



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY 14TH JUNE 2017 AT 6.00 P.M.

PARKSIDE COMMITTEE - PARKSIDE

MEMBERS: Councillors G. N. Denaro (Leader), K.J. May (Deputy Leader),
B. T. Cooper, M. A. Sherrey, C. B. Taylor and P. J. Whittaker

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest

To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests.
3. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5th April 2017 (Pages 1 - 8)
4. Minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 27th March 2017 and 24th April 2017 (Pages 9 - 24)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
(Please note that the recommendation in Minute 109/16 relating to the Cabinet Work Programme was considered and approved at Cabinet on 5th April)
5. Outside Bodies 2017/18 - Appointments by Cabinet (Pages 25 - 30)
6. Community Engagement Strategy (Pages 31 - 40)
7. Equality Strategy and Equal Opportunities Policy (Pages 41 - 64)

8. Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy (Pages 65 - 70)
9. Revised Treasury Management Strategy 2017 Report (Pages 71 - 72)
10. 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
11. 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:-

Item No.	Paragraph(s)
12	4
13	4
14	4

12. Facility Management and Cleaning Review Business Case (Pages 73 - 106)
13. Parks and Open Spaces Review Business Case (Pages 107 - 158)
14. Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services Review Business Case (Pages 159 - 180)

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

Parkside
 Market Street
 BROMSGROVE
 Worcestershire
 B61 8DA

6th June 2017

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

5TH APRIL 2017 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors G. N. Denaro (Leader), K.J. May (Deputy Leader),
B. T. Cooper, M. A. Sherrey, C. B. Taylor and P. J. Whittaker

Observers: Councillor S. A. Webb

Officers: Mr K. Dicks, Ms J. Pickering, Mrs C. Felton, Ms D. Poole, Ms
A. Singleton, Mr M. Hanwell, Mr D. Piper, Mr D. Allen, Mrs S. Sellers
and Ms R. Cole

103/16 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence on this occasion.

104/16 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

105/16 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 28th February 2017,
1st March 2017 and 22nd March 2017 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 28th
February 2017, 1st March 2017 and 22nd March 2017 each be approved
as correct records respectively.

106/16 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 13th February 2017

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on
13th February 2017 were submitted.

Reference was made to the recommendations contained within minute
94/16 relating to the work of the Finance and Budget Working Group.
Cabinet were in agreement with the recommendations subject to the
amendment to the wording of recommendation (3) to read:

- (3) Heads of Service be asked to look at all areas where generate
income and produce a cost recovery statement for further
consideration.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that subject to the above amendment, the recommendations within minute 94/16 of the Overview and Scrutiny Board be approved;
and
(b) that the remainder of the minutes be noted.

Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 27th March 2017

The recommendation contained within minute 109/16 of the Overview and Scrutiny Board relating to the Cabinet Work programme was considered.

It was felt that the recommendation was in accordance with the way the Cabinet sought to operate and therefore it was

RESOLVED that Cabinet Members work with Senior Officers and Heads of Service to ensure that items are placed on the Cabinet Work Programme in a timely manner so that the Overview and Scrutiny Board has the opportunity to identify items for pre-scrutiny.

107/16

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD

The minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 16th February 2017 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Service Board held on 16th February 2017 be noted.

108/16

APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED that the appointment of Councillor M. A. Sherrey to the following outside bodies (which are Cabinet appointments) be endorsed:

- Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board (replacing Councillor K. J. May);
- Worcestershire Health Improvement Group (a Sub Group of the Health and Wellbeing Board)

109/16

REVIEW OF ECONOMIC PRIORITIES AND FUTURE DIRECTION OF TRAVEL

The Leader welcomed to the meeting Robert Spittle and Jonathan Till, Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively of the Bromsgrove Economic Development Theme Group, which was part of the Bromsgrove Partnership Board.

Cabinet considered a report on a set of revised economic priorities for the District. These were supported by an analysis of the various economic challenges faced by and opportunities available to the District.

Members referred to some of the current challenges. In particular reference was made to:

- Low wage levels for those who live and work in Bromsgrove – 6th lowest in the West Midlands region;
- An imbalanced Housing Market and rising affordability issues – the property to annual income ratio in Bromsgrove being 10.8:1 when generally a ratio of 4:1 is considered to be affordable;
- The demographics of the District which showed Bromsgrove has the 10th lowest proportion of residents in the working age group and that numbers in the 30-39 age group were falling (probably due to the cost of housing)

Members' attention was drawn to the 9 strategic priorities for economic growth set out in section 3.22 of the report:

- Driving economic growth
- Improving Connectivity
- Supporting Businesses to start and grow
- Re-balancing the local housing market
- Developing key sectors
- Driving up and retaining skills locally
- Improving the Centres
- Partnership working
- Leading by example

A range of “early actions” to drive forward delivery of these priorities were contained in Appendix 3 to the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development stressed that in order to take these priorities forward, the co-operation and support of colleagues within the Cabinet and other Members would be crucial as the priorities cut across many areas of the Council's activities and services.

