development needs of the District.

The following priorities have been identified for this Council Objective:-

- *Clean Streets and Recycling*

Council Values

The Council will achieve its Vision, Objectives and Priorities through focusing on its Values which are:

- Leadership
- Partnerships
- Customer First
- Equality

Capital is a finite resource and a strict policy therefore is adopted for approval of capital schemes. For the Capital Programme 2008 – 2011 Heads of Service made bids for the inclusion of new capital schemes based on requirements identified in their service business plans, which were then ranked as ‘High’, ‘Medium’ or ‘Low’ priority by the Corporate Management Team, after considering each scheme’s impact on the Council’s corporate objectives and priorities. Only those bids which were ranked as ‘High’ have received Council approval because of the annual limits placed on the use of the Council’s capital receipts.

The Council is concentrating on meeting the service improvements as set out in the Improvement Plan and this has therefore been the main criteria in determining which capital schemes received approval.

Capital Strategy Priorities for Years 2008/09 – 2010/11

The new schemes approved reflect the corporate priorities as follows (some schemes meet more than one priority):-

COUNCIL OBJECTIVE 1 - REGENERATION
Priority – Town Centre
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Redevelopment of Bromsgrove Town Centre £300k. ➤ New Toilet Block in Town Centre £174k.
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Also includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Vehicle Replacement Programme (Refuse Collection, Recycling, Street Cleaning Commercial Services, (see Customer Service & Clean Streets & Recycling)</i>
Priority – Housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Grants to Partners for the development of Affordable Housing in the District £350k. ➤ Grant to Registered Social Landlords £40k. ➤ Upgrading of Houndsfield Lane Caravan Park £110k. ➤ Energy Efficiency Grants Home Insulation Project £25k. ➤ Low Carbon Renewable Energy Grants £10k. ➤ Provision of Disabled Facilities Grants £2.035m. ➤ Provision of Home Repair Assistance & Housing Renewal Grants (Private Sector) £505k.
COUNCIL OBJECTIVE 2 - IMPROVEMENT
Priority – Customer Service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Spatial IT Scheme (a Local Authority Modernisation Programme) £5.793m. ➤ Improvements to Internet Access and Bandwidth £35k. ➤ Remedial Work to Council Buildings £777k. ➤ Alteration to Council Buildings to comply with the Disabled Discrimination Act £150k. ➤ Vehicle Replacement Programme (Refuse Collection £299k & Commercial Services £119k). ➤ Vehicle / Equipment Replacement Programme (Grounds Maintenance £214k & Other Depot Services) £77k).
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Also includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>New Tipper Vehicle for Hit Squad – (see Clean Streets & Recycling)..</i>

COUNCIL OBJECTIVE 3 - SENSE OF COMMUNITY & WELL BEING

Priority – Sense of Community

- Replacement of CCTV Equipment £533k.
- Childrens Play Schemes £200k.
- District Wide Provision/Enhancements of Sports Facilities £360k.

Also includes:

- *Grants to Partners for the development of Affordable Housing in the District - (see Housing).*
- *Grant to Registered Social Landlords - (see Housing).*
- *Upgrading of Houndsfield Lane Caravan Park - (see Housing).*
- *Provision of Disabled Facilities Grants - (see Housing).*
- *Provision of Home Repair Assistance & Housing Renewal Grants (Private Sector) - (see Housing).*

COUNCIL OBJECTIVE 4 - ENVIRONMENT

Priority – Clean Streets and Recycling

- New Tipper Vehicle for Hit Squad £25k.
- Vehicle Replacement Programme (Street Cleaning) £332k.
- Vehicle Replacement Programme (Recycling) £13k.

Also includes:

- *Vehicle Replacement Programme (Refuse Collection, Ground Maintenance & Commercial Services) – (see Customer Service).*
- *(Environment) Energy Efficiency Grants Home Insulation Project - (see Housing).*
- *(Environment) Low Carbon Renewable Energy Grants - (see Housing).*

Corporate Capital Finance Strategy

A keystone of the Council's Capital Financing Strategy has been to be debt free and this was achieved in March 2000. The Large Scale Voluntary Transfer of Council Dwellings to Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) in March 2004 also provided substantial capital receipts. The Council has therefore adopted a prudent approach to the use of its capital resources to enable the debt free status to be maintained as long as possible and it has been Council policy for the past few years to limit the use of capital receipts on new schemes to £1m per annum.

The limit has been exceeded in the Capital Programme for 2008 to 2011 mainly because of the need to invest in a major information technology scheme to modernise methods of working and update our computer infrastructure, and to provide an adequate replacement programme for vehicles and plant. This is to make up for years of underinvestment and is required to enable the Council improve levels of performance and move forward in its plan to become an 'Excellent' Council.

The main reason for limiting the use of capital receipts has been the use of the interest received on capital investments to help finance the Council's Revenue budget. Also, once funds are borrowed to finance capital expenditure the Council will have to meet the additional cost of external interest payments from its Revenue budget in addition to bearing the loss of interest.

Under the latest Capital Programme the Council plans to start funding capital expenditure by borrowing in 2010/11 because existing capital balances will have been utilised and opportunities for obtaining capital receipts in the future will be limited.

Estimate of Capital Receipts Remaining after Current Capital Programme
(excluding the effect of unspent 2007/08 budgets carried forward to 2008/09)

At 01/04/2008	At 01/04/2009	At 01/04/2010	At 01/04/2011
£10.6m	£2.6m	£0.8m	-£0.4m

See **Appendix 2** for a full estimate of capital resources.

It is estimated that at 1st April 2008 the following capital resources will be available for financing the Capital Programme, but the precise amount will not be known until the accounts have been closed for the year 2007/08. These figures exclude the carry forward of any unspent budgets from 2007/08 to 2008/09 which however can be ignored when considering the availability of resources because they are already committed.

- Capital Receipts £10.6m
- Section 106 Planning Agreement Resources £0.4m

The Prudential Code

The Local Government Act 2003 introduced the new Prudential Code capital controls system which came into force on 1st April 2004. Under these arrangements local authorities are freed from the allocation of Central Government credit approvals and are now able to borrow funds to finance capital schemes providing capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable as demonstrated by using a series of comprehensive prudential indicators.

The 2003 Act also introduced the 'pooling' of capital receipts from sales of Housing Revenue Account assets whereby a proportion of the capital income has to be paid over to Central Government. Under these regulations the Council is permitted to retain a proportion of 'poolable' capital income provided it is spent on affordable housing, regeneration, or housing functions, and the Council has therefore approved a number of schemes financed from such income.

Following the transfer of Council dwellings to BDHT the Housing Revenue Account was closed and the few remaining housing assets were transferred to General Fund. Poolable capital receipts are therefore now restricted to low levels of repaid principal on outstanding Council mortgages.

An important element of the Capital Finance Strategy is to continue to seek funding from other agencies as part of the match funding process, to further stretch the use of the Council's own resources. Examples of this will be Advantage West Midlands, Government Grants (e.g. Liveability for Recreation, Community Safety (C.C.T.V.), Countryside Agency, Lottery, and partnerships with other Councils.

The traditional Private Finance Initiative (PFI) is not being pursued as it is considered the current constraints render it unsuitable for the smaller type of projects undertaken by the Council. Instead reliance is being placed upon partnerships where considerable success has already been achieved.

The Council will also continue to utilise the capital resources made available through the planning Section 106 obligations which are utilised to finance schemes involving affordable social housing, leisure play areas, and public open spaces.

The Council's Capital Programme for 2008 to 2011 totals £12.9m and is financed from a combination of capital receipts, Government grants, Section 106 planning agreement funds, and prudential borrowing. See **Appendix 3** for full details.

Asset Management

A new strategic group known as the Asset Management Group has been formed to ensure the Council's assets are suitably managed and to develop a new Corporate Asset Register. See **Appendix 4** for the strategic objectives and responsibilities of the group.

Membership comprises:

- Corporate Property Officer (Chairman)
- Facilities Manager
- Representative from Financial Services
- Representative from Street Scene and Waste Management Services
- Representative from e-Government and Customer Services
- Representative from Culture and Community Services

Officers with responsibility for major services are invited to attend as appropriate.

All property ultimately falls under the control of the designated Corporate Property Officer, who is the Head of Legal Equalities & Democratic Services who is a member of the Corporate Management Team (CMT). She reports to CMT and Executive Cabinet as necessary and is within the Resources Directorate. The Portfolio Holder for Legal Equalities and Democratic Services is Member "Champion" for asset management.

The Corporate Property Officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring stakeholder consultation and review takes place regarding assets and that findings are fed into the decision making process.
- Developing the Asset Management Plan (AMP) for consideration and approval by the Council and its subsequent implementation.
- Ensuring its adherence to Corporate Objectives.
- Ensuring that the AMP is coordinated with the Medium Term Financial Plan and considering key actions relating to asset management contained within other relevant strategies.
- Ensuring all asset management issues are properly considered by Corporate Management Team and Executive Cabinet as necessary.
- Reporting twice a year to CMT and Executive Cabinet on the performance of the property portfolio as measured against a suite of property performance indicators.
- Chairing the Asset Management Group.
- Champion the current and future approach to matching asset usage with business needs at strategic management level
- Provide the key link ensuring Member involvement in asset management planning and implementation
- Consider the effect of corporate drivers on asset management

The AMP is therefore the key document for ensuring that all capital assets are fit for purpose and used effectively, and on 3rd January 2007 the Council approved a new Plan for the period 2006 to 2010 to replace the previous version produced in 2003 which was approved as 'Good' standard by Government Office West Midlands.

The Plan applies primarily to property assets but with the fullness of time will extend to include infrastructure, vehicles, plant, and major equipment. The new plan clearly sets out the requirements and the high level actions which are required to embed effective asset management within the Council.

Bromsgrove District Council is a significant property owner within the District and the AMP is prepared in order to provide a framework that will optimise the use of property assets in terms of service benefits and financial return in order to support the Council's priorities and corporate objectives. Regular condition surveys will highlight areas where capital investment is required and provide the links to the Capital Strategy, Capital Programme, and Medium Term Finance Plan. Other linked plans and strategies include the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Procurement Strategy, the Customer Care Strategy, and individual service business plans.

The Council can expect the following from the Asset Management Plan:

- Clear corporate responsibility for strategic asset management.
- How the Council will support the delivery of its Vision, values, objectives and priorities.

- Assurance that the assets are suitable and sufficient for the services provided and continue to be so.
- A performance measurement system which relates to the Council's corporate objectives.

In the latest 2008 – 2011 Capital Programme the Council will invest £9m in the creation and improvement of its assets which include:-

- A new toilet block in Bromsgrove town centre
- Remedial work to Council buildings
- Work on buildings to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act
- Recreation grounds, children's play schemes & allotments,
- Replacement and new CCTV systems,
- Investment in ICT infrastructure & updating,
- Replacement of vehicles & plant.

Departmental Services Strategies

Each department has its own capital investment strategy which links into the Council's Capital Strategy and these can be seen at **Appendix 5**.

The Capital Investment Process

Comprehensive Spending Review

Following the efficiencies required under the Gershon review the Government released the Comprehensive Spending Review to include a 3 year settlement on grant to Local Authorities. In addition there is a requirement to deliver 3% year on year cashable efficiency savings which should be delivered by transforming services provided by Local Government and by improving procurement practices within the Councils. Bromsgrove has recognised the need to improve the value for money of our services and the medium term financial plan 2008/09-2010/11 identifies the savings to be realised from transforming the Council and the improved procurement regime.

The Capital Programme

The Council currently has a 'live' three year Capital Programme that is reviewed on a regular basis. The capital budget is reviewed several times a year after the original budget has been approved by Council prior to the start of each financial year.

When the previous year's final capital expenditure is reported to Executive Cabinet approval is sought to carry unspent budgets forward to the new financial year on schemes where unavoidable delays have occurred, and at this time the original budget is revised to include such unspent budgets. Also at this stage any other new schemes which have been approved since the original budget was agreed, are also added to the revised budget.

A flexible approach is followed and new schemes may be added to the capital budget during the year following submission of a detailed robust business case and approval by Executive Cabinet. Normal practice is however that most new schemes

receive approval for inclusion in the Capital Programme prior to the start of each year. Schemes can also be rescheduled within the Capital Programme if necessary.

It is Council policy that the following investment criteria should apply on all capital schemes:-

A scheme will:-

- 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), and;
- Maximise the benefits of partnership working.

Scheme selection and prioritisation

The following process applies for considering bids for new capital schemes from Heads of Service for inclusion in the Capital Programme, and due consideration will be given to the results of condition surveys undertaken for the Asset Management Plan (AMP):

- Members of the Executive Cabinet, and the Corporate Management Team (CMT) meet to shape priorities for the forthcoming year, to drive the budget process and the formulation of service business plans;
- Capital schemes are identified as part of the business planning process and are included in service business plans;
- Basic feasibility studies are undertaken;
- Heads of Service submit a Capital Funding Request Form to allow an initial assessment to be made of each capital bid, and to seek approval from the CMT to develop a business case and detailed financial appraisal as part of the formal request for funding;
- The initial bids are considered by the Council's CMT and are ranked into high, medium and low priority categories;
- CMT will agree the scheme bids to be included in the draft capital programme for consideration by Members having regard to the merits of each scheme and the overall level of resources available;
- The Scrutiny Steering Board is consulted before finalising the Capital Programme;

- It is Council policy that it consults with the citizens of Bromsgrove on the capital budget proposals through the Customer Panel and focus groups, and in accordance with this, consultation took place with focus groups on the annual capital and revenue budgets for 2008/09;
- Executive Cabinet considers the budget proposals and agree the formal Capital Programme for approval by the Council;
- For all new approved capital schemes Heads of Service are required to complete a full Project Initiation Document (PID) which forms the detailed business case and includes the following essential elements (see **Appendix 6**):
 - Details of proposed scheme;
 - Reason for the project;
 - A definition of what the project is and what it will deliver;
 - The current position and deficiencies found;
 - The risks arising out of deficiencies found;
 - The different options available including doing nothing;
 - Brief details of the costs of each option;
 - The option recommended and reasons why;
 - How the recommended option achieves value for money;
 - How the recommended option achieves the objectives of the business plan;
 - The key drivers in developing the recommendation;
 - An overview of the proposal;
 - A cash flow of the recommended scheme;
 - Depreciation period for the capital asset;
 - Revenue impact of proposed scheme;
 - Demonstration of how the project meets the Vision, Values and Objectives;
 - How the project will help to improve performance;
 - Details of any asset savings generated e.g. a disposal.
- New capital schemes are signed off before commencement by the Executive Cabinet Portfolio Member for Finance and the Head of Financial Services on receipt of the PID (business case), which needs to be robust, before approval will be given.

Project Management

Budget holders and budget managers control their capital schemes using the Council's approved Project Management Framework. The Framework is based on eight output documents which are split into three discrete areas:- project initiation, project implementation and project close. The document outputs are categorised as follows:

Project Initiation

- Project Initiation Document (PID)
- Business Case
- Project Plan (usually a Gantt Chart produced using MS Project)

Project Implementation

- Highlight Reports
- Risk Register
- Issues Log
- Agendas, minutes and general communications

Project Closure

- Closure Report including lessons learned

Financial Monitoring of Capital Schemes

Capital expenditure budgets are profiled over the accounting periods of the financial year and monthly capital monitoring takes place:

- Monthly capital monitoring statements are issued to Heads of Service detailing their schemes with a comparison of planned budget to date with actual expenditure and budget variances to enable action to be taken to keep projects on track;
- Updating of the 'Contract Register' with payments to contractors;
- Quarterly reporting of progress and performance on the capital programme to the Performance Management Board (PMB).

Bench marking:

In order to get the best out of our Capital Strategy it is important that the Council bench marks. The Council does this in a number of ways. Individual schemes are procured and are therefore subject to market testing. The Council is also subject to audit and inspection which includes an examination of our use of resources under the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE).

Performance Management:

The Council has introduced a robust framework of performance management over the last 2 years. Individual service plans identify the statutory and local performance indicators to be monitored by the department and members. These indicators are monitored monthly by Corporate Management Team and Performance Board and quarterly by Cabinet where they are integrated with the financial position of the Council.

New capital schemes are proposed with the aim of achieving the Council's Vision, Values, Objectives and the capital appraisal process requires the identification of related performance indicators which will be impacted by each proposed scheme. The success of many schemes can therefore be evaluated by monitoring the movement of such related indicators.

A range of property related performance indicators have been developed and are included in the new AMP and these will be robustly monitored and reported on by Heads of Service and the Corporate Property Manager at CMT. The Council is now also a member of the Institute of Public Finance (IPF) Asset Management Planning Network which is an organisation which provides advice on property related matters.

The actual progress on delivery of schemes against the target of the Capital Programme is monitored by the issuing of monthly capital monitoring statements to budget holders, and the details are also reported to PMB and Executive Cabinet on a quarterly basis. The final capital outturn is also reported following closedown of the accounts.

Once completed there is a review of the effectiveness of schemes. This is carried out under the Performance Management Framework by completion of the project closure report where the scheme is re-evaluated against the original aims and objectives.

In order to celebrate and promote the successful delivery of capital schemes Press Releases are issued at the appropriate time to provide the local press and community of the full details. Examples in recent years have included the achievement of the national targets for the recycling of waste following significant capital investment in vehicles and equipment, and the 'Shopmobility' scheme offering disabled people the use of free wheelchairs and scooters for shopping in the town centre.

Key Partners in the Development of this Strategy

The Local Strategic Partnership

The Council recognises that it cannot deal with all the issues facing the District alone and has therefore embraced partnership working through the establishment of the Bromsgrove Partnership.

The Bromsgrove Partnership

The Bromsgrove Partnership is the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) with the lead role of promoting economic, social, and environmental well-being and its function has been to develop the Sustainable Community Strategy following extensive consultation across the District and to drive forward the delivery of the Strategy towards the year 2013. Membership comprises representatives from a wide range of public, private, community and voluntary groups (listed below) and full details can be seen at **Appendix 7:-**

- Weaver PLC (Chair);
- Bromsgrove District Council;
- West Mercia Police;
- County Association of Local Councils;
- Education & Lifelong Learning Representative (NEW College);
- Bromsgrove & Redditch Network;
- Worcestershire County Council;
- Worcestershire Primary Care Trust;
- Bromsgrove District Housing Trust.

The Bromsgrove Partnership therefore is a single body that:

- brings together at a local level the different parts of the public sector as well as the private, business, community and voluntary sectors so that different

initiatives and services support each other and work together to consider specific issues that require a joined up response;

- is a non-statutory, non-executive organisation. It does not replace the existing decision-making mechanisms of each constituent body but works behind the scenes to deliver outcomes;
- operates at a level which enables strategic decisions to be taken and is close enough to individual neighbourhoods to allow actions to be determined at community level;
- supplements the County LSP.

The Bromsgrove Partnership has set itself 6 objectives to match those of the countywide LAA:

- Communities that are safe and feel safe;
- A better environment for today and tomorrow;
- Economic success that is shared by all;
- Improving health and well being;
- Meeting the needs of children and young people;
- Stronger communities.

At its away-day on 12th February 2007, the LSP Board considered local evidence and national priorities on each of the LAA blocks, and a result, the following priorities were determined and subsequently approved by the Board on 1st March 2007:

- Fear of Crime
- Environment
- Town Centre Redevelopment (including transport: railway station redevelopment and associated issues and community transport)
- Longbridge Regeneration
- Health & Well Being
- Children & Young People
- Older People
- Housing

Each of these priorities has a Theme or Project Group which focuses on delivering the outcomes in the Community Improvement Plan (which is the performance management framework for the LSP). These action plans therefore influence the content of our Capital Programme because the Capital Strategy is linked with the Council Plan, which in turn is linked with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 require the co-operation of Local Authorities with partners and the operation of Local Area Agreements. This is likely to mean an expansion of shared services and joint working between councils and may well impact on future years' capital strategy.

Examples of Successful Partnership Working

The Council actively seeks and encourages joint working with a variety of partners to deliver services, to attract additional funding, and secure community benefits. There are many examples of successful partnership working involving the Council in the years 2003/2007 which include working with:-

- a range of registered social landlords and the grant funding of capital schemes to provide additional affordable housing for the benefit of local people;
- Worcestershire County Council and joint funding to provide the 'Worcestershire Hub', and also the 'One-Stop Shop' Customer Service Centre, in Bromsgrove town centre;
- NEW College for the provision of a new Arts Centre where the college provided the land and the Council provided the building and agreement on a trust arrangement for split use of the facility;
- ASDA where in exchange for a piece of land, ASDA has provided the Council with its first every multi storey car park; and,
- Birmingham City Council and St Modwen on the redevelopment and regeneration of the old MG Rover site at Longbridge.