Mr Spittle expressed the support of the Economic Development Theme Group for the proposals which the Group had helped to shape. It was also suggested that it would be beneficial to look to create a wider Task Force to encourage all Stakeholders to work together.

Cabinet recognised that in order to maximise the success of the Economic Development of the District, the co-operation and support of a wide range of stakeholders would be required and therefore the establishment of a Task Force to facilitate this was supported in principle.

Members welcomed the report and the revision of the economic strategic priorities whilst acknowledging there were a number of challenges which would impact upon their implementation.

Issues which were raised during the discussion included:

- potential sources of funding for some of the priorities;
- the role of the West Midlands Combined Authority;
- the role of the Local Enterprise Partnerships;
- highways issues which needed to be addressed;
- parking issues which were being considered;
- Broad Band issues

It was recognised that Bromsgrove District had a good base from which to build and achieve greater economic growth to benefit residents and the District as a whole.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the economic narrative set out in Appendix 2 to the report and the challenges and opportunities faced by the District set out in section 3.14 of the report be noted and endorsed;
- (b) that the 9 strategic priorities for economic growth set out in section 3.22 of the report be approved; and
- (c) that the Early Action Programme set out in Appendix 3 to the report be approved.

110/16

BEOLEY CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Cabinet considered a report on the Conservation Area Appraisal and proposed Management Plan for Beoley Conservation Area.

It was noted that following the previous decision to approve the draft Conservation Area Appraisal, public consultation had taken place with local residents and other interested parties. There had been broad support for the Conservation Area Appraisal, Management Plan and minor boundary changes. Comments were included in Appendix 2 to the report.

Cabinet thanked officers for the detailed work undertaken in respect of this proposal. It was noted that the purpose of the Appraisal and Management Plan was to allow development to take within the Conservation Area in a way which would protect and enhance its character and appearance.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Beoley Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be approved and its contents endorsed as a material consideration for planning purposes; and
- (b) that the designation of the areas to be added to the Beoley Conservation Area as outlined in the report be approved.

111/16

REVIEW OF NEW HOMES BONUS COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME

Cabinet considered a report on the proposed revision of the New Homes Bonus Community Grants Scheme for 2017/18. The review had been agreed by the New Homes Bonus Community Grants Panel and had been undertaken by Members of the Panel supported by officers.

It was reported that the revised scheme if approved would revert largely to the scheme originally implemented in 2015/16. This would mean that the allocation of funds would be based on where there was evidence of the impact of housing growth.

The application forms and documentation had been reviewed to reflect this and to take account of a number of issues which had been raised previously. As a consequence the application process would be more robust and would require more involvement from Ward Councillors.

The Leader thanked Councillors K. J. May and S. J. Baxter and the officers for their work on this issue.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revised New Homes Bonus Community Grants Scheme as attached at Appendix 1 to the report be approved;
- (b) that the use of 25% of the additional New Homes Bonus Grant received in 2016/17 to calculate the amount of £144k to be allocated to the scheme be approved;
- (c) that an additional amount of £27,157 be added to the total allocation in respect of funds carried forward from the previous year's scheme; and
- (d) that a deduction of £2k be made from the Scheme to cover the cost of administering the Scheme.

112/16

WORCESTERSHIRE STRATEGIC HOUSING PARTNERSHIP PLAN

Cabinet considered a report in relation to the proposed Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan and Memorandum of Understanding.

It was noted that the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership was made up of a range of strategic partners including Adult Services and Health, Children's Services, the Department of Work and Pensions, Homes and Communities Agency and Local Authority Strategic Housing Officers from across Worcestershire.

It was reported that the Plan had been developed in order to reflect the major changes around Health and Housing legislation since the Worcestershire Housing Strategy was published in 2011. The new Housing Partnership Plan sought to capture the legislation in one place and to identify the challenges faced as a result of the changes. It also intended to enable action planning across agencies to respond at a local level to pressures on housing.

It was noted that the Plan was an overarching document setting the strategic direction for housing in Worcestershire and recognised the need for partners to work together to make the most effective use of existing resources to maximise the wellbeing of residents. The Local Memorandum of Understanding sets out how the Partnership will work together to address the housing need and achieve wider benefits to partner organisations.

Members recognised that there would still be a number of challenges to deliver the actions within the Plan but action plans would be developed to assist with this.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan be approved; and
- (b) that the Worcestershire Memorandum of Understanding be approved.

113/16

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

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 items of business the subject of the following minute on the grounds that they involve the disclosure of "Exempt Information" as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, the relevant part being as set out below and that it is in the public interest to do so.

<u>Minute No</u>	<u>Paragraph</u>
114 /16	3
115/16	3

114/16

ICT INFRASTRUCTURE PROPOSALS

Cabinet considered a report on a further procurement exercise in respect of ICT Infrastructure resource. It was noted that the full details of the tender specification document had been included within the report. It was also noted that a further procurement exercise had been undertaken as the previous quotation had expired and that only one tender had been received.

Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED that authority be delegated to the Head of Transformation and Organisational Development to proceed with the procurement of a contract to deliver the ICT infrastructure functions with the preferred supplier as set out in Appendix 1 option 2.

115/16

SHARED SERVICES BUSINESS CASE FOR CUSTOMER ACCESS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

The Head of Customer Access and Financial Support gave a brief presentation on the Business Case for the Service Review of the Customer Access and Financial Support Service.

The presentation included the following:

- a reminder of the strategic and operational purposes for the service;
- the work undertaken within the service over a three year period to understand how best to meet the purposes and to ensure the roles and capacity needed were understood;
- working with partners such as Connecting Families and BDHT;
- the aims of the proposal and proposed structure;
- key work areas i.e. welfare support, revenues, customer support, quality and improvement and systems development but working as one Team;
- financial savings;
- the impact on staff;
- the reasons for not pursuing alternative operating models

The Head of Customer Access and Financial Support referred to the report and to the Business Case which contained part of the significant amount of the evidence which had been obtained through the transformation process including trial working, gathering of customer demand etc.

Members raised a number of queries to which officers responded. It was also requested that for clarity a Glossary of Terms be included as an Appendix to the report.

It was acknowledged that there would need to be further changes within the service in future due to changing circumstances both nationally and locally.

Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED that the proposals within the Customer Access and Financial Support Services – Service Review Business Case be approved.

116/16

MRS S SELLERS

The Leader referred to this being the last Cabinet meeting to be attended by the Council's Principal Solicitor Mrs Sarah Sellers. The Leader thanked Mrs Sellers for her work on behalf of the Authority and wished her well for the future.

Agenda Item 3

Cabinet
5th April 2017

The meeting closed at 7.25 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

27TH MARCH 2017 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors L. C. R. Mallett (Chairman), S. A. Webb (Vice-Chairman), C. Allen-Jones, C.A. Hotham, R. J. Laight (present from Minute No. 101/16 to Minute No. 105/16), C. J. Spencer, P.L. Thomas and M. Thompson

Observers: Councillor M. A. Sherrey

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Mr. J. Godwin, Ms J. Willis, Ms. B. Houghton, Ms. A. Scarce and Ms. J. Bayley

101/16

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors S. R. Colella, M. Glass and J. M. L. A. Griffiths.

The Chairman explained that Councillors J. M. L. A. Griffiths and C. A. Hotham had replaced Councillors B. T. Cooper and S. Baxter respectively on the Board. On behalf of the Board the Chairman thanked Councillors Baxter and Cooper for their contributions to the scrutiny process. Councillor Cooper's work as the Council's representative of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) in recent years was also recognised by the Board. Members were advised that as the appointment to HOSC was made by Council a replacement would be confirmed in April.

102/16

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor C. A. Hotham declared an other disclosable interest in respect of Minute Item No. 105/16 in that his wife's GP Practice, the New Road Surgery in Bromsgrove, had a symbiotic relationship with the Ryland Centre for use of the organisations' respective parking facilities.

103/16

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 13th February 2017 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 13th February 2017 be approved as a correct record.

104/16

SCRUTINY OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER PARTNERSHIP

The Community Safety Manager presented a briefing note which updated the Board on the work of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership in 2016/17. During the delivery of this presentation the following points were highlighted for Members' consideration:

- Since May 2013 there had been a single Community Safety Partnership for the whole of north Worcestershire, covering Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest districts.
- The Safer Bromsgrove Group took an operational lead on behalf of the partnership in respect of the district.
- The Bromsgrove Town Centres Management Group was a sub-committee of the Safer Bromsgrove Group which focused on a range of matters including community safety in the town centre and links to economic regeneration.
- There was a statutory duty for the partnership to produce a three year rolling plan outlining how partners would address key crime and community safety priorities during the period.
- The partnership had links to the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). Although he was not a statutory partner he had a duty to co-operate with the Community Safety Partnership and vice versa.
- The West Mercia PCC provided funding to the Community Safety Partnership. The funding process was due to be reviewed and it was anticipated that this would lead to a more robust, outcome-based framework in future.
- There was a typographical error in the total figure that had been quoted in Appendix 2 to the report in respect of funding requests by the partnership to the PCC for 2017/18; this should have been recorded as £199,950.
- The partnership had proposed a series of projects to be funded using grants from the PCC. These had been identified based on available data.
- A number of county wide initiatives were being delivered in Bromsgrove district including the Safe Place Scheme.
- Based on available data Appendix 3 had been developed to enable Members to assess the frequency of particular crime types in Bromsgrove. Data had been provided for previous years and for both Redditch and Wyre Forest for comparative purposes.

The Board subsequently discussed a number of points in detail:

- The trends in crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) identified from the available data.
- The increase in domestic burglaries within the district. The partnership had analysed available data and found that many of these crimes