Other partners include Advantage West Midlands which is playing a key part in developing the former UEF site as part of the A38 high technology corridor, and British Waterways where a joint feasibility study has been carried out relating to increased leisure and tourism access to the canal system from and within Bromsgrove.

The Council recognises that future partnership working will be a key element in delivering successful capital schemes. The continued need to find additional efficiency savings [Gershon 2004] will provide further impetus to review current levels of partnership working and revise practises to achieve benefits across the authority and the District.

Local Area Agreements

The Council is also involved in the Local Area Agreement (LAA) which is a three-year agreement that sets out the priorities for Worcestershire. It is negotiated between government, represented by Government Office West Midlands (GOWM), and a local area, represented by the County and district councils and their partners working through the Worcestershire Partnership. The aim of the LAA is to simplify funding streams and allow the area greater flexibility to address local priorities.

Worcestershire's Local Area Agreement commenced in April 2006. The County LSP agreed to concentrate on establishing the outcomes and performance targets in the first year of the Agreement with a fuller consideration of the re-aligning of funding streams to support the outcomes kicking in from April 2007. The County LSP are currently reviewing priorities and targets to align with the government's new performance frame work which was developed as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2007.

A successful LAA will provide an opportunity for improving future service delivery in a number of ways:-

- Focus on key strategic priorities and measurable outcomes;
- Assist partners to more clearly identify gaps and overlaps in provision;
- Pooling of budgets/resources leading to greater efficiency and effectiveness;
- Enhanced performance management in conjunction with partners, thus enabling a process which is transparent and accountable;
- Simplification of delivery structures and clear accountability and governance arrangements;
- Improved community cohesion through greater engagement of all sectors, notably private, voluntary and community;
- By linking outcomes to a clear identification of needs, based on data from local communities through effective consultation.

Corporate Procurement Strategy

The first phase of improvements identified in the 2005 to 2008 strategy to the procurement processes within the Council have now been completed and a review undertaken to identify further opportunities and actions required over the period 2008 to 2011 to consolidate and continue achieving best value for the Council's revenue and capital spend.

The Council remains committed to best practice, transparency and best value the controls and processes put in place during 2006 to 2008 ensures that internal Contracts Procedure Rules, Standing Orders and UK and EU procurement regulations are complied with and risk is minimised.

The key procurement objectives of the 2008 - 2011 strategy are:- (In no order of priority)

- Continue to identify cashable savings opportunities
- Training and development for officers and members
- Drive planning into the procurement process with officers
- Continue to work with other public sector entities and local authorities in Worcestershire to jointly effect savings/efficiencies
- Identify and utilize existing compliant contracts available to the Council within the wider public sector
- Identifying and implementing further efficiencies
- Support and training for small & medium enterprises and local business
- Full integration of equality & diversity best practice into procurement
- Integration of the Council's sustainability and environmental goals into procurement
- Further development of e-business to achieve savings

Consultation

Consultation across the district is vital if we are to ensure we can deliver the services our residents want. As such, the Council has appointed an officer dedicated to consultation activities and has drawn up a Consultation Policy and associated guidance for officers across the authority to use in order to ensure a consistent approach. All strategies and plans are subject to consultation and they will continue to be revised through consultation, to take account of changing public priorities.

The Council outsourced its existing in-house citizens' panel to SNAP Surveyshop in 2007 in order to establish and maintain a statistically valid Customer Panel. The Panel is surveyed twice-yearly on issues of service delivery and quality of life in the district. Members of the Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team have been trained in running Focus Groups with members of the public and a series of Focus Groups will take place in the coming year. The Council also regularly consults with community forums, and other participation groups. In all of the methods used the Council ensures that feedback is given to those consulted so that they are aware that their views are being listened to and acted upon.

It is Council policy that formal consultation with the public will take place on all significant or major capital projects through the Customer Panel, Focus Groups and other activities. Consultation with Focus Groups has taken place this year on the annual capital and revenue budgets for 2008/09, and this will be repeated each year.

The Local Development Framework

This is a strategic plan for the development of the Bromsgrove District over the next 15 to 20 years and Planning Department carry out consultation developers and other interested parties when developing this plan.

Housing

The Council has a good past record for working with its tenants in encouraging participation and meaningful consultation. Since housing transfer took place, the main responsibility for tenant participation has transferred to Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) enabling the Council to now concentrate on wider community and partner consultation as a mainstream activity within its strategic housing role.

In respect of housing needs and investment, the Council undertook substantial and varied consultation with residents, registered social landlords, the Housing Corporation, and the voluntary sector and other agencies in developing its Housing Strategy (2006 – 2011). All feedback from this consultation is fed into the policy development process.

The following list provides examples of the consultation work the Council is developing with the whole community, irrespective of whether they are tenants, persons accessing homelessness services or people benefiting from the authorities private sector housing and planning services.

Examples of Key Local Housing Consultations and Partnerships

- Bromsgrove Homelessness Strategy Steering Group;
- Housing Strategy Steering Group;

- Strategic Housing and Principal; RSI Partner Consultation Group.
- Registered Social Landlord (RSL) Liaison Group;
- Bromsgrove Private Landlords Forum.

The Strategic Housing section has a schedule of customer satisfaction surveys that are being carried out on an annual basis spanning the services provided.

The Council will have reached mid term in the life of it's housing strategy during 2008 when further consultation will take place to inform a mid term review of the strategy and update of the action plan.

Examples of Key County Wide Housing Consultation Groups and Partnerships

- Health and Social Care Groups;
- South Housing Market Area Partnership Group and Housing Market Assessment sub group and Member / Officer RHB Briefing Group.;
- North Worcester Care & Repair Agency Consultation Group;
- Supporting People Commissioning Group.

Culture and Community

Culture and Community Services recognise that the operation of facilities and the planning and implementation for activities/service delivery within the department needs to be driven by the outcomes of valid consultation and user feedback. To this end the department has developed a consultation strategy to ensure that the needs of the community are adequately addressed, continuous improvement is achieved and quality of service enhanced based on robust information obtained through consultation.

The following methods of consultation are currently in use within the department: -

- Comments and suggestion systems;
- User questionnaires;
- Consultative and focus groups;
- Council complaints procedure;
- Open meetings;
- User/Non-user general residents survey;
- Open days;
- Meet the manager sessions.

Community Safety

The Council's response to consultation is to identify future investment and service delivery needs so that these may be incorporated as necessary into the capital strategy and other policy documents. This approach has in the past contributed to the identification of capital schemes to improve car parking, leisure facilities and reduce crime, amongst others.

The corporate "Sense of Community" priority is closely matched to the community fear of anti social behaviour and crime taken on board by the community safety team as key deliverables for 2008/09

A key part of the Council's investment in tackling crime and anti social behaviour is its CCTV & lifeline operation. A capital programme has been put in place to start replacing time-expired CCTV cameras in 2008/09. Capital funding is also in place to convert the control room to digital recording and remodel the work area during 2009/10. The aim is to upgrade and replace equipment and systems, to ensure the CCTV operation is 'future proofed' for another 10 years.

Lifeline supports some of the most vulnerable members of the community and has requested capital funding in 2009/10 to replace its current operating system, which cannot support the latest developments in 'telecare' services, and is becoming increasingly problematic to support due to its age.

In 2008/09 a 3 year rolling strategy will commence for Bromsgrove Community Safety Partnership. Reviewed annually, it will be driven by what are the priorities of local communities in the District.

A yearly survey is conducted by West Mercia Police and its community safety partnerships on key issues around fear of crime. A monthly tasking group, supported by a dedicated analyst, prioritises types of crime, disorder and anti social behaviour, together with geographical areas. Partners put together an action plan, resources, and funding to tackle issues highlighted.

The Council seeks the support of voluntary organisations about supporting specific projects and also uses residents and young people focus groups for specific issues.

Partners and Communities Together (PACT) is a scheme that looks at the key issues that have the greatest impact on a ward/ community. Residents prioritise issues and statutory organisations or voluntary groups deliver them.

Neighbourhood Forums are being piloted which brings agencies such as parish, district and county councils, plus key individuals, together to tackle a wide range of localised issues.

All these methods of consultation are used to highlight the community safety concerns of residents. These concerns are analysed and prioritised. Projects to tackle these concerns are developed and submitted for inclusion within the capital programme. The provision of new or additional CCTV cameras is a typical example.

In all of the approaches to consultation the community safety team ensures that feedback is given to those consulted so that they are aware that their views are being listened to and acted upon.

Review of the Capital Strategy

This is the sixth formal Capital Strategy for the Council and will be subject to regular review to ensure that it reflects the Council's priorities and corporate objectives and contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The new Prudential Code system for control of local authority capital expenditure has been in place since 1st April 2004 which opens up opportunities for borrowing capital

resources to finance capital projects provided the criteria of being affordable, prudent and sustainable is clearly met. In accordance with this development, the Council will be financing some capital expenditure from borrowing in 2010/11 to ensure it continues to deliver its priorities and objectives, and will therefore no longer be a debt free local authority.

The Capital Strategy is a corporate document, owned by both Members and officers, and reflects and supports the wider community and partnership role. It is one part of the bigger corporate management and governance picture and will adapt as the Council evolves.

Jayne Pickering
Head of Financial Services
Bromsgrove District Council
The Council House
Burcot Lane
Bromsgrove
Worcestershire
B60 1AA

COUNCIL VISION VALUES OBJECTIVES & PRIORITIES

Bromsgrove District Council

our Vision our Values and Objectives

Vision

Working together to build a district where people are proud to live and work, through community leadership and excellent services

Values

Leadership
Partnerships,
Customer First and
Equality

Council Objective One Regeneration	Council Objective Two Improvement	Council Objective Three Sense of Community & Well being	Council Objective Four Environment
C01 Priorities Town Centre Housing	C02 Priorities Customer Service	C03 Priorities Sense of Community	C04 Priorities Clean Streets and Recycling

Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

PROJECTED USE OF CAPITAL RESOURCES

Capital Resource	Balance Available 01/04/07	ADD Estimated Receipts in 2007/08	LESS Revised Budget & Additions & Savings 2007/08	Estimated Balance at 31/03/08	ADD Estimated Receipts in 2008/09	LESS Original Budget 2008/09	Estimated Balance at 31/03/09	ADD Estimated Receipts in 2009/10	LESS Revised Estimate for 2009/10	Estimated Balance at 31/03/10	ADD Estimated Receipts in 2010/11	LESS Revised Estimate for 2010/11	Estimated Balance at 31/03/11
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
All Capital Receipts (Including Low-Cost & Poolable Housing Ring Fenced)	15.000	1.024	5.448	10.576	0.292	8.325	2.543	0.092	1.872	0.763	0.092	1.276	-0.421
Section 106 Funds	1.441	0.086	1.119	0.408	0.367	0.360	0.415	0.222		0.637			0.637
Government Grants - IEG	0.004		0.004	0.000			0.000			0.000			0.000
Government Grants - SCG (DFG's)	0.090	0.281	0.360	0.011	0.281	0.281	0.011	0.281	0.281	0.011	0.281	0.281	0.011
Government Grants - Liveability	0.209		0.209	0.000			0.000			0.000			0.000
Government Grants - Regional Housing Pot	0.217	0.162	0.379	0.000			0.000			0.000			0.000
Other Government Grants & Contributions	0.096		0.086	0.010			0.010			0.010			0.010
BIG Lottery Childrens Programme					0.200	0.200	0.000			0.000			0.000
	17.057	1.553	7.605	11.005	1.140	9.166	2.979	0.595	2.153	1.421	0.373	1.557	0.237

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008 - 2011

Schemes by Department	Revised Budget & Additions 2007-08 £	Financing Budget & Additions 2007-08	Original Budget 2008-09 £	Estimate 2009-10 £	Estimate 2010-11 £	Funding of Original Budget 2008/09	Brief Description of Project
Street Scene & Waste Management							
Concessionary Fare Implementation of Smart Cards (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	20,000	Capital Receipts					To implement smart card operation as part of the concessionary fares scheme
Replacement Pay & Display Ticket Machines	18,000	S106 Off-Site Car Parking Provision					The replacement of seven old pay and display machines with brand new ones using S106 monies from development adjacent to Hanover Street car park.
Depot Services							
Replacement of Fleet Vehicles (Multi Lift Vehicles) (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	125,000	Capital Receipts					Part of the structured vehicle replacement plan to ensure we can comply with our statutory requirements for mobile litter crews, dog foul bins and fly tipping etc.
Street Cleansing Vehicles & Equipment (Identified within Depot Strategy) (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	192,000	Capital Receipts					Implementation of the strategy to improve services delivered from the Depot and achieve the outputs required by the Council's Recovery Plan. This scheme is for the purchase of large, mini, & pedestrian controlled sweepers; pick-up vehicles, & trailers. Also replacement of existing vehicles.
Skips for new 18 tonne Depot Multi Lift Vehicles. (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	20,000	Capital Receipts					Skips for the new 18 tonne Multi Lift vehicles now planned for purchase in 2006/07. Will be utilised by all Depot services.
Replacement of 2 Large Mechanical Sweepers	140,000	Capital Receipts					The replacement of the two existing mechanical sweepers.
Improvements to Depot Site. (£43,846 of budget carried forward from 2006/07)	93,846	Capital Receipts					Physical improvements to Depot yard and stores to meet HSE recommendations and create suitable parking arrangements for fleet.
New Tipper Vehicle for Hit Squad			25,000			Capital Receipts	

Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Refuse Collection)	63,000	Capital Receipts	12,500	273,000	13,500	Capital Receipts	To provide a 10 year, on going, vehicle replacement programme for the departmental fleet.
Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Street Cleaning)	85,000	Capital Receipts	186,000	146,000		Capital Receipts	To provide a 10 year, on going, vehicle replacement programme for the departmental fleet.
Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Recycling)	540,000	Capital Receipts	0	13,000		Capital Receipts	To provide a 10 year, on going, vehicle replacement programme for the departmental fleet.
Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Commercial Services)			106,000	13,000		Capital Receipts	To provide a 10 year, on going, vehicle replacement programme for the departmental fleet.
Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Garage Services)	59,000	Capital Receipts	1,000	15,000	25,000	Capital Receipts	To provide a 10 year, on going, vehicle replacement programme for the departmental fleet.
Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Highways)	21,000	Capital Receipts	22,500	500	1,000	Capital Receipts	To provide a 10 year, on going, vehicle replacement programme for the departmental fleet.
Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Grounds)	123,000	Capital Receipts	58,500	102,000	53,500	Capital Receipts	To provide a 10 year, on going, vehicle replacement programme for the departmental fleet.
Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Multi-lift Vehicle)	17,000	Capital Receipts		12,000		Capital Receipts	To provide a 10 year, on going, vehicle replacement programme for the departmental fleet.
SUB-TOTAL	1,516,846		411,500	574,500	93,000		
Culture & Community Services							
Dolphin Centre Hot Water System Replacement	45,000	Capital Receipts					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.
Children's Play Schemes (funded by BIG Lottery Children's Programme funding)			200,000			Lottery	The money from the BIG Lottery shall contribute to the following schemes; Wythall Play Project - a new adventure play area at Wythall Park, a more innovative/natural play facility at Hollywood Lane Play Area and an improved toddler/young children's play area at May Farm Close. Rubery - a new MUGA. Sidemoor - additional risky play items at King George play area.



District Wide Provision/Enhancements of Sports Facilities			360,000			S106 Culture & Community	
Recreation Grounds							
New Park at Barnsley Hall (Budget carry forward from 2006/07). Part funded from Liveability Fund.)	204,766	Gov't Grant Liveability					The scheme includes creation of a new public open space/Park following the conveyance of a field from the Health Authority that was subject to a Section 106 agreement (Town & Country Planning Act). The scheme involves ground works to reinstate football pitches, additional landscaping to encourage wildlife, a new access road, car parking and infrastructure to serve proposed changing room facility (recommendation of the Playing Pitch Strategy 2003).
New Park at Barnsley Hall (Budget carry forward from 2006/07) Part funded from Capital Receipts.	10,000	Capital Receipts					
Regeneration of two Allotment Sites (Budget carry forward from 2006/07). Funded from Government Liveability Fund.	4,000	Gov't Grant Liveability					The budget is for the regeneration of two allotment sites.
Callowbrook Park (Rubery) Improvement Scheme. (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	50,000	S106 Culture & Community					To provide improved leisure facilities at the park for children/teenagers. Officers are currently considering the feasibility of schemes in consultation with the young people of Rubery in association with the police, youth service and ward members. The aim is to run the scheme in parallel and complementary to the improvements identified to St. Chads Park (Rubery) that is being funded from external grant (Liveability) monies.
Sports Development							
Wythall Teenage Sports Facility Scheme. (£65k of budget carried forward from 2006/07)	80,000	S106 Culture & Community					To provide an openly accessible area for teenagers to meet, participate in casual use football and other sports activity. The aim is to provide opportunities for diversionary activities to help curb localised anti social behaviour identified in Wythall. Officers are currently considering feasibility option sites in association with local stakeholders e.g. police, school, youth service.



Leisure/Sports Centres							
Dolphin Centre - Replacement of Pool Plant. (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	55,000	Capital Receipts					The scheme is for the refurbishment of the Swimming Pool Plant at the Dolphin Centre which has been identified as requiring replacement as part of a recent Pool Plant Condition Survey. Scheme is to ensure we operate our pools to the required environmental standards and avoid deterioration in pool water quality. The scheme has been deferred to 2006/07 so that the pool only has to be closed down once at the same time as Dolphin Phase 2 Upgrade.
Dolphin Centre Upgrade to Fitness Suite (Revised 2007/08 Scheme)	850,000	Capital Receipts					Enhancement of health and fitness facilities at the Dolphin Centre, to result in additional usage and income generation.
Contribution Towards New Catering Equipment at the Dolphin Centre	45,000	Gov't Grant (PSA Perf Reward)					
Community Services							
Restoration of Memorial Headstones in Bromsgrove Cemetery (Budget carry forward of £15k from 2006/07)	15,000	Capital Receipts					To restore/erect the memorial headstones that are currently laid down further to the Risk Assessment previously undertaken. Headstones shall be restored to sustain their historical and structural integrity and site signage replaced.
Other Schemes							
Hunters Hill School Blackwell. Contribution towards New Indoor Sports Facilities (Budget carry forward from 2006/07.)	129,500	Capital Receipts					Capital grant towards the provision of a new Sports Hall
Barnsley Hall - Requisition of Land & Provision of new Play Area. (Budget carry forward from 2006/07.)	79,000	S106 Culture & Community					Part of an approved programme for new provision and improvements to parks, open spaces, play areas, and recreation areas.
Belbroughton - Improving Play Facilities. (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	19,370	S106 Culture & Community					Part of an approved programme for new provision and improvements to parks, open spaces, play areas, and recreation areas.
Blackwell - Relocation of Play Area. (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	40,000	S106 Culture & Community					Part of an approved programme for new provision and improvements to parks, open spaces, play areas, and recreation areas.



Bromsgrove Town FC - Portable Goals for Lickey End Recreation Ground. (Budget carry forward from 2006/07)	1,700	S106 Culture & Community					Part of an approved programme for new provision and improvements to parks, open spaces, play areas, and recreation areas.
Catshill - Refurbishment of Horse Course Play Area	50,000	S106 Culture & Community					Part of an approved programme for new provision and improvements to parks, open spaces, play areas, and recreation areas.
Charford Section 106 Schemes. (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	100,000	S106 Culture & Community					Part of an approved programme for new provision and improvements to parks, open spaces, play areas, and recreation areas.
King George V Playing Fields - Floodlights for existing Multi Use games area. (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	30,000	S106 Culture & Community					Part of an approved programme for new provision and improvements to parks, open spaces, play areas, and recreation areas.
Oakhalls - New Play Area. (£40k budget carried forward from 2006/07 + £25k 2007/08 budget increase)	65,000	S106 Culture & Community					Part of an approved programme for new provision and improvements to parks, open spaces, play areas, and recreation areas.
Alvechurch Youth Scheme	90,000	S106 Culture & Community					The project is to enhance the provision of youth facilities in the Alvechurch area following resident's consultation of local needs.
Bromsgrove Youth Scheme	70,000	S106 Culture & Community					The project is to enhance the provision of youth facilities in the Bromsgrove area following resident's consultation of local needs.
Tutnall & Cobley - Access Improvements	25,000	S106 Culture & Community					The project is to enhance the access to Tardebigge Community Hall to support/ expand the provision of services provided.
Community Safety							
Upgrading of C.C.T.V. Facilities at St Chads Park Rubery. (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	18,215	Capital Receipts					Upgrade to CCTV and the multi channel link.



Replacement of CCTV Equipment			164,000	290,000	79,000	Capital Receipts	The project is the replacement of all of the Districts CCTV cameras on a 3 year rolling programme to commence in 2008/09, the cameras were designed for a 10 year lifecycle and are due for replacement. Replacement of 26 CCTV cameras and domes in Bromsgrove Town Centre. Replacement of 19 CCTV cameras in Town Centre, Alvechurch, Barnt Green, Hagley, Rubery & Sanders Park. Upgrade the CCTV Control Room to Digital Recording and future proofing for the next 10 years. New monitor wall, display systems and interior building works.
SUB-TOTAL	2,076,551		724,000	290,000	79,000		
Financial Services							
Purchase Order Processing System (Part funded from Capital Receipts) (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	44,623	Capital Receipts					The scheme is for the provision of a cost effective and efficient IT based Purchase Order Management System as a replacement for existing manual methods. The Council is required to have an e-procurement system in place by December 2005 both to meet the national procurement agenda and its commitments in IEG statements submitted to central government as part of the e-government agenda.
SUB-TOTAL	44,623		0	0	0		
Human Resources & Organisational Development							
- New HR Information & Management System. (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	30,000	Capital Receipts					To provide the Council with a modern Human Resources system which will enable both efficient and effective monitoring of its staff and provide information to support performance indicators. The system will provide a flexible approach in order to facilitate the changing role of the Council, assist management users to be continually aware of staffing implications, and enable the Council to meet current and future e-government targets.
SUB-TOTAL	30,000		0	0	0		



Policy & Performance							
Customer Feedback System (Complaints)	20,000	Capital Receipts					As per Cabinet Report (Dec 2006) the system (software and server) will enable us to properly manage, track and respond to complaints. The purchase of such a system is consistent with our Improvement Plan and the Customer first Strategy.
Contribution towards Stages 3 & 4 of Bromsgrove Station Re-Development	25,000	Capital Receipts					
SUB-TOTAL	45,000		0	0	0		
Planning & Environment Services							
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) - Private & BDHT Grants (Funding by BDC)	550,489	Capital Receipts	382,000	399,000	411,000	Capital Receipts	Budget for Disabled Facilities Grants which became mandatory under the provisions of Section 23 of the 1996 Act for works facilitating access to and around the dwelling, and for the provision of certain facilities within the dwelling.
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) - Private & BDHT Grants (60% Government Specified Capital Grant (SCG) Funding)	370,511	Gov't Grant DFG-SCG	281,000	281,000	281,000	Gov't Grant DFG-SCG	
Town Centre Development	10,000		100,000	100,000	100,000	Capital Receipts	
New Toilet Block in Town Centre			174,000			Capital Receipts	
Energy Efficiency Grants Home Insulation Project			25,000			Capital Receipts	The Energy Efficiency Home Insulation Project will enable free cavity wall and loft insulation to dwellings that fulfill the following criteria: - Occupants are 65 and over - The dwelling is owner occupied or privately rented - The property is within Council Bands A-E 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.



Low Carbon – Renewable Energy Grants			10,000			Capital Receipts	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.
Private Sector Renewal Grants							
Discretionary Home Repair Assistance & Housing Renewal Grants (Private Sector Only)	161,000	Capital Receipts £62k, Gov't Grant - Regional Housing Pot (£20k c/fwd from 2006/07, £79k 2007/08)	164,000	168,000	173,000	Capital Receipts	The Council's Strategy & Policy relates to the implementation of new services designed to improve housing quality, energy efficiency & health and social well being by improving poor standard, unfit or empty dwellings and by enabling people to remain in their own homes. This scheme forms part of our agreed private sector housing strategy.
Strategic Housing							
Retained Housing							
Houndsfield Lane Caravan Site - Improvements (Budget carried forward from 2006/07.)	10,000	Housing Retained Capital Receipts (Debt Free)					Refurbishment of amenity blocks on caravan site.
Upgrading of Houndsfield Lane Caravan Park			110,000			Capital Receipts	The scheme is to upgrade the caravan site to modern standards.
Homeless Hostels Schemes							
Homeless Hostel Re-modelling Scheme	765,000	Various					Grants to RSL's to support and subsidise the provision of Affordable Housing Development in the form of rented tenure. On 6th September 2006 Executive Cabinet approved in principle the de-commissioning of Wythall Hostel, the proceeds of which are to be re-invested into the Hostel re-modelling scheme.
Strategic & Enabling Housing Schemes							
4 Houses on garage sites (Grafton, Foxwalks) (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	55,200	S106 Affordable Housing					Grant funding of 4 houses for letting at affordable rents by Rooftop Housing Association development at a former garage site.

Affordable Housing Schemes						
Grants to Principal Preferred Partners (BDHT / W Mercia) for the development of affordable housing in the District.			350,000			<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"> - Meet housing need as identified by the Strategic Housing Section; - Are Affordable; - Provide good Value for Money; - Provide meaningful opportunities for tenant participation; - Provide quality and accessible housing management; - Provide good standards of affordable housing.
Grants to RSL's - General (Includes £40k budget carried forward from 2006/07)	77,000	Capital Receipts - (Ring Fenced for Low Cost & Shared Ownership Hsg) £40k + Gov't Grants Strat Hsg Pot £37k	40,000			<p>A second phase of the refurbishment and modernisation of the four hostels that continue to be owned by the Council. The 4 hostels provide a total of 35 rooms of temporary accommodation for a variety of homeless applicants whilst they are either having their application assessed, being provided with temporary accommodation for a period, seen reasonable for them to find alternative accommodation (where full duty is not owed to the client) or where the council has accepted its duty to rehouse and is seeking to secure them permanent accommodation. The hostels are in constant use and average over 90% occupancy. The 4 premises require extensive refurbishment including window replacement, bathroom fitting replacement, floor replacement, kitchen refurbishment, outhouse and storage unit re-roofing and external works.</p>
Grants to RSL's - Housing to Rent (New Build) - Barrington Road (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	29,270	S106 Affordable Housing £26,270 + Hsg Capital Receipts Debt Free £3k				<p>The provision of Local Authority Grant to a Registered Social Landlord to fund the provision of additional units of affordable housing within the District through new build. Method - New Build. Tenure - Rented. Property Type - General Needs Housing.</p>
Grants to RSL's - Housing to Rent (New Build) - Ryfields Road (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	19,000	S106 Affordable Housing				



Grants to RSL's - Low Cost Housing (Includes £160k budget carried forward from 2006/07)	182,000	Capital Receipts - (£160k & £11k Ring Fenced for Low Cost Hsg + Hsg Capital Receipts (Debt Free) £11k					The provision of Local Authority Grant to a Registered Social Landlord to fund the provision of additional units of affordable housing within the District. Tenure - Low Cost/ Shared Ownership. Property Type - General Needs Housing. Funding- To be funded from capital receipts received and ringfenced for low cost housing schemes.
Grants to RSL's - Housing for Rent - Redgrove School (BDHT) (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	96,000	Capital Receipts - Ring Fenced for Low Cost					
Grants to RSL's - Grant for Buy Backs (BDHT) (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	104,000	Capital Receipts - Ring Fenced for Low Cost					
Extra Care Sheltered Housing - Gilbert Court, Charford.	1,000,000	Capital Receipts					The provision of Local Authority Grant to a Registered Social Landlord towards the joint commissioning or the remodelling and provision of 27 additional units of affordable housing and community facilities within the planned remodelling of Gilbert Court Sheltered Housing Scheme to Extra Care Standard. Tenure- Rented (79) shared ownership (8) Low Cost Sale (5). Property Type - Housing for older people. Funding- Funding from capital receipts, approved by Executive Cabinet on 28.09.05.
Grant to BDHT to enable development of 17 Flats (Flavel Rd, Charford) (Allocation from West Mids Regional Housing Pot Grant) (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	100,000	Gov't Grant Regional Housing Pot					The Government Office West Midlands has made a cash allowance to housing authorities who are debt free to spend generally on housing capital projects. The £217k allocation has been allocated to 8 separate projects which were approved by Executive Cabinet on 1st Nov 2006.
Grants to owners of Houses in Multiple Occupation (regulatory standard in Fire Precautions and Energy Efficiency) (Allocation from West Mids Regional Housing Pot Grant) (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	30,000	Gov't Grant Regional Housing Pot					The Government Office West Midlands has made a cash allowance to housing authorities who are debt free to spend generally on housing capital projects. The £217k allocation has been allocated to 8 separate projects which were approved by Executive Cabinet



Choice Based Lettings Capital Implementation Cost (Allocation from West Mids Regional Housing Pot Grant) (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	37,000	Gov't Grant Regional Housing Pot					The Government Office West Midlands has made a cash allowance to housing authorities who are debt free to spend generally on housing capital projects. The £217k allocation has been allocated to 8 separate projects which were approved by Executive Cabinet
Energy Efficiency Home Insulation Project (Allocation from West Mids Regional Housing Pot Grant) (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	30,000	Gov't Grant Regional Housing Pot					The Government Office West Midlands has made a cash allowance to housing authorities who are debt free to spend generally on housing capital projects. The £217k allocation has been allocated to 8 separate projects which were approved by Executive Cabinet
SUB-TOTAL	3,626,470		1,636,000	948,000	965,000		
Legal Equalities & Democratic Services							
Remedial Work to Council Buildings following Stock Condition Surveys			286,000	207,000	284,000	Capital Receipts	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.
Alterations to Council Buildings in compliance with DDA	150,000	Capital Receipts	150,000			Capital Receipts	Enable the Council to deliver structural and other alterations to council buildings over a 3 year period as required by the Disability Discrimination Act and following the review of accessibility by SCOPE. The works required have been identified in order to ensure that our buildings and services can be accessed by all of our customers and will ensure we are DDA compliant.
Replacement Electoral Software (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	15,000	Capital Receipts					Replacement of the current IT electoral software with a more reliable alternative.
Disabled Discrimination Act Improvements (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	7,582	Capital Receipts					To ensure the final stages of all works to council buildings will be completed to the 2005/06 target of 100% compliance to the Act. To comply with statutory legislation within all council buildings.
Case Management System	14,000	Capital Receipts (Spend to Save Scheme)					Provide a solution for managing legal case loads and increase capacity for operating shared service arrangements. Increase workload within existing SLA with external customer. In turn this would enable the department to investigate further opportunities for the delivery of the service to third parties.
CCTV Provision at Council House	20,000	Capital Receipts					Provision of CCTV facilities at the Council House.
SUB-TOTAL	206,582		436,000	207,000	284,000		



<u>E-Government & Customer Services</u>							
Councillors Remote Access			25,000			Capital Receipts	Standardise on the ICT equipment provided to Councillors. Enabling a more efficient service and remote support capability.
Increase Bandwidth for Internet Link			10,000			Capital Receipts	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.
Spatial IT Scheme (Local Authority Modernisation Programme) (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	384,818	Capital Receipts	5,793,000			Capital Receipts	The Spatial Project is a modernising programme involving the procurement of new integrated software to enable the transformation of service delivery and the achievement of full compliance with national E-Government priority outcomes.
Corporate Budget for IT Upgrades (£3,362 of budget carried forward from 2006/07)	43,362	Capital Receipts					Scheme is for refreshing Corporate Desktop (provision of laptops, new visual display units & central processing units, but not servers, to ensure we are capable of handling future new software applications) (additional to existing upgrade budget requirements).
Internet/Intranet Development (IEG) (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	3,640	Gov't Grant IEG					This scheme is the complete refresh of the web and updates. Provide a common solution for the intranet and internet content management system. Ensure ongoing maintenance of the system. Comply with all national standards for local government websites. Provide an on-line communication tool and payment facilities to the citizens of Bromsgrove. To assist with the delivery of the following e-Government indicators: R1, R3, R5, R6, G3, R7, R9, R10, R12, G12, R15, R23, R24 and G20. These are described within the business case. Future proof the website for at least 3 years. Provide a solution that is flexible to citizen requirements
Government Connect Scheme (Budget carried forward from 2006/07)	30,000	Capital Receipts					Government Connect is a scheme which Bromsgrove DC has already signed up to. This is a national citizen authorisation programme whereby citizens have a unique reference which allows access to their local council's IT systems. E.g. enable them to review their council tax balances on-line.



Replacement of desktop print fleet at the Council House and Depot	75,000	Capital Receipts (Spend to Save Scheme)					Review of existing print fleet and facilities within the Council House and Depot by NRG, Danwood Group and Xerox under the OGC buying solutions compliant framework contract. Report and proposals for multifunctional devices received from all three companies and NRG selected a preferred bidder based on commercial evaluation of the 3 proposals submitted.
Provision of a Queue Management system at the CSC	30,000	Capital Receipts					Provide a solution for managing customer flow within the Customer Service Centre and in particular the disparate queue that forms in the area in front of the service desks. Provide customers with information regarding where they should wait, their position in the queue and which service desk they should attend.
SUB-TOTAL	566,820		5,828,000	0	0		
Support Service Recharges							
SUPPORT SERVICES RECHARGES TO CAPITAL (To be recharged over all schemes in 2008/09, 2009/10 & 2010/11)	127,000	Capital Receipts	130,000	133,000	136,000	Capital Receipts	
SUB-TOTAL	127,000		130,000	133,000	136,000		
TOTAL FOR ALL EXISTING SCHEMES	8,239,892		9,165,500	2,152,500	1,557,000		

Funding:

Capital Receipts	6,114,435		8,324,500	1,871,500	252,000
Capital Receipts & Borrowing	0		0	0	1,024,000
Section 106 Receipts	1,118,540		360,000	0	0
Government Grants	1,006,917		281,000	281,000	281,000
BIG Lottery Childrens Programme	0		200,000	0	0
Total	8,239,892		9,165,500	2,152,500	1,557,000



ASSET MANAGEMENT GROUP

Strategic Objectives and Group Responsibilities

1. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

To support the Council's Vision, Objectives and Priorities the group has been set the following as its strategic objectives for asset management:

- To ensure that the Council's asset portfolio support the delivery of its service and objectives.
- To meet the challenge of working in an environment of change.
- To ensure that all assets are demonstrably managed in the most economic, efficient and effective manner.

From these strategic objectives the asset management plan must ensure procedures are implemented and performance measures adopted such that all operational assets must be:

- In the right location to allow customers to access the service and staff to deliver it.
- In good condition to the extent that services can be provided from them in a comfortable environment for both staff and customers without interruption.
- Suitable and sufficient for the purpose for which they are being used in terms of size, type and layout of accommodation – including accessible to people with disabilities.
- Flexible to the extent that they can be adapted economically to adjust to changing services needs, including sharing with partners in service delivery.
- Able to demonstrate “value for money” in terms of balance between efficiency in operation, running costs and long term sustainability.
- Able to convey a positive image of the Council and for the service being provided.
- Able to contribute something positive to the immediate environment, particularly where there is a need for physical regeneration of the locality.
- Good examples of sustainable development if new or extensively refurbished.
- Maintained in such a way so as to minimize reactive maintenance by improving planned maintenance arrangements.
- Managed to mitigate their impact on and effect of climate change.

All non operational assets must be:

- Able to make the maximum contribution to service revenue budgets in terms of rental income; and / or
- Able to make a positive contribution to the social wellbeing of the community either through its presence as a heritage asset or through use by others such as voluntary groups, charity organizations or small businesses.

- Retained reasons of strategic importance, such as to influence the physical and economic regeneration of the District.

When assets are considered for acquisition it should be for the following reasons:

- They are able to contribute towards the provision of the Council's services.
- A strategic acquisition for redevelopment or tactical purposes.
- To facilitate economic development.
- To generate revenue income.

A cost benefit analysis and risk assessment will be prepared as part of the decision making process in connection with the acquisition of assets.

2. GROUP RESPONSIBILITIES

The Group is responsible for:

- The strategic management of the Council's assets.
- Ensuring that the Council's use and management of its corporate property assets is efficient and effective.
- Reviewing the Council Plan, Council Results, Community Strategy and other associated plans and strategies including service business plans with a view to identifying property implications including future service property requirements and aspirations.
- Considering the recommendations of service reviews and internal or external audits.
- Considering the responses of suitability surveys undertaken by the Property and Facilities Manager.
- Considering responses to the consultations of stakeholders regarding the Asset Management Plan.
- Reviewing data gathered for property performance indicators and from benchmarking exercises and implementing actions required in order to improve performance as necessary.
- Monitoring the amount of surplus and unoccupied properties, unlet investment property and instigating any necessary action
- Considering asset related projects for inclusion in the capital programme.
- Seeking and considering examples of best practice in asset management in the public and private sectors.
- Ensuring that the requirements of service departments including housing, recreational, planning, or corporate needs, and in support of the delivery of those needs taking into account best value principles and corporate priorities.
- Meeting the corporate objectives of the Council insofar as the same are influenced by Asset Management.
- Reviewing land and property holdings to determine ways and means of achieving the Council's objectives through the sale, acquisition, or letting of land, as appropriate.

APPENDIX 4

- To assess the Council's accommodation requirements, based on strategic aims, statutory service provision, Council objectives, and service delivery priorities
- To assess the extent, type, condition, accessibility, and performance of the existing asset portfolio to ensure that it is sufficient, suitable, and fit for purpose
- To ensure continual improvement in asset management, with the establishment of priorities for future investment.
- Considering alternative uses for land and property holdings, as appropriate.
- The maximisation of income from asset holdings.
- The application of robust procedures to the proposed acquisition of assets.
- The maximisation of returns from disposal of surplus assets.
- Updating annually the Asset Management Plan for submission to Corporate Management Team.

Day to day responsibility for property and property matters lies with the Corporate Property Officer, within Legal Equalities and Democratic Services. The Corporate Property Officer is supported by the handling of responsibility for service-specific operational property by the Heads of Service / service managers of particular departments as follows:

Head of Culture & Community Services

- Parks & Open Spaces
- Cemeteries
- Museum & Tourist Information Centre

Head of Street Scene & Waste Management

- Council's Depot
- Public Conveniences

DEPARTMENTAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Planning and Environment Services Strategy

The Planning and Environment Services Department comprises the regulatory services of Development Control (and enforcement), Strategic Planning including the Local Development Framework, Trees and Conservation, Building Control, Environmental Health Commercial and Pollution, Licensing, Economic Development Administrative support services and also the Council's Strategic Housing and Enabling role.

Planning Strategy

The department has been very successful in the previous years in obtaining Government funds under the Planning Delivery Grant after meeting performance targets on the processing of planning applications, and for planning policy work. This funding has been used for both capital and revenue purposes. Capital schemes have included equipment for producing digital maps and the acceptance of electronic plans which are requirements under e-Government, and presentational equipment in the Council Chamber.

A number of new capital schemes are required but they have not been progressed because they do not meet the Council's current capital priorities.

Environment Services Strategy

There are currently no requirements for capital schemes.

Housing Strategy

In 2004, housing in Bromsgrove took a major step forward in transferring its Council housing stock to a newly created, non profit making housing association, Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT). The Large Scale Voluntary Transfer of stock provided an opportunity to enable significant service improvements for tenants and additional funding to achieve the Decent Homes Standards for which a programme of delivery is well under way.

Successful completion of the transfer enabled the Council to focus its full attention on its strategic housing role, to ensure that those in need have an opportunity to access good quality, affordable housing in a safe environment.

In developing our housing strategy, the Council involves our local community, partners and other agencies in developing the local priorities that link to regional and national priorities. The Council recognise that it cannot 'deliver the goods' in isolation and that partnership working is crucial to our success.

The Council has arrived at four key housing priorities that have been ranked in the order identified from our consultation process and are focused on balancing the housing market, meeting housing needs and help to contribute to improving the social and economic infrastructure of the District.

The four housing priorities are:-

- **Priority 1 – Addressing the Shortage of Affordable Housing**
 - Focusing on achieving a well balanced housing market and a consistent and appropriate supply of affordable housing to meet urban and rural needs, making best use of planning powers and the resources available
- **Priority 2 – Improving the Quality and Availability of Private Sector Housing**
 - To achieve sustained decent housing conditions, a strong, well managed private rented sector, improved energy efficiency of domestic homes and increased availability and accessibility of privately rented accommodation offering people more choice.
- **Priority 3 – Addressing Homelessness**
 - Promoting a continued co-ordinated approach to the ongoing provision of early intervention preventative and support services for the homeless and an improved supply of permanent accommodation to reduce the use of temporary accommodation. Increased access to privately rented housing for the homeless is targeted to help achieve this and to maintain our minimal use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation.
- **Priority 4 – Assisting Vulnerable Groups to Live Independently**
 - Aimed at enabling people who are vulnerable through age, disability or life experience to live independently, within the community. Promotion of healthy, safe and independent living through improved housing conditions, home safety & security checks and by creating the right environment through improvements and adaptations and linked action to enable older people to be discharged from hospital more rapidly through more efficient home adaptation.

The Council's housing strategy embraces planning and delivering homes for the whole community through strong partnership working in assessing needs, integrating housing with economic development, building relationships with providers and further engaging the local community in plans for new development. Key elements include a well managed private rented sector which is a fundamental part of meeting housing needs, the enforcement of standards in housing, in particular houses in multiple occupation, and support and encouragement to private landlords in increasing the supply and choice in housing.

Implementation of the strategy has been strengthened through the review of the Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) with whom the council works and the formalisation of a Preferred RSL Partnership within which BDHT/West Mercia are identified as the Councils Principal RSL partners.

The Council was awarded Government Grant of £217k for the financial year 2006/07 and £162k for 2007/08 from the Regional Housing Capital Pot under the 'safety net'

arrangements for use on a range of schemes that support Private sector Housing improvements, energy efficiency work and affordable housing schemes.

The Capital Programme for 2008 to 2011, and the current financial year 2008/09, includes various new housing schemes totalling some £0.5m, and the completion of several schemes commenced in 2007/08, funded from Section 106 Planning agreement resources, general capital receipts and 'ring fenced' housing capital receipts, consisting of:-

- Retained Housing (Houndsfield Lane Caravan Site);
- Homeless Hostels Re-modelling schemes) (completion of 2007/08 scheme);
- Affordable Housing Schemes (Grant funding of schemes);
- Extra Care Sheltered Housing (Gilbert Court) (completion of 2007/08 scheme).

The Capital Programme also includes the following grants which are financed by a combination of Government grants and general capital receipts:-

- Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's);
- Discretionary Home Repair Assistance & Housing Renewal Grants.

See the Capital Programme shown at **Appendix 3**.

Future Housing Investment Strategy

Following the sale of the housing stock and having transferred most of its diminishing land holdings to Registered Social Landlord's (RSL's) for the development of affordable housing, the Council is faced with a prospect of considerably reduced capital receipts in future years.

The Council's planning moratoria for private development and its policy of favouring 'on site' provision' in preference to accepting commuted sums indicate that future capital receipts from Section 106 Planning agreements, which has been utilised to finance affordable housing schemes, is likely to decline.

There is an ongoing increase in demand for assistance through Disabled Facilities Grants which is partly financed by Government grants and the Council is therefore investigating schemes that in time become self funding or that explore new sources of financing. The Council has increased capital resources for the allocation of discretionary private sector housing renewal grants and has developed a repayment condition to these grants linked to fluctuations in property values, which will enable an element of future recycling of the investment.

The Council has reviewed its investment priorities and continues to fund a Housing Capital Programme that includes a programme of allocating development grant to enable RSL's to provide affordable housing across the range of tenures (rented, shared ownership and low cost housing). The programme reflects the identified housing needs of the district which indicates that up to one third of housing need can be met through intermediate housing options.

In addition to the use of Section 106 commuted sums, the Council has made a longer term partnership commitment with BDHT to invest one million pounds of its capital receipts into social housing through the joint funding of an extra care housing scheme in Bromsgrove.

The BDHT / West Mercia partnership works closely with the Council upon the development of affordable housing and assists with schemes such as the replacement of hostel accommodation with higher quality self contained dwellings from their housing stock for use by homeless people.

This financial strategy has the benefit of impacting upon all four of the Councils housing priorities:

- **Priority 1 – Affordable Housing**
 - By potentially releasing the hostel sites as assets for sale or re investment in the provision of additional affordable housing;
 - By potentially releasing four sites on which additional affordable housing could be built;
 - By contributing funding towards the development of 27 additional dwellings within the proposed Extra Care Housing Scheme;
 - By enabling move on from under occupied family dwellings.
- **Priority 2 – Private Housing**
 - By enabling low cost and shared ownership housing options to be provided within the proposed Extra Care Scheme.
- **Priority 3 – Homelessness**
 - By enabling the phased replacement of hostel accommodation for the homeless with self contained dwellings of a higher standard dispersed in the community.
- **Priority 4 – By assisting Vulnerable groups to live independently**
 - By joint funding the provision of 27 additional units of extra care housing and enabling the re-modelling of 65 existing dwellings to the higher extra care standard.

Recycling of Capital Grants

The Council intend to recycle our grant following the same model as the Housing Corporation's proposed operation of recycled capital grant. So where the Council assists an RSL with grant towards affordable housing development, it is made a condition that a proportion of any future capital receipt from the sale of a property, or 'staircasing' to a greater proportion of ownership, is recovered by the authority for re-investment in affordable housing.

Culture and Community Services Strategy

Sport and active recreation have long been recognised as an important part of modern life, which can provide a contribution to healthy communities, building safe, strong & sustainable communities, economic vitality & workforce development and meeting the needs of children & young people.

Sport, active recreation and art are a major influence on people's lives in terms of what they watch, their lifestyle choices and even what they wear. It impacts on virtually every level of our local community and plays a vital role in defining the life/identity of local residents.

Culture & Community Services currently provides/operates the following services for local residents, the Dolphin centre, Haybridge sports centre, Spadesbourne suite, sports & art development, parks, play areas, open spaces, fairs, cemeteries, tourist information centre, CCTV, Lifeline and the management of the Community Safety Partnership.

As part of the corporate improvement plan a large number of changes have occurred within the Council to allow it to deliver its corporate objective and priorities.

The creation of the Culture and Community Services department which brought together the former Leisure Services department, Community Safety, CCTV and the Lifeline operation, has allowed the service to focus it's planning, implementation and delivery of services to address the corporate objective 03 Sense of Community & Well Being and its priority of Sense of Community, and the C02 objective of Improvement and It's priority of Customer Service by creating individual service and team improvement plans and focusing attention on the key elements of service delivery.

The community safety, sports & arts development teams will be focusing on the Council's values of Leadership and Partnership working by endeavouring to enhance their current work and by responding the needs of the community. The sports, parks & events teams will be focusing their attention on the value of Equality and be looking to expand the number of community events/activities we directly deliver or facilitate across the district for all local residents.

The aim of the Council is to ensure that there is a suitable mix of cultural and leisure activities and opportunities which are accessible to all sections of the community including arts, parks and open spaces, play areas, and sports facilities and opportunities.

Service Aims

Culture & Community Services (C&CS) – Are committed to providing high quality, cost effective and efficient services which meet the needs of the community and contribute to the delivery of the Council Plan, and its objectives and priorities.

These values are supported by the individual services areas vision statement as follows:

Sports Services - To provide high quality sport and active recreation opportunities throughout the District that are accessible to everyone by removing social and financial barriers to participation, promoting continuous improvement, originality and excellence in all that we do.

Parks and Community Services - To provide a diverse range of parks, open spaces, play and community events that meet the needs of the local residents and promote a sense of community & well being.

Community Safety - To make the community feel safe, help the vulnerable & those at risk by working with and influencing partner organisations to meet the aims of the Community Safety Partnership and Bromsgrove District Council.

We are committed to promoting and developing equality and diversity, both within our work programmes and in our work with partner organisations.

To achieve equality and diversity we need to:

- Take account of the needs of different groups or communities within any given priority group;
- Adopt the recommended practices of equal opportunities and managing diversity;
- Address issues of fairness in the workplace and the way in which services are allocated and delivered;
- Acknowledge and respect diversity.

External Links - to establish and contribute to partnerships including the Local Strategic Partnership, which can provide a contribution to:

- Improving the health of the local community;
- Build safe, strong & sustainable communities;
- Promote economic vitality & workforce development; and
- Meet the needs of children, young people & the vulnerable.

Raising the Profile - to promote Bromsgrove, the Council and Culture & Community services to everyone who lives, works, visits or attends school or college in the district by providing high quality services which meet the needs of local residents.

Objectives for 2008/09

As part of the corporate business planning and the service level team planning process a number of key deliverables for 2008 / 2009 including the following items that may impact upon future capital programmes: -

- Increase participation in sport, leisure, active recreation & culture activities;

APPENDIX 5

- Review the current events/activity programmes operated by the service and look to expand the range of events in line with the Council Plan;
- Implement the CCTV improvement action plan and camera replacement programme, to enhance service delivery;
- Ensure that the sports centres transfer is undertaken and that the trust that is established effective and efficient.
- Develop a sports strategy for Bromsgrove in consultation with partners.
- Address anti-social behaviour and fear of crime with in the district.
- Prepare a response to the PPG17 audit of the District.

The capital programme for 2008 – 2011 contains a number of key projects for Culture and Community Services including:-

- Enhancement of a number of children's play areas across the district;
- Provision of a new sports facilities/pitches across the district;
- Improvements to the Council allotment provision.
- Upgrading of the CCTV systems.

Future years schemes are likely to include: -

- Additional sport facilities with in the District;
- Additional/replacement play facilities across the District

Community Safety

Community Safety is part of Culture and Community Services Department and Its main focus is via Bromsgrove Community Safety Partnership which was formed in 1998 as a result of the Crime and Disorder Act of 1998. It has a statutory duty to improve community safety in Bromsgrove District.

The Partnership works through a three year strategy, the current one of which runs from April 2005 to March 2008. It is made up of statutory partners:-

- West Mercia Police;
- Fire & Rescue Service;
- Redditch & Bromsgrove Primary Care Trust;
- Worcestershire County Council; and
- Bromsgrove District Council;
- Other partners including representatives from the Voluntary Sector and BEM Group.

Community Safety capital schemes are mainly for the provision/replacement of Closed Circuit Television systems (CCTV) for which the Council has received Government Home Office capital grants in previous years. Schemes recently completed include CCTV systems at Wythall and Alvechurch railway stations, with additional funding from Central Trains, Hagley Playing Fields, with additional funding from Hagley Parish Council and Wythall and Drakes Cross scheme funded from the Council's capital resources.

There are currently five priorities for action in the current three year Strategy:-

- Reducing comparator crime in seven key areas by 17.5% during next three years;
- Reduce the Fear of Crime and Anti Social Behaviour to ensure Bromsgrove is safe place to live and work;
- Achieve Cleaner, Greener and Safer Public Spaces;
- Reduce the harm of Drugs & Alcohol;
- Realise the potential of our Young People.

Street Scene & Waste Management Strategy

The department delivers the following services to a population of 91,600 people and 37,647 households (Council Tax Register) within Bromsgrove:-

- Refuse collection;
- Recycling collections;
- Bulky Waste service;
- Trade Waste service;
- Street Cleansing;
- Abandoned vehicles;
- Fly-tipping;
- Cesspool emptying service;
- Highways and general works team;
- Grounds Maintenance;
- Fleet Management;
- Garage services;
- Waste policy and promotions;
- Business Support unit;
- Parking Operations;
- Transportation issues;
- Street furniture and Naming;
- Land Drainage/watercourses; and
- Concessionary Fares.

Approx 140 employees are employed by the Department to deliver a minimum of 7 million customer interactions per year through the above services.

The Depot has suffered over the last 10 years from significant underinvestment. The Council has however invested heavily in its refuse and recycling fleet financed mainly through Government grant funding, and within the last year its street cleansing fleet. Operational practices have now been reviewed and in general are improving against progressive and high performing Council.

A capital programme for the Depot has been developed which will ensure that there are sufficient funds for vehicle replacements in future year. A well-managed fleet is fundamental to the delivery of effective services.

Whilst the life expectancy of the fleet is known at the time of purchase the Council has failed in the past to schedule a robust renewals programme. The proposed Capital Programme however now introduces a schedule of vehicle replacement over a 10 year period which will ensure that the department does not deteriorate into a situation where vehicles become dilapidated shabby and reflecting a poor Council image. This failing of earlier years has been recognised and a new approach has been adopted.

Resources Strategy

Support Services

The Council's support services comprise the following departments:-

- E-Government & Customer Services;
- Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services;
- Financial Services.
- Human Resources & Organisational Development;

Prior to 2005/06 the Council invested insufficient capital resources into the support services particularly in relation to departmental IT computer systems where existing systems were either out of date or non-existent with reliance having to be placed on manual effort.

This was recognised in the financial year 2005/06 which saw the commencement of the £1.8m IT Infrastructure scheme which delivered a sound platform to enable the Council to introduce modern efficient working practices thereby delivering potential savings. This was followed in 2006/07 by commencement of the £6.3m Spatial IT project (see E-Government & Customer Services below for further details) and other smaller schemes.

Other new IT developments include a case management system for Legal section, a queue management system at the Customer Services Centre, and replacement of desktop printers at the Council House and Depot. It is also planned to acquire a new Human Resources Information and Management System.

A Purchase Order Payments IT system (POPS) has been introduced and is currently being rolled out across the Council which is capable of dealing with commitment accounting, electronic purchasing, and will streamline the procurement/creditor payments processes and be a step on the way towards the paperless office. The Radius Cash Receipting/Income system has also been upgraded.

E-Government & Customer Services

Following the end of the Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) initiative in 2005 the Council's ICT function continues to play a central role in delivering modern, fit for purpose public services.

It is essential that the ICT function supports business activity across the Council by installing and implementing new systems. In turn this will lead to new ways of working and delivering services to our customers.

It is recognised that further substantial capital investments are necessary to enhance and modernise the Council's ICT resources and new schemes have been developed and included in the latest Capital Programme.

The estimated capital expenditure on IT related schemes in 2008 – 2011 is £5.8m.

Ongoing schemes continuing into 2008 – 2011 include:

The Spatial Project

A modernising programme involving the procurement of new integrated software to enable the transformation of service delivery and the achievement of full compliance with national E-Government outcomes.

The project covers how we will organise our corporate datasets to give the Council clean, accurate and usable data that will form the cornerstone of developing our services. We are proposing radical transformation that will affect all service areas and enhance all points of delivery to our citizens.

General IT Upgrades

A rolling corporate programme of ICT desktop replacement.

New Bids for 2008 – 2011 include:

High Priority

Councillors Remote Access

Standardise Councillors ICT equipment to enable a more efficient service and remote support capability.

Increase Bandwidth for Internet Link

A scheme to provide an increase in the available internet bandwidth. This will speed up access for current remote and home workers such as Councillors and staff. It will also provide more capacity to increase the numbers of remote workers.

Medium/Low Priority

IP Telephony

This would enable 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 would also be available. Staff could listen to e-mails over the telephone.

Vault Storage System

A system to facilitate the archiving of corporate documents and email.

For 2008 - 2011 the Council has approved the high priority schemes only.

Project Initiation Document 2008 – 2011

Bids for Capital Resources in the 2008 – 2011 Capital Programme

1 Purpose

The purpose of the Project Initiation Document (PID) is to provide the detailed financial appraisal for the recommended option for a new capital project, which has already received approval and been included in the Capital Programme.

Funds will only be released after approval by the Head of Financial Services and the Portfolio Holder for Finance after the receipt of a robust financial appraisal/business case for the project.

Prepared by:

Date:

2 Details of Proposed Capital Scheme

Title of Scheme:	Start Year:
-------------------------	--------------------

3 Background

Briefly provide the reason for this project, Council requirements, meeting Council aims etc.

3.1 Definition

Briefly state what the project is and what it will deliver.

3.2 Current Position

Investigation has found the current position to be (Summary and Bullet points):

Current position:

The deficiencies are (Summary and Bullet Points):

Deficiencies:

The consequential risks arising from these deficiencies are (Summary and Bullet Points):

Consequential risks:

4 The Proposal

This PID considers (enter number of) options: (alternatives considered including doing nothing).

List option 1 – (one line description only)

List option 2 – (one line description only)

Etc.

Options Considered:

4.1 Costs

Brief details (very summarised) of each options costs (possibly estimated costs):

Cost of Options Considered:

Option recommended and reason:

Recommended Option:

4.2 Value for Money

Explain how the recommended option achieves Value for Money (please include forecast improved performance targets and/or customer service measures where appropriate) and attach copies of your Option Appraisals:

--

4.3 Service Business Plan

Explain how the recommended option achieves the Objectives of your Departmental Business Plan:

--

4.4 Support for the proposal

The key drivers in developing this recommendation are

Driver	Consideration

4.5 Overview of the proposal

Brief details with no more than 4 bullet points:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4.
--

5. Cash Flow of Proposed Scheme

Element	Cash Flow £'000			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Contract Payments Equipment Consultants Fees In-house fees Allowance for support services recharges for the scheme Other costs (specify)				
Total Capital Cost	0	0	0	0
Additional Income (describe) This should include the possibility for matched funding (e.g. SRB, ERDF, Co-Financing etc.)				
Total Capital Income	0	0	0	0
Net Capital Cost	0	0	0	0

6. Asset Management

The number of years useful life for the capital asset for depreciation purposes	Years
Estimated residual value of the asset at the end of its useful life	£0

7. Revenue Impact of Proposed Scheme

Element	Cost £'000			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Ongoing
Employee Costs (describe purpose) (Do not include Internal Design / Supervision Costs) Maintenance Costs Loss of interest on capital expenditure @ 5.00% of total scheme Other Costs (describe purpose)				
Total Revenue Cost				
Income / Savings (describe)				
Total Revenue Income / Savings				
Net Revenue Impact				

8. The 'Council Plan'

The 'Council Plan' approved by Executive Cabinet sets out the following Vision, Objectives and Priorities for the Council which are underpinned by two 'strap lines' for the public and for staff ('Building Pride' & 'Zero to Hero'). These criteria will be used for considering bids for Capital resources in the Capital Programme from 2007/08.

9. Justification

In order for funds to be released the bid for capital resources must demonstrate a measurable return on investment. Briefly complete the appropriate section(s) below in support of your bid. (Bullet Points) All sections are to be completed, for objectives which do not apply enter 'Not Applicable'.

10. Vision

“Working together to build a district where people are proud to live and work, through community leadership and excellent services”

How will the funds requested be used to help the Council achieve its Vision?

11. Council Objectives

How will the funds requested be used to help the Council achieve its Objectives (enter details for each relevant priority)?

1. Regeneration

Priority – Town Centre

Priority – Housing

Regeneration:

2. Improvement

Priority – Customer Services

Improvement:

3. Sense of Community and Well Being

Priority – Sense of Community

Sense of Community and Well Being:

4. Environment

Priority – Clean Streets & Recycling

Environment:

12. Values

How will the funds requested be used to help the Council achieve its Values?

1. Leadership
2. Partnerships
3. Customer First
4. Equality

Values:

13. Performance Improvement

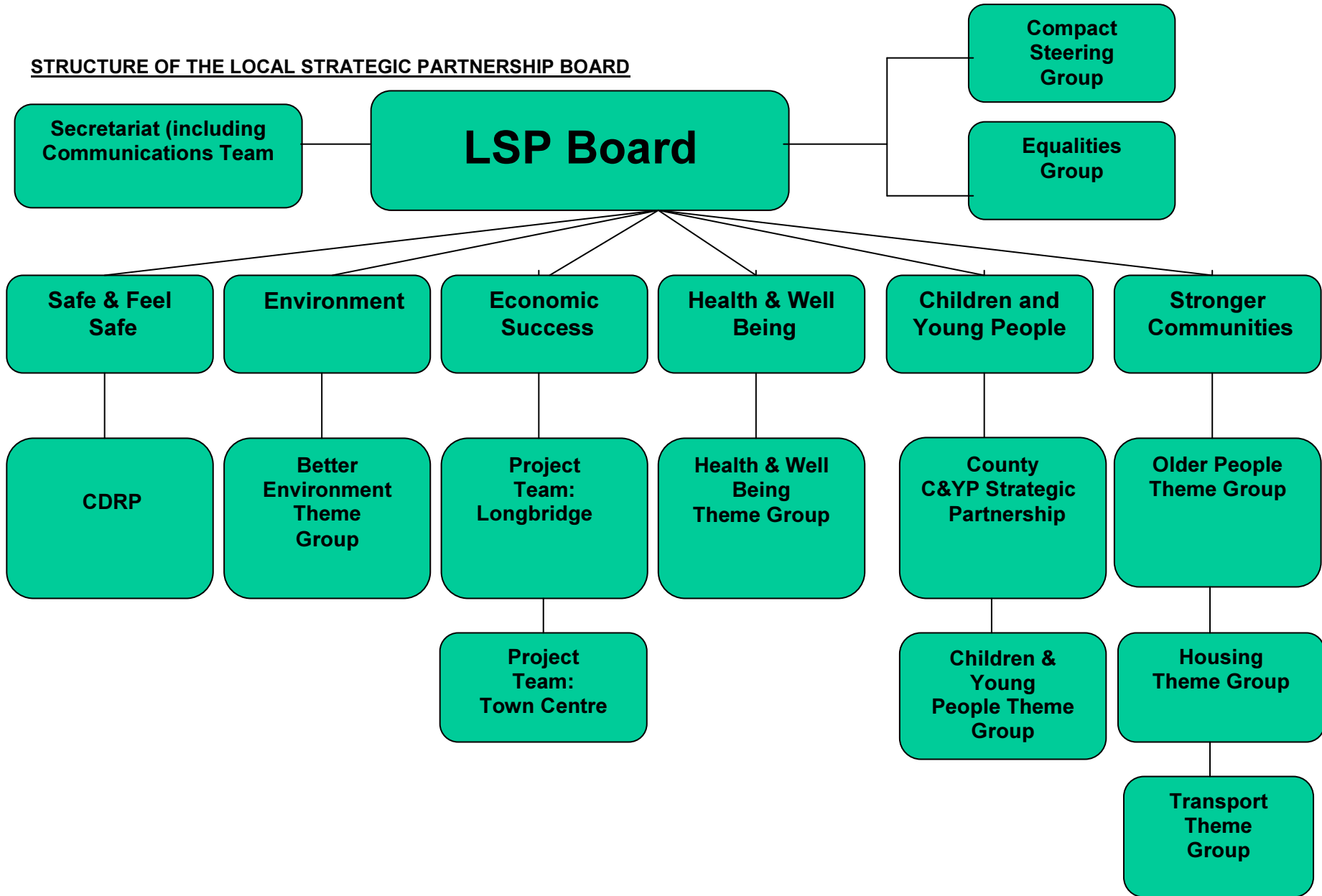
How will this investment help to improve performance? Please list the PI's that will be affected and the expected change.

PI's:

14. Asset savings

Will this investment generate asset savings e.g. being able to dispose of an asset as a result of this investment?

STRUCTURE OF THE LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD



This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5TH MARCH 2008

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2008-09 TO 2010-11

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

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 A strategy statement for the treasury management and investments in relation to Bromsgrove District Council to comply with the Local Government Act 2003 and to ensure the Council demonstrates accountability and effectiveness in the management of its funds .

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The strategy and prudential indicators shown at Appendix A and B, be approved and adopted.
- 2.2 That the Council be recommended to set the Authorised Limit for borrowing at £6,000,000 as required by CIPFA (this is the same as the Affordable Borrowing Limit as required by Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003.)
- 2.3 That the Council be recommended to approve the maximum level of investment to be held within each organisation (i.e. bank or building society) as detailed at £3m.

3. BACKGROUND

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services (the "CIPFA TM Code") requires local authorities to set Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for borrowing each financial year.

In addition the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to 'have regard to the Prudential Code and to set Prudential Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Council's capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

- 3.3 CIPFA has defined Treasury Management as:

"the management of the organisation's cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."

3.4 The Council regards the successful identification, monitoring and control of risk to be the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. Treasury management risks are identified in the Council's approved Treasury Management Practices and include:

- Liquidity Risk (Adequate cash resources)
- Market or Interest Rate Risk Fluctuations in the value of investments).
- Inflation Risks (Exposure to inflation)
- Credit and Counterparty Risk (Security of Investments)
- Refinancing Risks (Impact of debt maturing in future years).
- Legal & Regulatory Risk (Compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements).

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The financial implications are contained within the body of the strategy statement at Appendix A.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This is a statutory report under the Local Government Act 2003.

6. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

6.1 Approval of this strategy statement will ensure that the Council invests its resources within a robust and effective framework to deliver a maximum return on investments within a secure environment.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

- *Poor Use of Resources scoring*
- *Poor investment return*
- *Loss of capital due to investing with inappropriate organisations*

7.2 These risks are being managed as follows:

- Poor Use of Resources scoring

Risk Register: *Corporate*

Key Objective Ref No: *1*

Key Objective: *Effective Financial Management*

7.3 The risks associated with the delivery of maximum return within a secure environment are not currently identified in the risk register. This has been highlighted within a recent internal audit report and the risks and current controls will be included in the update financial services risk register.

7.4 Current controls to reduce the risk of loss of capital and poor return on investment include:

- Monthly reports from investment managers on performance of funds
- Quarterly reporting to Performance Management Board and Cabinet of financial position on investments
- Monthly updates from treasury advisors in respect of level of status for organisations we invest with
- Daily monitoring by internal officers of banking arrangements and cash flow implications

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The effective management of treasury operations will ensure that the management of the public funds is monitored and reviewed in a complaint way to satisfy the public of the use of their financial resources.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None as a direct result of this strategy

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The robust framework that is in place to ensure investments maximise return within a secure environment support the demonstration that the Council is providing value for money is the use of its funds available.

11. 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

12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	No
------------------	-----------

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

13. WARDS AFFECTED

All wards

CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Jayne Pickering
E Mail: j.pickering@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881207

Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2008-09 to 2010-11

Contents

1. Background
2. The Treasury Position : estimates for 31/3/2008 and following financial years
3. Outlook for Interest Rates
4. Borrowing Requirement and Strategy
5. Investment Policy and Strategy
6. Balanced Budget Requirement
7. MRP Statement
8. Reporting
9. Other Items : CIPFA's review of the Prudential Code

Appendices

- A. Prudential Indicators
- B. Interest Rate Outlook
- C. Specified and Non Specified Investments for use by the Council

1. **Background**

1.1 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services (the "CIPFA TM Code") requires local authorities to set the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for borrowing each financial year.

1.2 CIPFA has defined Treasury Management as:
"the management of the organisation's cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."

1.3 The Council regards the successful identification, monitoring and control of risk to be the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. Treasury management risks are identified in the Council's approved Treasury Management Practices; the main risks to the Council's treasury activities are:

- Liquidity Risk (Inadequate cash resources)
- Market or Interest Rate Risk (Fluctuations in interest rate levels and thereby in the value of investments).
- Inflation Risks (Exposure to inflation)
- Credit and Counterparty Risk (Security of Investments)
- Refinancing Risks (Impact of debt maturing in future years).
- Legal & Regulatory Risk (i.e. non-compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements, risk of fraud).

1.4 The strategy also takes into account the outlook for interest rates, the Council's current treasury position and its approved Prudential Indicators (attached as Appendix A). The PIs relevant to the treasury management strategy are set out below:

PI No.		2007-08 Approved	2008-09 Estimate	2009-10 Estimate	2010-11 Estimate
6	Authorised Limit for External Debt	£6m	£6m	£6m	£6m
7	Operational Boundary for External Debt	£5m	£5m	£5m	£5m
9	Upper Limit for Fixed Interest Rate Exposure	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %
10	Upper Limit for Variable Rate Exposure	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %
12	Upper Limit for total principal sums invested over 364 days	£25m	£16m	£10m	£5m

11	Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing :	Lower Limit	Upper Limit %
	under 12 months	0%	100%
	12 months and within 24 months	0%	100%
	24 months and within 5 years	0%	100%
	5 years and within 10 years	0%	100%
	10 years and above	0%	100%

1.5 This TMSS also incorporates the Council's Investment Strategy.

2. The Treasury Position

2.1 The estimated treasury position is:

	31/12/2007	31/3/2008 Estimated	2008/09 Estimated Average
	£m	£m	£m
Total external debt	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total Investments	£29.0	£17m	£8.4m

2.3 The balance as at 31/12/2007 includes cash-flow related investments. The investment balance at 31/3/2008 and the average for FY 2008/09 is predicated on existing investments being reduced by the application of capital receipts for the funding for approved capital schemes in the financial year.

23 The estimate for interest receipts in 2008/09 is £426k.

3. Outlook for Interest Rates

3.1 The economic interest rate outlook provided by the Council's treasury advisor, Arlingclose Ltd, is attached at Appendix B. It is summarised below.

3.2 UK : The global credit crunch impacts on UK finance and business services sector; weakness spreads to housing and ultimately the consumer. UK housing market enters a period of considerable weakness. Rising repossession and ensuing nervousness lead to a consumer slowdown.

The Bank of England's February Inflation Report projects an initial marked and more persistent slowdown in growth. Inflation remains resilient from elevated food prices, fuel and transport costs and will test the Bank's upper CPI limit of 3%.

The Bank's Monetary Policy Committee, balancing deteriorating growth prospects with elevated inflation, will adopt a cautious approach and deliver two further 0.25% interest rate cuts taking the Bank Rate to 4.75% .

UK Bank Rate at quarter end %	Mar 2008	Jun 2008	Sep 2008	Dec 2008	Mar 2009	Jun 2009	Sep 2009	Dec 2009	Mar 2010
Central case	5.25	5.00	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	5.00

3.3 US / Europe :

- The US Federal Reserve will supplement the 2.25% rate cuts already delivered as insurance against a US recession.
- European rates remain on hold at 4%. The ECB moves to a neutral stance as global slowdown becomes more real but inflation is stubborn and economic fundamentals remain strong.

4. Borrowing Requirement and Strategy

- 4.1 The Council's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by reference to its Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) – see Appendix A. The CFR will determine the Council's requirement to make a Minimum Revenue Provision for Debt Redemption (MRP) from within its Revenue budget.

No. 3	Capital Financing Requirement	31/3/08	31/3/09	31/3/10	31/3/11
		Estimate £'000	Estimate £'000	Estimate £'000	Estimate £'000
	General Fund CFR	24	24	24	192
	Total CFR	24	24	24	192

- 4.2 Over the past 5 years the Council had not entered into any long-term borrowing arrangements due to the significant capital receipts generated. However, the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2008/09 to 2010/11 estimates that utilisation of capital receipts will decrease by 2010/11 the Council's balance of capital receipts to a level which will result in the Council looking to borrow to fund future capital programmes. Capital expenditure not financed from Capital Receipts, Capital Grants and Contributions, Revenue or Reserves will produce an increase in the CFR (the underlying need to borrow) and may in turn produce an increased requirement to charge MRP in the Revenue Account.
- 4.3 Physical borrowing may be greater or less than the CFR. When borrowing the Council will aim for maximum control over its borrowing activities as well as flexibility on its loans portfolio and will keep under review the options it has in borrowing from the PWLB, the market and other sources.
- 4.4 The Council will adopt a prudent and pragmatic approach consistent with the Council's Prudential Indicators to minimise borrowing costs without compromising longer-term stability of the portfolio. Actual borrowing undertaken and the timing will depend on capital expenditure levels, interest rate forecasts and market conditions during the year. The Council will be advised by Arlingclose of the specific timing of borrowing.
- 4.5 The Council will undertake a financial options appraisal process to establish how it has arrived at its 'value for money' judgement in the use of resources.

5. Investment Policy and Strategy

Background

- 5.1 Guidance from the then ODPM (now DCLG) on Local Government Investments in England requires, similarly, that an Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) be set. The Guidance permits the TMSS and the AIS to be combined into one document.

Investment Policy

- 5.2 The Council's general policy objective is to invest its surplus funds prudently. The Council's investment priorities are:
- security of the invested capital;

- liquidity of the invested capital;
- an optimum yield which is commensurate with security and liquidity.

The speculative procedure of borrowing purely in order to invest is unlawful.

- 5.3 Investments are categorised as ‘Specified’ or ‘Non Specified’ investments based on the criteria in the ODPM Guidance. Potential instruments for the Council’s use within its investment strategy are contained in Appendix C.
- 5.4 The Council will maintain a counterparty list based on its criteria and monitor and update the credit standing of the institutions on a regular basis. This assessment may include credit ratings, alternative assessments of credit strength, and other information.
- 5.5 The Council’s estimated levels of investments are set out in 2.1 of this TMSS.

Investment Strategy

- 5.6 Based on the forward projections for its Balances, Reserves and Provisions available for investment and its budgeted income requirement, the Council will evaluate and consider investment opportunities to earn an optimum return, to build in consistency of return over the medium term to the extent practicable, and to diversify and manage risk.

The Head of Financial Services, under delegated powers, will undertake the most appropriate form of investments in keeping with the investment objectives, income and risk management requirements and Prudential Indicators. Decisions taken on the core investment portfolio will be reported to the Cabinet meeting.

5.7 Investments managed in-house

- 5.7.1 The Council’s existing investments include the monies previously managed by Invesco Asset Management. The in-house investments at the time of determining this strategy comprise term deposits with banks and building societies with maturities under 1 year, and call accounts which are used to maintain liquidity. Shorter term investments will continue to be made with reference to cashflow as well as the outlook for the UK Bank Rate and prevailing money market rates and may also include the use of AAA-rated Money Market Funds.

- 5.7.2 Longer-term investments : A proportion of the Council’s in-house core balances can be invested with a longer-term strategic focus, within the limits the Council has set for Non-Specified Investment. As interest rates are forecast to fall in 2008-09, the Council may consider investing a proportion of its in-house managed funds for periods longer than 1 year in order to protect against falling interest rates and to build in stability of investment return against the budget. Fixed longer-term investments will be made with due regard to projected reduction in the level of capital receipts as these are used to finance the capital programme and the limits set for longer term investments in Appendix C of this TMSS.

- 5.7.3 The mix of long- and short-term investments with staggered maturities will enable the Council to maintain an appropriate level of liquidity and also mitigate re-investment risk (the risk that a large proportion of maturing investments are reinvested when interest rates are at a cyclical low). The Council will consider investing in :

- Term deposits with maturities in excess of 1 year, including callable deposits where appropriate.
- Bonds issued by AAA-rated Multilateral Development Banks (supranational banks such as the European Investment Bank, the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development etc).

5.7.4 The associated increase in credit risk from a longer-term investment is managed by using counterparties meeting the Council's longer-term credit criteria, ie those with a minimum long-term rating of AA- (AA minus) or equivalent.

5.7.5 Fixed longer-term investments will

- have regard to projected reduction in the level of capital receipts as these are used to finance the capital programme
- be within the limits set for longer term investments in Appendix C of this TMSS
- be made with advice from Arlingclose.

5.8 Investments managed externally

Funds managed on a segregated basis

5.8.1 The Council's funds are also managed on a discretionary basis by HSBC. The fund's remit allows the managers scope to add value through the use of investments contained in Appendix C and within the parameters and guidelines set for the Council's fund. Revised parameters for HSBC are being discussed with HSBC for a likely introduction on 01/4/08 to lower market risk and enhance stability of return on the Council's portfolio. This is particularly important as the Council's investment balances reduce in forthcoming financial years as a result of the financing of the capital programme from capital receipts.

5.8.2 HSBC's will report monthly. The manager's performance will be monitored quarterly and measured against the benchmark set for the fund, prevailing economic conditions and investment opportunities.

Collective Investment Schemes (Pooled Funds):

5.8.3 The Council will explore with Arlingclose the investments in Pooled Funds due to the continuing importance of investment returns in the Council's overall finances as well as a recognition that investment returns purely from cash or near cash instruments will be lower in the future.

5.8.4 Pooled funds are liquid enabling units in the fund to be sold at short notice. Using pooled funds will enable the Council to diversify the assets and the underlying risk in the investment portfolio and provide the potential for enhanced returns. It will enable the Council to establish relatively small exposures (£1m - £2m upwards) in appropriate asset classes including those which, if used within segregated funds management mandates, would constitute capital expenditure.

5.9 All investment activity will comply with the accounting requirements of the local authority SoRP.

6. Balanced Budget Requirement :

- 6.1 The Council complies with the provisions of S32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to set a balanced budget.

7. Annual MRP Statement

- 7.1 Draft Regulations produced by the Department of Communities and Local Government include draft consultation Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision issued by the Secretary of State under section 21(1A) of the Local Government Act 2003. This Guidance includes a recommendation that before the start of each financial year a local authority prepares a statement of its policy on making MRP in respect of that financial year and submits it to full council. The statement should indicate which of the four options set out in the Guidance are to be followed in the financial year.

The four options available are set out below:

Option 1: Regulatory Method

Option 2: CFR Method

Option 3: Asset Life Method

Option 4: Depreciation Method

The Council will apply Option 1 in respect of supported capital expenditure and Option 3 or Option 4 in respect of unsupported capital expenditure.

8 Reporting on the Treasury Outturn

- 8.1 The Head of Financial Services will report on treasury management activity / performance as follows :
- (a) Investment income and return will be monitored and reported on quarterly. The report to members on investment income will be received as part of the quarterly financial and performance monitoring reports to the Performance Management Board and Cabinet.
 - (b) The Council will produce an outturn report on its treasury activity no later than 30th September after the financial year end.

9. Other items

CIPFA review of the Prudential Code.

- 9.1 CIPFA will be undertaking a review of the implementation and ongoing use of the Prudential Code to assess whether there are improvements that could and should be made. A discussion paper was circulated to local authorities in January 2008 setting out a commentary on the experience of the first years of the Prudential Code and asking questions about the application of the Code in practice. The closing date for responses to the consultation will be 31 March 2008.
- 9.2 CIPFA will then publish a response to the consultation during May 2008 which will summarise the views received and set out the next steps. Due to the statutory nature of the Prudential Code any significant revision to the Code will require a rigorous process of consultation, validation and approval.

Prudential Indicators FY 2008-09 to FY 2010-11

1 Background:

There is a requirement under the Local Government Act 2003 for local authorities to have regard to Cipfa's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the "Cipfa Prudential Code") when setting and reviewing their Prudential Indicators. It should be noted that CIPFA will be undertaking a review of the Code in 2008.

2. Estimates of Capital Expenditure:

- 2.1 This indicator is set to ensure that the level of proposed capital expenditure remains within sustainable limits and, in particular, to consider the impact on Council Tax.

No. 1	Capital Expenditure	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
		£'000	Estimate £'000	Estimate £'000	Estimate £'000
	General Fund	8,240	8,351	1,655	701
	Total	8,240	8,351	1,655	701

- 2.2 Capital expenditure will be financed as follows:

Capital Financing	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
	£'000s	Estimate £'000	Estimate £'000	Estimate £'000
Capital Receipts	6,114	7,510	1,374	252
Capital Grants	1,008	481	281	281
Capital Contributions	1,118	360	0	0
Revenue Contributions	0	0	0	0
Borrowing	0	0	0	168
Total	8,240	8,351	1,655	701

- 2.3 The estimates are as per the **Capital Programme 2007/08 to 2010/11 Amended** to take account of use of capital receipts per the Cabinet Report of 5/12/2007. The element to be financed from borrowing in 2010/11 impacts on the movement in the Capital Financing Requirement.

3. Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream:

- 3.1 This is an indicator of affordability and highlights the revenue implication of existing and proposed capital expenditure on investment income and is based on the net revenue stream and interest and investment income as per the Cabinet report of 5/12/07.

No. 2	Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2007-08 Estimate	2008-09 Estimate	2009-10 Estimate	2010-11 Estimate
	General Fund	-6.85%	-3.74%	-1.22%	0.00%

Note: this ratio is a negative number as the Council has a net investment position.

4. Capital Financing Requirement:

- 4.1 The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) measures the Council's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose. The calculation of the CFR is taken from the

amounts held in the Balance Sheet relating to capital expenditure and its financing. It is an aggregation of the amounts shown for Fixed and Intangible assets, the Fixed Asset Revaluation Reserve, the Capital Adjustment Account, Government Grants Deferred and any other balances treated as capital expenditure.

No. 3	Capital Financing Requirement	31/3/08	31/3/09	31/3/10	31/3/11
		Estimate £'000	Estimate £'000	Estimate £'000	Estimate £'000
	General Fund CFR	24	24	24	192
	Total CFR	24	24	24	192

4.2 In order to ensure that over the medium term net borrowing will only be for a capital purpose, the Council should make sure that net external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the Capital Financing Requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years.

4.3 The Head of Financial Services reports that this Council had no difficulty meeting this requirement in 2006-07 nor are difficulties envisaged for the current or future financial years.

5 Actual External Debt:

5.1 This indicator is obtained directly from the Council's balance sheet. It is the closing balance for actual gross borrowing plus other long-term liabilities. This Indicator is measured in a manner consistent for comparison with the Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit.

No. 4	Actual External Debt as at 31/3/2007	£ ' 000
	Short-term Borrowing	108
	Other Long-term Liabilities	--
	Total	108

5.2 The short-term borrowing as at 31/3/07 was for the management of the Council's cash flow requirements.

6. Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions:

6.1 This is an indicator of affordability that shows the impact of capital investment decisions on Council Tax and Housing Rent levels. The incremental impact is calculated by comparing the total revenue budget requirement of the current approved capital programme with an equivalent calculation of the revenue budget requirement arising from the proposed capital programme.

No. 5	Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions	2007-08 Estimate	2008-09 Estimate	2009-10 Estimate	2010-11 Estimate
	Incremental impact on Band D Council Tax	£9.68	£8.99	£7.82	£4.03

6.2 The impact on the Band D council tax reflects the reduction in investment income due to depletion of capital receipts to finance the capital programme.

7 Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt:

- 7.1 The Council has an integrated treasury management strategy and manages its treasury position in accordance with its approved strategy and practice. Overall borrowing will therefore arise as a consequence of all the financial transactions of the Council and not just those arising from capital spending reflected in the Capital Financing Requirement.
- 7.2 The **Authorised Limit** sets the maximum level of external borrowing (i.e. gross of investments) for the Council. It is measured on a daily basis against all external borrowing items on the Balance Sheet (i.e. long and short term borrowing, overdrawn bank balances and long term liabilities. This Prudential Indicator separately identifies borrowing from other long term liabilities such as finance leases. It is consistent with the Council's existing commitments, its proposals for capital expenditure and financing and its approved treasury management policy statement and practices.
- 7.3 The Authorised Limit has been set on the estimate of the most likely, prudent but not worst case scenario with sufficient headroom over and above this to allow for unusual cash movements.
- 7.4 The Authorised Limit is the statutory limit determined under Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 (referred to in the legislation as the Affordable Limit).

No.	Authorised Limit for	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
6	External Debt	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	Borrowing	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
	Other Long-term Liabilities	--	--	--	--
	Total	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000

- 7.5 The **Operational Boundary** links directly to the Council's estimates of the CFR and estimates of other cashflow requirements. This indicator is based on the same estimates as the Authorised Limit reflecting the most likely, prudent but not worst case scenario but without the additional headroom included within the Authorised Limit.
- 7.6 The Head of Financial Services has delegated authority, within the total limit for any individual year, to effect movement between the separately agreed limits for borrowing and other long-term liabilities. Decisions will be based on the outcome of financial option appraisals and best value considerations. Any movement between these separate limits will be reported to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

No.	Operational Boundary for External Debt	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
7		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	Borrowing	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
	Other Long-term Liabilities	--	--	--	--
	Total	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000

8. Adoption of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code:

8.1 This indicator demonstrates that the Council has adopted the principles of best practice.

No. 8	Adoption of the CIPFA Code of Practice in Treasury Management
	The Council approved the adoption of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code at its meeting on 18 th May 2005.

9. Upper Limits for Fixed Interest Rate Exposure and Variable Interest Rate Exposure:

9.1 These indicators allow the Council to manage the extent to which it is exposed to changes in interest rates. This Council calculates these limits on net principal outstanding sums.

9.2 The upper limit for variable rate exposure has been set to ensure that the Council is not exposed to interest rate rises which could adversely impact on the revenue budget. The limit allows for the use of variable rate debt to offset exposure to changes in short-term rates on investments

		2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
		%	%	%	%
No. 9	Upper Limit for Fixed Interest Rate Exposure	100%	100%	100%	100%
No. 10	Upper Limit for Variable Rate Exposure	100%	100%	100%	100%

10 Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate borrowing:

10.1 This indicator is designed to protect against excessive exposures to interest rate changes in any one period, in particular in the course of the next ten years, requiring borrowing to be replaced at times of uncertainty over interest rates.

10.2 It is calculated as the amount of projected borrowing that is fixed rate maturing in each period as a percentage of total projected borrowing that is fixed rate.

No. 11	Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing	Lower Limit %	Upper Limit %
	under 12 months	0%	100%
	12 months and within 24 months	0%	100%
	24 months and within 5 years	0%	100%
	5 years and within 10 years	0%	100%
	10 years and above	0%	100%

10.3 As the Council currently has no longer-term debt, the limits above provide the necessary flexibility within which decisions will be made for drawing down new fixed rate loans.

11. Upper Limit for total principal sums invested over 364 days:

11.1 The purpose of this limit is to contain exposure to the possibility of loss that may arise as a result of the Council having to seek early repayment of the sums invested.

11.2 The upper limit for 2007-08 was set to permit the Council's two fund managers the flexibility to operate within their individual fund mandates. The lower thresholds for 2008-09 onwards reflect the Council's diminishing investment balances.

No. 12	Upper Limit for total principal sums invested over 364 days	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
		£m	Estimate £m	Estimate £m	Estimate £m
	Upper limit	25.0	16.0	10.0	5.0

Arlingclose's Forecast for Interest Rates - February 2007

	Mar-08	Jun-08	Sep-08	Dec-08	Mar-09	Jun-09	Sep-09	Dec-09	Mar-10
Official Bank Rate									
Central case	5.25	5.00	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	5.00
Risks		-0.25	-0.25						
1-yr LIBID									
Central case	5.15	5.10	5.10	5.00	5.00	4.75	4.75	5.00	5.00
Risks	-0.10	-0.10							
5-yr gilt									
Central case	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.50	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.80	4.80
Risks	+0.10	+0.10							
10-yr gilt									
Central case	4.40	4.25	4.25	4.50	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75
Risks	+0.10	+0.10							
20-yr gilt									
Central case	4.50	4.45	4.45	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.70
Risks	+0.10								
50-yr gilt									
Central case	4.45	4.45	4.35	4.35	4.40	4.40	4.40	4.40	4.40
Risks	+0.10								

The UK Bank Rate is currently 5.25%. The Bank of England is expected to respond to deteriorating economic prospects and adopt a cautious approach to rate reductions cutting rates by 0.25% in each of quarters 2 and 3 of calendar 2008, their timing to coincide with the May and August Inflation Reports.

The UK is particularly vulnerable to a slowdown in the housing market and the financial sector. The expected feed through of weaknesses from housing and financial services into the wider economy.

The Bank of England's faces the conundrum of setting interest rate policy to counteract slowing growth on the one hand and to combat higher inflation on the other. The Bank's February 2008 Inflation Report shows :

- The slowdown in economic growth will initially be more pronounced and persistent as tighter credit conditions bear down on business activity and consumers' incomes. Thereafter growth is projected to stage a recovery over the medium term on the back of easier credit conditions, weaker sterling and lower interest rates.
- Higher energy, food and import prices are set to push inflation up sharply in the near term. CPI increases will depend on whether businesses and retailers can pass on higher producer prices to the consumer. Higher inflation will test the Monetary Policy Committee's upper 3% limit and could result in the Governor having to write one or more open explanatory letters.

Market Outlook: Short-term gilt/bond yields will be influenced by the forecast movement in the Bank Rate and are expected to fall ahead of the forecast movement in this rate. In the near term, the continuing fall out from the financial market turmoil and liquidity constraints could push gilt yields lower. Thereafter, increased government bond issues could put upward pressure on gilt yields.

Specified and Non Specified Investments

Specified Investments identified for use by the Council:

Specified Investments will be those that meet the criteria in the ODPM Guidance, i.e. the investment

- is sterling denominated
- has a maximum maturity of 1 year
- meets the “high” credit criteria as determined by the Council or is made with the UK government or is made with a local authority in England, Wales and Scotland.
- the making of which is not defined as capital expenditure under section 25(1)(d) in SI 2003 No 3146 (i.e. the investment is not loan capital or share capital in a body corporate).

“Specified” Investments identified for the Council’s use are:

- Deposits in the DMO’s Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (DMADF)
- Deposits with UK local authorities
- Deposits with banks and building societies
- *Certificates of deposit with banks and building societies
- *Gilts : (bonds issued by the UK government)
- *Bonds issued by multilateral development banks
- Money Market Funds, i.e. ‘AAA’ liquidity funds with a 60-day Weighted Average Maturity (WAM)
- * Other Money Market Funds and Collective Investment Schemes– i.e. credit rated funds which meet the definition of a collective investment scheme as defined in SI 2004 No 534 and SI 2007 No 573.

1. * In-house use of these instruments will be on advice from the Council’s treasury advisor.
2. The use of the above instruments by the Council’s fund manager, HSBC, will be by reference to the fund guidelines contained in the agreement between the Council and the manager.

For credit rated counterparties, the minimum criteria will be the short-term ratings of : P-1 (Moody’s) or A-1 (S&P) or F1 (Fitch) backed up by a support rating of 1, 2 or 3 as stated in the Council’s Treasury Management Practices. The individual counterparty limit for banks and building societies will be £3m.

Investments with the DMADF are guaranteed by HM Treasury. Following advice from the Council’s treasury advisor, from a credit perspective no upper £ limit is proposed on investments with the DMADF.

Non-Specified Investments determined for use by the Council:

Having considered the rationale and risk associated with Non-Specified Investments, the following have been determined for the Council's use : *(please amend the table below as applicable – we encourage you to discuss with Arlingclose the instruments appropriate to your strategy. Please also note that the % and maturity limits are examples for the template)*

	In-house use	Use by fund managers	Maximum maturity	Max % of portfolio	Capital expenditure?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deposits with banks and building societies ▪ Certificates of deposit with banks and building societies 	✓		5 yrs	60% in aggregate	No
Gilts and bonds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gilts ▪ Bonds issued by multilateral development banks ▪ Bonds issued by financial institutions guaranteed by the UK government ▪ Sterling denominated bonds by non-UK sovereign governments 	✓ (on advice from treasury advisor)	✓	10 years	75% in aggregate	No
Money Market Funds and Collective Investment Schemes (pooled funds which meet the definition of a collective investment scheme as defined in SI 2004 No 534 and SI 2007 No 573) but which are not credit rated	✓ (on advice from treasury advisor)	✓	These funds do not have a defined maturity date	50%	No

1. In determining the period to maturity of an investment, the investment should be regarded as commencing on the date of the commitment of the investment rather than the date on which funds are paid over to the counterparty.
2. The use of the above instruments by the Council's fund manager, HSBC, will be by reference to the fund guidelines contained in the agreement between the Council and the manager.

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5TH MARCH 2008

FEES AND CHARGES 2008/09

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

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To set out the fees and charges to be levied on services provided by the Council as used as the basis for income targets in the medium term financial plan 2008/09-2010/11.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Executive Cabinet approve the fees and charges as presented in Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Medium Term financial plan was approved by Full Council in January 2008. The income targets as included in the budget were prepared following detailed reviews of the level of income generated and the comparison between charges levied by Bromsgrove and other districts.
- 3.2 Heads of Services and budget holders have assessed the level of fees and these are included in Appendix A.
- 3.3 The level of charges have been used to calculate the financial impact of the revised income targets and included in the Medium Term Financial Plan as approved by members.
- 3.4 It is proposed that the revised fees and charges will be advertised to the public within approved deadlines with a start date of 1st April 2008 or 1st May 2008 dependant on the notice period required prior to implementation.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The financial impact of charging the attached fees are included in the medium term financial plan as approved.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications.

6. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

6.1 The increase in fees and charges will enable the resources to be made available to fund the priority areas in the district.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

- *Failure to effectively monitor the income budget with the potential shortfalls to income*

These risks are being managed as follows:

- Failure to effectively monitor the income budget with the potential shortfalls to income

Risk Register: Financial Services

Key Objective Ref No: 9

Key Objective: Effective VFM culture and compliant procurement best practices.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The implementation of the revised fees & charges will be notified in advance to the customer to ensure that all users are aware of the new charges and any concessions available to them.

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
Equalities and Diversity - None

10. **OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	yes
Acting Chief Executive	yes
Corporate Director (Services)	yes
Assistant Chief Executive	yes
Head of Financial Services	yes
Head of Legal & Democratic Services	yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	yes
Corporate Procurement Team	yes

11. **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Fees & Charges

12. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Jayne Pickering
E Mail: j.pickering@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: 01527 881207

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX A					
BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL					
Scale of Charges 1st April 2008					
SERVICE CATEGORY	Charge as at 1st April 2006	Charge as at 1st April 2007	Charge as at 1st April 2008	Increase 06/07 to 07/08	Increase 07/08 to 08/09
	£	£	£	%	%
Inflation built into Medium Term Financial Plan			2.50%		
ELECTORAL REGISTRATION					
Register Sales					
In data form					
- basic fee	20.00	20.50	20.00	2.50%	-2.40%
- for each 1,000 names or part thereof	1.50	1.54	1.50	2.50%	-2.40%
In printed form					
- basic fee	10.00	10.25	10.00	2.50%	-2.40%
- for each 1,000 names or part thereof	5.00	5.13	5.00	2.50%	-2.40%
<i>This charge is determined by the Representation of the People Regulations 2001</i>					
Land search fees are to remain at 2006/07 levels from 1st April 2007 but will be subject to change following announcements from Central Government.					
LAND SEARCHES					
NLIS Searches					
- standard search fee (incl. LLC1 and Con29 Pt1)	130.00	95.00	97.38	-26.90%	2.50%
- official certificate of search (LLC1 only)	4.00	4.00	4.10	0.00%	2.50%
- each additional property/parcel of land	18.00	18.00	18.45	0.00%	2.50%
- each optional enquiry (Con29 Pt2)	16.50	16.50	16.91	0.00%	2.50%
- supplementary enquiries (per question)	40.00	40.00	41.00	0.00%	2.50%
Non-NLIS Searches					
- standard search fee (incl. LLC1 and Con29 Pt1)	132.00	95.00	97.38	-28.00%	2.50%
- official certificate of search (LLC1 only)	6.00	6.00	6.15	0.00%	2.50%
- each additional property/parcel of land	18.00	18.00	18.45	0.00%	2.50%
- each optional enquiry (Con29 Pt2)	16.50	16.50	16.91	0.00%	2.50%
- supplementary enquiries (per question)	40.00	40.00	41.00	0.00%	2.50%
Personal search fee	15.00	15.00	15.38	0.00%	2.50%
TAXI LICENSING					
- Hackney Carriage	255.00	275.00	282.00	7.80%	2.50%
- Private Hire	232.00	251.50	258.00	8.40%	2.60%
- Private Hire Operator	253.00	260.50	267.00	3.00%	2.50%
- HC/PH Drivers Licence	80.00	82.50	85.00	3.10%	3.00%
- Mid-Term vehicle test	37.50	51.00	51.00	36.00%	0.00%
- Vehicle Re-test if MOT certificate is required		51.00	51.00		0.00%
- Meter Test	17.00	21.50	21.50	26.50%	0.00%
- conversion of vehicle licence to P/H or H/C	20.00	37.00	38.00	85.00%	2.70%
- Replacement vehicle plate	10.00	10.30	11.00	3.00%	6.80%
- Replacement Driver's Licence	6.00	6.20	6.50	3.30%	4.80%
- Trailer Test	17.50	18.00	18.50	2.90%	2.80%
- Transfer of ownership of licensed vehicle	20.00	20.60	21.00	3.00%	1.90%
- Criminal Bureau Check	36.00	37.00		2.80%	-100.00%
ESTABLISHMENT					
Freedom of Information Act 2000					
Photocopies					
- A4 sheet (per sheet)	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.00%	0.00%
- A3 sheet (per sheet)	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.00%	0.00%
LEGAL					
Legal work (per hour)	101.87	101.87	90.00	0.00%	-11.70%
RTB	203.74	203.74	180.00	0.00%	-11.70%
RTB purchasers	113.19	113.19		0.00%	-100.00%
Retrospective Consent	N/A	N/A	100.00	N/A	N/A
Issuing of consents (transfer of mortgage)	N/A	N/A	50.00	N/A	N/A
Section 106:					
-Private Owner	N/A	N/A	250.00	N/A	N/A
-Developer 6 or less properties	N/A	N/A	500.00	N/A	N/A
-Developer 6 or more properties	N/A	N/A	750.00	N/A	N/A

SERVICE CATEGORY	Charge as at 1st April 2006	Charge as at 1st April 2007	Charge as at 1st April 2008	Increase 06/07 to 07/08	Increase 07/08 to 08/09
	£	£	£	%	%
Not exceeding two hours	1.20	1.40	1.40	16.67%	0.00%
Not exceeding three hours	N/a	2.10	2.10		0.00%
Not exceeding four hours	N/a	2.80	2.80		0.00%
Not exceeding five hours	N/a	3.50	2.50		-28.57%
School Drive					
Not exceeding one hour	0.60	0.70	0.70	16.67%	0.00%
Not exceeding two hours	1.20	1.40	1.40	16.67%	0.00%
Not exceeding three hours	N/a	2.10	2.10		0.00%
All day	2.10	3.00	3.00	42.86%	0.00%
Stourbridge Road					
Not exceeding one hour	0.60	0.70	0.70	16.67%	0.00%
Not exceeding two hours	1.20	1.40	1.40	16.67%	0.00%
All day	2.10	2.00	3.00	-4.76%	50.00%
Windsor Street					
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.30	0.40	0.40	33.33%	0.00%
Not exceeding one hour	0.60	0.70	0.80	16.67%	14.29%
Not exceeding two hours	1.20	1.40	1.60	16.67%	14.29%
Season Tickets (valid at long stay car parks only)					
Annual	300.00	300.00	300.00	0.00%	0.00%
Quarterly	75.00	75.00	75.00	0.00%	0.00%
Season Tickets (valid at Stourbridge Road car park only)					
Annual	200.00	200.00	200.00	0.00%	0.00%
Quarterly	50.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%	0.00%
Excess Parking Charges					
If paid within fourteen days	30.00	30.00	35.00	0.00%	16.67%
Otherwise	60.00	60.00	70.00	0.00%	16.67%
Car Park charges only apply between 8.00am to 10.00pm everyday					
SPORTS CENTRES (including DOLPHIN CENTRE)					
Swimming (single admission)					
- Senior Citizens (8.00-9.00am/2.00-4.30pm) disabled/under 2's.	FREE	FREE	FREE		N/A
- Adults	2.80	2.85	3.00	1.80%	5.30%
- Juniors/Senior citizens (except as above)	1.55	1.60	2.20	3.20%	37.50%
Swimming (monthly ticket)					
- Adults	N/A	22.50	23.50		4.40%
Spectators					
	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%	0.00%
Swimming lessons (per lesson)					
- Adult	4.75	5.00	5.10	5.30%	2.00%
- Junior	4.00	4.25	4.25	6.30%	0.00%
- Mother & toddler	3.80	4.00	4.00	5.30%	0.00%
Fitness Suite (based on Phase 2 requirements)					
- per hour	4.75	4.75	5.00	0.00%	5.30%
- monthly direct debit	42.00	42.00	42.00	0.00%	0.00%
- induction/membership	26.00	28.00	28.00	7.70%	0.00%
Badminton					
- per hour	6.95	7.20	7.60	3.60%	5.60%
- racket hire (plus £2.00 deposit)	1.15	1.20	1.25	4.30%	4.20%
Squash (per court per 40 minutes)					
	6.45	6.65	7.00	3.10%	5.30%
Tennis Courts (per court per hour)					
- Adult	6.00	6.50	6.50	8.30%	0.00%
- Junior	3.00	4.50	4.50	50.00%	0.00%
Cricket					
- nets (1 hour, 3 bays)	42.00	45.00	46.00	7.10%	2.20%
Table Tennis (per hour)					
	4.30	4.50	4.50	4.70%	0.00%
Sports Hall (per hour)					
	42.00	45.00	46.00	7.10%	2.20%
Gymnasium (per hour)					
	32.00	34.00	36.00	6.30%	5.90%
Viewing Gallery hire (per hour)					
	20.00	22.00	25.00	10.00%	13.60%
Training Room hire (per hour)					
	32.00	34.00	36.00	6.30%	5.90%
Galas (clubs & voluntary)					
- first 3 hours	170.00	180.00	190.00	5.90%	5.60%
- additional rate, per hour	54.50	57.50	60.00	5.50%	4.30%
Lane swimming					
	8.00	8.20	8.50	2.50%	3.70%
School swimming (per hour)					
- large pool	39.00	41.00	42.00	5.10%	2.40%
- small pool	23.75	25.00	25.50	5.30%	2.00%
Clubs (per hour)					

SERVICE CATEGORY	Charge as at 1st April 2006	Charge as at 1st April 2007	Charge as at 1st April 2008	Increase 06/07 to 07/08	Increase 07/08 to 08/09
	£	£	£	%	%
- large pool	39.00	41.00	42.00	5.10%	2.40%
- small pool	29.00	31.00	32.00	6.90%	3.20%
Membership (per year) - pre-Phase 2 only					
- adult BDC resident	25.00	26.25	N/A	5.00%	N/A
- junior BDC resident	19.00	20.00	N/A	5.30%	N/A
- adult non-resident	40.00	43.00	N/A	7.50%	N/A
- junior non-resident	28.50	31.00	N/A	8.80%	N/A
<i>Primary Sports Project</i>	1.80	1.85	1.95	2.80%	5.40%
<i>School Curriculum Session (Per hour)</i>	13.60	14.75	15.50	8.50%	5.10%
<i>Community Sports Coach Session</i>	N/A	14.75	15.50		5.10%
<i>Sports Specific Coaching</i>	2.95	3.75	3.85	27.10%	2.70%
<i>Multi Sports Coaching</i>	2.95	3.20	3.35	8.50%	4.70%
A reduction of 50% of the Adult charge is available to those in receipt of income support, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and disabled people and their carers.					
These reductions are available at off peak times only, which are Monday to Friday 9am to 4.30pm, all day Saturday and Sunday.					
Charges for combined activities, courses parties, special promotions etc are delegated to the Head of Culture and Community Services.					
The above rates are for non-commercial hirers, and the Head of Culture & Community Services has authority to vary them as appropriate. Charges to commercial hirers are decided by negotiation					
SANDERS PARK					
Tennis Courts (per court per Hour)					
- Adult	6.00	6.50	6.50	8.30%	0.00%
- Junior/Senior Citizen	3.00	4.50	4.50	50.00%	0.00%
Bowls					
- Adult (per hour)	3.60	5.50	5.65	52.80%	2.70%
- Adult (season ticket)	40.00	47.00	48.00	17.50%	2.10%
- Junior (per hour)	2.60	4.00	2.85	53.80%	-28.80%
- Junior (season ticket)	30.00	34.00	25.00	13.30%	-26.50%
- Senior Citizen (per hour)	n/a	n/a	4.00		
- Senior Citizen (season ticket)	n/a	34.00	35.00		
Bromsgrove Town Bowling Club					
- for season (exclusive use on present basis)	1800.00	2250.00	2330.00	25.00%	3.60%
- additional use, Sundays (per rink)	25.00	27.50	28.50	10.00%	3.60%
- additional use, other days (per rink)	20.00	20.00	20.00	0.00%	0.00%
Putting					
- Adult	1.50	2.00	2.00	33.30%	0.00%
- Junior/Senior Citizen	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%	0.00%
OTHER RECREATION GROUNDS AND OPEN SPACES					
Football Pitch (without changing facilities)					
- adult (per game)		22.50	25.00		11.10%
- junior (per game)		12.50	14.00		12.00%
Changing Facilities					
- adult		32.50	35.00		7.70%
- junior		17.50	19.00		8.60%
Boleyn Road, Frankley					
- fairs (per day)	200.00	250.00	310.00	25.00%	24.00%
- deposit	1000.00	1000.00	1250.00	0.00%	25.00%
Market Street Recreation Ground					
- fairs (per day)	200.00	250.00	310.00	25.00%	24.00%
- deposit	1000.00	1000.00	1250.00	0.00%	25.00%
One free day is allowed for each of the above bookings by fairs/circuses.					
Other hirings – charge to be decided at the time of application.					
SPADESBOURNE SUITE					
Main Hall					
- peak (per hour)	26.00	34.00	36.00	30.80%	5.90%
- off-peak (per hour)	22.00	30.00	32.00	36.40%	6.70%
Main Hall and Conservatory					
- peak (per hour)	25.00	35.00	40.00	40.00%	14.30%
Conservatory (weekend only subject to availability)(min 4 hours)					
	50.00	60.00	65.00	20.00%	8.30%
Party rates evening hire excluding bar					
	150.00	175.00	185.00	16.70%	5.70%

SERVICE CATEGORY	Charge as at 1st April 2006	Charge as at 1st April 2007	Charge as at 1st April 2008	Increase 06/07 to 07/08	Increase 07/08 to 08/09
	£	£	£	%	%
Full Day Hire Rate			350.00		N/A
<i>Peak Hours are: - Monday – Friday 5 – 12pm All day Saturday and Sunday</i>					
<i>All hirings after midnight attract an additional hourly rate of 25%</i>					
PRODUCE AND RETAIL MARKET					
Permanent stalls (per sq. foot, per 4-day week)	0.45	0.45	Peter has proposed	0.00%	
			that fees stay		
			the same and are		
			reviewed when		
Casual stalls			porposals for the new	2.80%	
- inside (per occasion)	18.00	18.50	stalls etc. have been	3.30%	
- outside (per occasion)	15.00	15.50	agreed	3.20%	
Antiques market (per weekly booking)	155.00	160.00		2.70%	
Water charge (permanent stalls, per week)	3.70	3.80			
Hire of Market Hall (per occasion)					
- with tables	155.00	160.00		3.20%	
- without tables	260.00	266.50		2.50%	
Farmers Market	25.00	26.00		4.00%	
ALLOTMENTS (one year's notice of increase is required to existing tenants, therefore the rates shown in each column are payable from the FOLLOWING year.					
- Rent per acre	320.00	400.00	600.00	25.00%	50.00%
- Rent per 3/4 acre	N/A	N/A	400.00		N/A
- Rent per 1/2 acre	N/A	N/A	240.00		N/A
- Rent per 1/4 acre	N/A	N/A	112.00		N/A
- Minimum charge	20.00	25.00	26.00	25.00%	4.00%
CEMETERY					
Interments in a grave					
- children aged under 1 month	20.00	FREE	FREE		N/A
- children aged 1 month - 14 years	95.00	FREE	FREE		N/A
- persons aged 15 and over	290.00	300.00	315.00	3.40%	5.00%
- extra charge for burials at 7ft.	100.00	105.00	110.00	5.00%	4.80%
- extra charge for burials at 9ft.	140.00	145.00	150.00	3.60%	3.40%
- extra charge for grave longer than 6'6" or wider than 2'0".	60.00	60.00	62.50	0.00%	4.20%
Interment in a bricked grave	375.00	385.00	385.00	2.70%	0.00%
Interment of cremated remains	110.00	115.00	120.00	4.50%	4.30%
Exclusive rights of burial (75-year grants)					
- adult grave space	875.00	900.00	900.00	2.90%	0.00%
- child grave space	130.00	165.00	165.00	26.90%	0.00%
- cremated remains plot	315.00	325.00	330.00	3.20%	1.50%
Renewal of expired dede (single fee charged in all cases)					
-Burial	198.00	203.00	205.00	2.50%	1.00%
-Cremated remains	99.00	103.00	105.00	4.00%	1.90%
Memorials					
-Memorial permit (North Bromsgrove Cemetry only)	20.00	30.00	32.00	50.00%	6.70%
-Memorial trees and plaque	120.00	150.00	180.00	25.00%	20.00%
-Memorial benches (maintenance charge)	100.00	No new benches allowed	No new benches allowed		N/A
-Transfer of deed to new owner	N/A	20.00	22.00		10.00%
-Genealogy search and plan (per half hour)	N/A	20.00	22.00		10.00%
-Preparation of statutory declaration	N/A	50.00	80.00		60.00%
-Plaque only on existing BDC Bench (time limited to 15 years)	N/A	75.00	50.00		-33.30%
Searches arising from indemnity of lost Deed of Assignment	12.00	12.50	15.00	4.20%	20.00%
Certified copy of entry	10.00	20.00	25.00	100.00%	25.00%
<i>The above charges for interments and exclusive rights of burial are trebled for non-residents of the District.</i>					
REFUSE COLLECTION					
Trade refuse					
- orange sacks (per roll)	52.00	53.00	under review tbc	1.90%	

SERVICE CATEGORY	Charge as at 1st April 2006	Charge as at 1st April 2007	Charge as at 1st April 2008	Increase 06/07 to 07/08	Increase 07/08 to 08/09
	£	£	£	%	%
Conservation Area Appraisals		5.00	5.12		2.40%
Other Publications					
Information handbook	5.00	5.00	5.12	0.00%	2.40%
<i>* These can be downloaded free from the Council's website: www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/localplanning.</i>					
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL					
Photocopies (per sheet)					
- A4 sheet (per sheet)	0.10	0.10	0.10		0.00%
- A3 sheet (per sheet)	0.20	0.20	0.20		0.00%
Copy decision notices					
A0/A1 size print	20.00	20.00	0.10	0.00%	-99.50%
A2/A3 size print	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%	0.00%
Planning Histories (per hour)	5.00	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%
Sale of weekly planning lists *	40.00	40.00	40.00	0.00%	0.00%
	N/A	N/A	N/A		
<i>* These can be downloaded free from the Council's website: http://bromsgrove.whub.org.uk/home/bdcindex/bdc-planning/bdc-planning-applications/bdc-planning-recent-applications.htm?highlightTerm=weekly%20planning%20lists</i>					
BUILDING CONTROL					
<i>For charges applicable from 1st April 2008, see separate tab Building Regulations</i>					
HOUNDSFIELD LANE CARAVAN SITE					
Residential licences (per week)					
- licence charge	45.45	46.59	47.75	2.50%	2.50%
- water charge	6.15	6.30	6.61		4.90%
Transit licences (per night)					
- nights 1-7	6.25	6.41	6.57	2.50%	2.60%
- nights 8-15	10.40	10.66	10.92	2.50%	2.40%
- subsequent nights (each)	10.40	10.66	10.92	2.50%	2.40%
Deposits					
- deposit for a permanent plot	250.00	250.00	250.00	0.00%	0.00%
STRATEGIC HOUSING					
Homeless persons' hostels					
- Single room (incl. 45p heating)	6.45	6.77	6.93	5.00%	2.40%
- Two single rooms (incl. 70p heating)	9.90	10.39	10.65	4.95%	2.50%
- Double room (incl. 70p heating)	9.90	10.39	10.65	4.95%	2.50%
- More than one double room (incl £1.15 heating)	13.60	14.28	14.60	5.00%	2.20%
Bed and breakfast					
- Single room	5.65	5.79	5.93	2.50%	2.40%
- Two single rooms	8.60	8.82	9.04	2.50%	2.60%
- Double room	8.60	8.82	9.04	2.50%	2.60%
- More than one double room	11.50	11.79	12.08	2.50%	2.50%
- breakfast					
- adult	1.60	1.64	1.68	2.50%	2.40%
- junior over 11 years	1.30	1.33	1.36	2.50%	2.10%
- junior under 11 years	1.00	1.03	1.05	2.50%	2.40%
- storage of effects (per night)	1.60	1.64	1.68	2.50%	2.40%
HMO Licensing Fees	310.00	317.75	325.70	2.50%	2.50%
RTB Plan Preparation for BDHT	84.05	86.15	88.73	2.50%	3.00%
LIFELINE					
Installation Fee	15.00	20.00	21.00	33.30%	5.00%
Hire of equipment (per week)	1.60	1.65	1.70	3.10%	3.00%
Monitoring charge (per week)	1.25	1.30	1.35	4.00%	3.80%
Pendent	70.00	75.00	80.00	7.10%	6.70%
Wrist Strap	2.50	2.60	3.00	4.00%	15.40%
Extension Lead	5.00	5.25	6.00	5.00%	14.30%
Lifeline unit	160.00	165.00	165.00	3.10%	0.00%
Power supply	25.00	26.00	27.50	4.00%	5.80%
LOCAL TAX COLLECTION					
Council Tax Court Costs	52.00	53.50	56.50	2.90%	5.60%
NNDR Court Costs	83.00	85.00	85.00	2.40%	0.00%

SERVICE CATEGORY	Charge as at 1st April 2006	Charge as at 1st April 2007	Charge as at 1st April 2008	Increase 06/07 to 07/08	Increase 07/08 to 08/09
	£	£	£	%	%
Magistrates' court fee (added to both council tax and NNDR Summons)	3.00	3.00	3.00	0.00%	0.00%

Fees- Gambling Act 2005

Premises Licence Fees - Discretionary

Type of Premises Licence	Application to vary	Application to transfer	New applications	Annual fee	Copy of licence	Notification of change	Reinstatement of licence	Provisional statement
Bingo Premises	900.00	615.00	1794.00	512.50	25.00	51.25	615.00	1794.00
Adult Gaming Centre	770.00	615.00	1025.00	512.50	25.00	51.25	615.00	1025.00
Family Entertainment Centre	512.50	487.00	1025.00	385.00	25.00	51.25	487.00	1025.00
Betting Premises (general)	770.00	615.00	1537.50	307.50	25.00	51.25	615.00	1537.50
Track	641.00	487.00	1280.00	512.50	25.00	51.25	487.00	1280.00
Temporary use notices	N/a	N/a	250.00	N/a	25.00	N/a	N/a	N/a

Permit fees - Statutory

Type of Permit	New applications	Annual fee	Renewal	Change of Name	Copy of Permit	Variation	Transfer
Family Entertainment Gaming Machine	£280	N/a	£280	£25	£15	N/a	N/a
Small Society Lottery	£40	£20	N/a	N/a	£15	£25	N/a
Club Gaming	£200	£40	£200	N/a	£15	£25	N/a
Club Gaming Machine	£200	£40	£200	£25	£15	£25	£25
Licensed Premises less than 2 gaming machines	£50	N/a	N/a	£25	£15	£25	£25
Licensed Premises more than 2 gaming machines	£150	£50	N/a	£25	£15	N/a	N/A
Prize gaming	£270	N/a	£100				

Fees - Licensing Act 2003

Personal Licence

The fee for a Personal Licence is £37.00

Premises Licence and Club Premises Certificate

The fees to be paid in respect of obtaining either a premises licence or a club premises certificate are as follows:

Band	A	B	C	D	E
Non- Domestic rateable value of premises	£0-£4,300	£4,301-£33,000	£33,001-£87,000	87001-£125,000	£125,001 and over
New applications and variations	£100	£190	£315	£450	£635
Annual Fee	£70	£180	£295	£320	£350

Property not subject to non-domestic rates will fall into Band A. Properties, which have not yet been constructed will fall into band C.

Those premises which fall into Band 'D' will be subject to two times the amount of fee payable as outlined above, whilst those premises which fall into Band 'E' will be subject to three times the amount of fee payable, **if they are used exclusively or primarily for the carrying on of the retail of alcohol for consumption on the premises**, i.e. large public houses.

Large Events

An additional fee will be charged where the maximum number of persons exceeds 5000 at a licensible event. Please contact the Licensing Section for further details.

Exemptions

Church Halls, Community Halls, Village Halls, or other similar building etc. are exempt from paying any fees for a premises licence authorising **ONLY** the provision of regulated entertainment. If the retail of alcohol is to be included in the Premises Licence, the full fee will be payable as outlined above.

No fees are payable by an educational institution, such as a school or a college (whose pupils/students have not attained the age of 19) for a premises licence authorising **ONLY** the provision of regulated entertainment providing that is for and on behalf of the educational institution.

There are however, a number of other fees and charges that must be paid by applicants, they are as follows:

Occasion on which fee may be payable	Fee
Application for copy of licence or summary on theft, loss etc	£10.50
Notification of change of name or address (holder of premises licence)	£10.50
Application to vary the Designated Premises Supervisor	£23.00
Application to transfer a premises licence	£23.00
Interim authority notice following death etc. of licence holder	£23.00
Application for making of a provisional statement	£315.00
Application for copy of certificate or summary on theft, loss etc	£10.50
Notification of change of name or alteration of club rules	£10.50
Change of relevant registered address of club	£10.50
Temporary Event Notices	£21.00
Application for copy of licence on theft, loss etc of temporary event notice	£10.50
Application for copy of licence on theft, loss etc of personal licence	£10.50
Notification of change of name or address (Personal Licence)	£10.50
Notice of interest in any premises	£21.00

Should you need assistance in determining which level of fee you are required to pay, please contact the Licensing Section on (01527) 881743 or (01527) 881405.
Alternatively email - licensing@bromsgrove.gov.uk

In all cases, cheques must be made payable to 'Bromsgrove District Council'

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL - BUILDING CONTROL

Schedule 1 : Charge for new dwellings

Number of properties	Full plans submission Plan Charge (incl. VAT)	Full plans submission Inspection Charge (incl. VAT)	Building Notice charge (incl. VAT)
1	£176.25	£381.88	£558.13
2	£240.88	£527.58	£768.46
3	£317.25	£669.76	£987.00
4	£393.63	£769.63	£1,163.26
5	£475.88	£849.53	£1,325.41

When you will be using similar house types we can reduce our charges. For details of this reduction, or for a competitive quotation for more than 5 dwellings, please telephone : 01527 881402.

Schedule 2 : Charges for small buildings, extensions and alterations to dwellings

	Full plans submission Plan Charge (incl. VAT)	Full plans submission Inspection Charge (incl. VAT)	Building Notice charge (incl. VAT)
Putting up a detached or attached garage, carport, or both, which will be used with an existing building that has a floor area of:			
a) no more than 40sq.m	As per the Building Notice charge	As per the Building Notice charge	£150.15
b) more than 40sq.m but not more than 60sq.m	£110.00	£193.76	£303.76
Any extension where the total floor area is not more than 10sq.m	£110.00	£193.76	£303.76
Any extension where the total floor area is more than 10sq.m but is not more than 40sq.m	£110.00	£357.49	£474.99
Any extension where the total floor area is more than 40sq.m but is not more than 60sq.m	£110.00	£484.83	£594.83
Loft conversions costing up to £22,000	£110.00	£313.50	£423.50
Other domestic alterations less than £3,000 in value and which are separate from, but undertaken at the same time as an extension on the same application	£50.00	Included in Plan Charge	£50.00

If your extension is over 60 square metres or your loft conversion costs more than £22,000, the charge should be calculated by using the estimated cost of the work and schedule 3, but the charge cannot be less than the amount shown in schedule 2 for extensions up to 60 square metres or for loft conversions costing up to £22,000.

Schedule 3 : Charges for all other works

Estimated cost of work	FULL PLANS SUBMISSION		BUILDING NOTICES
	Plan Charge (incl. VAT)	Inspection Charge (incl. VAT)	Building Notice charge (incl. VAT)
£0 - £2,000	£141.00	Included in plan charge	£141.00
£2,000 - £5,000	£193.88	Included in plan charge	£193.88
£5,000 - £20,000	To £48.47 add an extra £2.64 for every £1,000 over £5,000 and up to £20,000	To £145.41 add an extra £7.93 for every £1,000 over £5,000 and up to £20,000	To £193.88 add an extra £10.58 for every £1,000 over £5,000 and up to £20,000
£20,000 - £25,000	To £88.13 add an extra £2.35 for every £1,000 over £20,000 and up to £25,000	To £264.38 add an extra £7.05 for every £1,000 over £20,000 and up to £25,000	To £352.50 add an extra £9.40 for every £1,000 over £20,000 and up to £25,000

If the estimated cost is more than £25,000, please telephone : 01527 881402 for a competitive quote.

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5TH MARCH 2008

LOCAL HOUSING ALLOWANCE (LHA) POLICY

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

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To inform members with the details of the Local Housing Allowance Scheme and to present the policy to support the delivery of the new scheme.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the changes to the Housing Benefit scheme, as detailed in the report, be noted and the policy at Appendix 1 be approved and adopted.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is central to the government's reform of Housing Benefit and provides for a more transparent system by basing payments on a flat rate of rental charge which takes into account household size and composition as well as the area in which the claimant resides. The Local Housing Allowance will be rolled out nationally in April 2008. One of the changes included in the new legislation is that claimant will receive housing benefit directly, except for special cases and authorities must devise a safeguard policy to deal with these cases.
- 3.2 From the 1 April 2008 the new scheme is being introduced for the payment of Housing Benefit for those claimants living in privately rented properties. There are two main changes for these claimants which are that rent levels are determined by the Rent Service locally and the local authority can only pay according to these preset levels, and unless there are particular circumstances, the payment of Housing Benefit must be made directly to the claimant. The policy document for approval is to deal with the circumstances where we would want to pay directly to a landlord instead of the claimant to protect the claimants' interests.

- 3.3 The changes affect only those tenants renting from a private landlord (this does not affect those people renting from Registered Social landlords such as Bromsgrove District Housing Association).
- 3.4 The change will only affect new tenants or those who have moved from one private landlord to another after 1 April 2008. In Bromsgrove District there are just under 400 claimants who rent from private landlords and so will not affect a significant number of people in the district.
- 3.5 Previously any claimant could request that their payment of Housing Benefit to be made directly to the landlord for payment of their rent. For those people renting from a private landlord from 1 April, direct payments can only be made in special circumstances – for example where a claimant is deemed to be safeguarded. Each authority must have a policy to explain in what circumstances they may pay directly to a landlord.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The council pays out around £12m in benefit each year and the majority of this money is claimed back in subsidy from the Department of Work and Pensions. The claims made under the Local Housing Allowance scheme will be treated in the same way for subsidy purposes.
- 4.2 The authority has received an additional grant of £82,862 from the Department of Work and Pensions to introduce the Local Housing Allowance. This additional funding is made available to pay for software development, producing a safeguard policy, introduction of money advice services, additional training and communication to ensure the efficient introduction of this new scheme.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are statutory amendments to Housing Benefit legislation for the introduction of Local Housing allowance from 7th April 2008

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 Approval of this policy contributes to the Council's priority of customer service in ensuring all our customers have a consistent and quality service provided to them.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

- Safeguarded tenants not being identified to have their Housing Benefit payments to be made direct to their Landlord

7.2 These risks are being managed as follows:

Risk Register: Financial Services

Key Objective Ref No: 2

Key Objective: Efficient and effective payment of benefits to those people who are eligible

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit provides assistance to some of the most safeguarded members of the community. The approval of this policy shows that the Council is committed to ensuring that safeguarded claimants are treated fairly and assisted within the terms of the legislation.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The adoption of the policy and implementation of the Housing Allowance will provide greater support and ownership of housing benefit to all our customers. The welfare officer can be requested to provide personal support to any customer who requires assistance.

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The implementation of Local Housing Allowance and this policy will ensure that the benefit received by the Council is paid to eligible claimants in an effective and consistent way.

11. 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

12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
------------------	-----

Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (Partnerships and Projects)	Yes
Executive Director (Services)	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	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	None

13. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards

14. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Local Housing Allowance – Safeguard Policy

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (S1 001 / 1167).

The Housing Benefit (Local Housing and Information Sharing) Amendment Regulations 2007.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Anne Bradbury
E Mail: a.bradbury@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: 01527 881238



Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

Local Housing Allowance

Safeguard and Direct Payments Policy and Procedure

Revenues and Benefits Section

Financial Services



March 2008

Local Housing Allowance Safeguard and Direct Payments Policy and Procedure

Safeguard and Direct Payments under LHA

1. Introduction

Under LHA a tenant cannot simply request that payment is made directly to a landlord to cover their rent. To safeguard tenants likely to have difficulty in paying their rent, the Council has the discretion to pay the Landlord direct. Safeguard in this circumstance means someone who may have difficulty managing their money. This does not mean someone who does not want to pay their rent.

A safeguarded tenant might be someone who:

- has severe debt problems;
- has a recent County Court judgment against them;
- is an un-discharged bankrupt;
- is unable to open a bank or building society account;
- has some of their Income Support or Jobseeker's Allowance paid direct to the gas, electricity or water company by DWP;
- is getting Supporting People help;
- is getting help from a homeless charity.

Other indicators to look at are whether the tenant is safeguarded are if the tenant:

- has learning difficulties;
- has an illness that stops them managing on a day-to-day basis;
- cannot read English;
- cannot speak English;
- is addicted to drugs, alcohol or gambling;
- is homeless.
- Is fleeing violence

The Department of Work and Pensions have provided guidance on when direct payments to the landlord may be appropriate. These will be where a tenant is unable to pay the rent themselves and may therefore be classed as a safeguarded tenant. Direct payments may also be made to the landlord where a tenant is eight or more weeks in arrears.

Deciding whether a claimant falls into one of these categories can be a sensitive issue and therefore this policy sets out the guidelines by which decisions will be made. Senior Officers will need to decide whether a tenant is safeguarded (i.e. unable to pay) so that the LHA can be paid directly to the landlord.

2. Policy aims

The primary concern of the safeguard tenants likely to have difficulty in paying their rent is to minimise the risk of tenants falling into rent arrears with their landlord and therefore ensuring that they 'keep a roof over their head'.

The aim of the safeguard policy is to:

- Provide a safeguard for tenants likely to have difficulty paying their rent and reassure them that their benefit and rent will be paid
- Prevent rent arrears and tenants being put at risk of eviction
- Help to sustain tenancies for safeguarded tenants
- Reassure landlords that their rent will be paid if they have safeguarded tenants or are approached by safeguarded tenants
- Help to put tenants in touch with other agencies where necessary and give people the opportunity and support to manage their own financial affairs
- To make reasonable, fair and consistent decisions
- Promote a transparent and simple process that is understood widely
- To treat each case individually and not make assumptions about people's situations

The policy is not designed to:

- Supersede support that is being received to allow tenants the opportunity to be responsible tenants and be in control of their own income and expenditure
- Be used by landlords to circumvent the aims of LHA
- Be a blanket policy for agencies providing support to private tenants

3. Decision Making Process

I. Receiving an application for Potential Safeguarded Tenants

The claimant (the tenant) or a representative makes the council aware that a person is potentially safeguarded.

This could be by:

- Letter/email from either the landlord, the claimant or their representative
- By telephone in which case a formal application form should be issued
- completion of the Council's formal application form

Whilst the application is being considered the regulations allow for the payments to be made direct to the Landlord for a period of up to 8 weeks.

II. Gathering information and evidence

A Senior Officer will consider the application that has been received and whether there is enough information to make an appropriate decision. When considering an application the Senior Officer should have in mind the factors set out by the DWP that constitute safeguarded tenants (as above).

Ideally this will be supported by written evidence from a third party such as Social Services, the G.P., or support or advisory services such as the CAB. You may also wish to look at evidence from the claimant's family or friends. Evidence from the landlord alone is not acceptable.

If the evidence is not sufficient, the Senior Officer will then need to request further information from the claimant or their representative by telephone. A discussion with the claimant or their representative may assist in making a decision.

If there is no phone number then a letter will need to be sent to the claimant or representative giving them one month to respond. If there is no response within a month consider the case on its own merits and make further enquiries if possible.

In some situations it may be felt that less is required or it would be impossible to collate further information. In these cases a common sense judgment will need to be made, but note this will always have to be justified.

III. Making a decision

Having made a decision the Senior Officer will need to write to the claimant and affected parties advising them of the decision.

The letter to the claimant and /or their representative should advise them of:

- The decision
- Reasons for the decision
- If and when this decision will be reviewed
- Appeal rights
- Any advice agencies, voluntary or statutory organisations that may help them

The letter to the landlord should advise:

- If the claimant has been found to be a safeguarded tenant that LHA up to the contractual rent will be paid directly to them
- Request bank details if not previously received
- The minimum length of time that this arrangement will apply if the decision is to be reviewed.

- If their tenant has been found not to be safeguarded, the landlords appeal rights against this decision

If the claimant's situation is a short-term issue only and they can receive help to overcome any problems, it will be necessary to set an appropriate date to review the decision.

If the LHA is above the claimants contractual rent, a split payment will occur and claimants should be encouraged to open bank accounts if they have not already got one.

IV Reviewing a Decision

Where a claimant needs short term help they should be contacted again to determine whether their situation has changed. For example someone with English as a second language may have received help and support and after a year feels confident enough to manage their financial affairs and wishes to receive their LHA directly.

Claimants are not expected to apply for continuation of payment to landlord, in the first instance it will be enough to write to them or speak to their representative / support worker to get an update of the situation.

If no responses are received then payment should continue to be paid to the Landlord. Only where the claimant requests that they be paid directly would payments to landlords be stopped.

If payment to a Landlord is stopped a letter informing the Landlord of this decision should be sent.

In all cases, a review should be undertaken at least every 12 months to check if the circumstances have changed and that it is still appropriate to pay the Landlord direct.

4. Procedure for claimants who are 8 weeks or more in arrears

If a tenant is 8 weeks or more in arrears with their rent then the law allows for payment of Local Housing Allowance to be made directly to the Landlord unless it is in the overriding interests of the claimant or his family not to do so.

Official evidence is required before we can change the payee. This should be provided in conjunction with the completed 8 weeks in arrears application form.

When this information is received a Senior Officer will consider the application and whether there is enough information to make an appropriate decision. If so the payee can be changed and a letter should be sent to the Landlord advising:

- It has been found that it is in the claimants best interests that LHA will be paid directly to them
- Request bank details if not previously received
- The minimum length of time that this arrangement will apply if the decision is to be reviewed.

- If there is insufficient evidence to determine that their tenant is incapable of or is having difficulty in managing their own affairs, the landlords appeal rights against this decision

A letter should also be sent to the claimant advising them of:

- The decision
- Reasons for the decision
- If and when this decision will be reviewed
- Appeal rights
- Any advice agencies, voluntary or statutory organisations that may help them
- The importance of paying rent and the consequences if they fail to do so

If the claimant's situation is a short-term issue only and the situation may be resolved in the future, it will be necessary to set an appropriate date to review the decision

Note that where the LHA is higher than the contractual rent the full amount of the LHA can be paid direct to the Landlord whilst the rent arrears continue to exist.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5TH MARCH 2008

DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENT (DHP) POLICY

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

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To present members with the Discretionary Housing Policy for the Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the changes to the Housing Benefit scheme, as detailed in the report, be noted and the policy shown at Appendix 1 be approved and adopted.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 2 July 2001 a scheme was introduced which granted all Local Authorities powers to make a discretionary award to top up the Housing and Council Tax Benefits statutory schemes. This is known as Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) and each authority receives an amount of subsidy to fund this – for 2007/8 this was £9,320. If the authority exceeds this amount, it must be funded by the authority. Therefore, it is necessary to have a policy to determine when these payments will be made.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The budget for Discretionary Housing Payment is £9,320 per annum, and once this budget is exhausted the authority pay any amount exceeding this. It is therefore important that payments made under this scheme are only paid in accordance with the policy and criteria set, and that payments are monitored against the budget available.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Payments are made within the Councils discretionary powers

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

6.1 Approval of this policy contributes to the Council’s priority of customer service in ensuring all our customers have a consistent and quality service provided to them.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

- Customers may be subject to eviction or CTAX recovery court costs

7.2 These risks are being managed as follows:

Risk Register: Financial Services

Key Objective Ref No: 2

Key Objective: Efficient and effective payment of benefits to those people who are eligible

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit provides assistance to some of the most safeguarded members of the community. The approval of this policy shows that the Council is committed to ensuring that safeguarded claimants are treated fairly and assisted within the terms of the legislation..

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The adoption of the policy and implementation of the Discretionary Policy will ensure that all our customers are treated in a fair and equitable manner and the Council has a robust framework in place to support both officers and clients

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The implementation of policy will ensure that the benefit received by the Council is paid to eligible claimants in an effective and consistent way.

11. 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

12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

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

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (Partnerships and Projects)	Yes
Executive Director (Services)	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	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	None

13. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards

14. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Discretionary Housing Payment Policy

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (S1 001 / 1167).

The Housing Benefit (Local Housing and Information Sharing) Amendment Regulations 2007

CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Anne Bradbury
E Mail: a.bradbury@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: 01527 881238



Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

Awarding Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's)

Revenues and Benefits Section

Financial Services



March 2008

AWARDING DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS (DHP's)

Background

On 2 July 2001 a new scheme was introduced which granted all Local Authorities new powers to make a discretionary award to top up the Housing and Council Tax Benefits statutory schemes. The legislation governing DHP's can be found in the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (S1 001 / 1167).

The intention was to replace the old scheme of exceptional circumstance and hardship payments, where payments were only made in "exceptional" circumstances with a much more widely available scheme to help with Housing costs, where Housing and Council Tax benefit payments under the statutory scheme were insufficient.

A DHP is available to every claimant, who has a shortfall between their rental liability and payment of Housing Benefit and/or a shortfall between Council Tax liability and entitlement to Council Tax Benefit, providing they are in receipt of a minimum amount of the relevant benefit.

However a DHP cannot be used to pay ineligible service charges, to decrease Council Tax liability when only Second Adult rebate is payable, to minimise the effect of Job Seeker Plus sanctions, to make payment when HB/CTB are suspended or when a claimant does not have a minimum entitlement to that benefit. For instance, if HB only is payable the claimant would have no entitlement to a DHP to help with their Council Tax liability and vice versa.

The main features of the scheme are:

- It is purely discretionary;
- A customer does not have a statutory right to a payment;
- The amount that can be paid out by an Authority in any financial year is cash-limited by the Secretary of State and may be reduced in subsequent years if it is not spent;
- The administration of the scheme is for the Benefits Service to determine (with a few specific exceptions);

The Benefit Service Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to specify how the Benefits Service will operate the scheme and to indicate some of the factors that will be considered when deciding if a DHP can be awarded. Each case will be treated strictly on its merits and all customers will be treated equally and fairly when the scheme is administered. The Benefits Service is committed to working with the local voluntary sector, social landlords and other interested parties in the District to maximise entitlement to all available state benefits and this will be reflected in the

administration of the DHP scheme. Where the evidence provided in support of a DHP indicates that the customer is not claiming another state benefit they may be entitled to, the Benefits Service will advise them to make such a claim and provide details of other agencies in the District who may be able to help with such a claim.

Statement of objectives

The Benefits Service will consider making a payment of a DHP to all customers who meet the qualifying criteria specified in this policy. The Benefits Service will treat all applications on their individual merits, and will seek through the operation of this policy to:

- Alleviate poverty;
- Support safeguarded young people in the transition to adult life;
- Encourage local residents to obtain and sustain employment;
- Safeguard local residents in their homes;
- Help those who are trying to help themselves;
- Keep families together;
- Support the safeguarded in the local community;
- Help customers through personal crises and difficult events.

The Benefits Service considers that the DHP scheme should be seen as a short time emergency fund. It is not and should not be considered as a way around any current or future entitlement restrictions set out within the Housing and Council Tax Benefit legislation.

Claiming a DHP

A claim for a DHP must be made in writing and signed by the customer. A letter or signed statement made at a designated office will be deemed as sufficient.

On request or in appropriate circumstances, the Benefits Service will issue the customer with a special DHP application form. This will be date stamped and will count as the date of claim.

The customer will be required to return the form to a designated office within one month of its issue and will be encouraged to include any relevant supporting evidence.

The Benefits Service may request any (reasonable) evidence in support of an application for a DHP. Such requests will normally be made in writing. The customer will be asked to provide the evidence within one month of such a request although this will be extended in appropriate circumstances.

The Benefits Service reserves the right to verify any information or evidence provided by the customer in appropriate circumstances.

If the customer is unable to or does not provide the required evidence, the Benefits Service will still consider the application and will take into account any other available evidence including that held on the Housing Benefit file.

Period of award

In all cases, the Benefits Service will decide the length of time for which a DHP will be awarded on the basis of the evidence supplied and the facts known.

The start date of an award will normally be:

The Monday after the written claim for a DHP is received by the Benefits Service; or the date on which entitlement to HB/CTB commenced (providing the application for DHP is received within one calendar month of the claim for HB/CTB being decided) whichever is the earlier, or the most appropriate.

The minimum period for which the Benefits Service will award a DHP is one week.

An award will usually be for not less than 3 months.

The Benefits Service will not normally award a DHP for a period exceeding 12 months.

Any reasonable request for backdating an award of a DHP will be considered but such consideration will usually be limited to the current financial year. A DHP cannot be awarded for any period outside an existing HB/CTB benefit period granted under the HB/CTB statutory scheme.

Awarding a DHP

In deciding whether to award a DHP, the Benefits Service will take into account:

- The shortfall between Housing and Council Tax Benefit and the liability;
- Any steps taken by the customer to reduce their rental or Council Tax liability;
- The financial and medical circumstances (including ill health and disabilities) of the customer, their partner and any other members of their household including dependants and any other occupants of the customer's home;
- The income and expenditure of the customer, their partner and any other members of their household including any dependants or other occupants of the customer's home;
- Any savings or capital that might be held by the customer or their family;
- The level of indebtedness of the customer and their family;
- The exceptional nature of the customer and their family's circumstances, bearing in mind there is no need to show that the circumstances are exceptional before awarding a DHP;
- The amount available in the DHP budget at the time of the application;
- The possible impact on the Council of not making such an award, e.g. the pressure on priority homeless accommodation;
- Any other special circumstances brought to the attention of the Benefits Service.

The Benefits Service will decide how much to award based on all of the circumstances. This may be an amount below the difference between the liability and the payment of Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit.

An award of a DHP does not guarantee that a further award will be made at a later date even if the customer's circumstances have not changed.

Changes of Circumstances

The Benefits Service may need to revise an award of a DHP where the customer's circumstances have materially changed.

Overpayments

The Benefits Service will seek to recover any DHP found to be overpaid. Normally this will involve issuing an invoice to the customer or the person to whom the award was paid. It is most unlikely that recovery of any overpayment caused by an "official error" will be sought. Under no circumstances will recovery be made from any amounts of Housing and/or Council Tax Benefit due to the customer (except if the customer requests this method of recovery specifically in writing). The decision letter that notifies an overpayment decision will also set out the right of review.

The right to seek a Review

DHP's are not payments of Housing or Council Tax Benefits and are therefore not subject to the statutory appeals mechanism. However, all Councils are expected to set up an appropriate review process.

The Benefits Service will operate the following policy for dealing with requests to review a decision not to award a DHP, a decision to award a reduced or lesser amount of DHP, a decision not to backdate a DHP or a decision that there has been an overpayment of a DHP.

A customer (or their appointee or agent) who disagrees with a DHP decision may dispute the decision. A request for a review shall be delivered in writing to a designated office within one calendar month of the written DHP decision being issued to the customer. The first step is for an Officer from the Benefits Service to explain the DHP decision to the customer by telephone, at interview or in writing and to seek to resolve the matter.

Where agreement cannot be reached, a Senior Benefits Officer will consider the case, review all the evidence held and will make a decision within 14 days of referral or as soon as practicable.

Where the Senior Benefits Officer decides not to revise the original decision, he/she will notify the customer of their decision in writing, setting out the reasons for their decision.

Where the customer is still not satisfied, they will be entitled to a further and final review, provided this is requested in writing within one calendar month of the date on the decision letter sent by the Senior Benefits Officer. A person who is completely independent of the Benefits Service will carry out this review.

An Independent Officer (a member of the Council's Corporate Complaints Team or similar) will conduct this further review. The Independent Officer will have the right to access all information held by the Benefits Service and to interview Officers from the Benefits Service involved in the decision making process. The decision made by the Independent Officer will be notified in writing to both the Benefits Service and to the customer. Their decision will be final and binding and may only be challenged via the judicial review process or by complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Senior Benefits Officer or Independent Officer may extend the time periods for a review in exceptional circumstances. In deciding to extend, they will take into account the financial difficulties in making an award for a previous financial year and any delay in seeking independent advice that was outside the control of the customer.

Unless a change in circumstances has occurred, the Officer dealing with the review may not recommend a reduction in an award already notified.

Publicity

The Benefits Service will publicise the scheme and will work with all interested parties to achieve this. A copy of this policy statement will be made available for inspection and will be posted on the Council's web site. Information about the amount spent will not normally be made available except at the end of the financial year.

Method of Payment

The Benefits Service will decide the most appropriate person to pay based upon the circumstances of each case. This could include paying:

- The customer;
- Their partner;
- An appointee;
- Their landlord (or an agent of the landlord); or
- Any third party to whom it might be most appropriate to make payment.

The Benefits Service will pay an award of DHP by the most appropriate means available in each case. This could include payment:

- by cheque or electronic transfer (e.g. BACS)
- by crediting the customer's Council Tax and / or rent accounts;

Payment frequency will normally be made in line with the Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit award.

Notification

The Benefits Service will inform the customer in writing of the outcome of their application within 14 days of receipt. Where the application is unsuccessful, the Benefits Service will set out the reasons why this decision was made and explain the right of review. Where the application is successful, the Benefits Service will advise:

- The weekly amount of DHP awarded;
- Whether it is paid in advance or in arrears;
- The period of the award;
- How, when and to whom the award will be paid;
- The requirement to report a change in circumstances;

Fraud

The Benefit Service and Fraud Service are committed to the fight against fraud in all its forms. A customer who tries to fraudulently claim a DHP by falsely declaring their circumstances, providing a false statement or evidence in support of their application, may have committed an offence under the appropriate legislation. Where the Fraud Service suspects that such a fraud may have occurred, the matter will be investigated as appropriate and this may lead to criminal proceedings being instigated.

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank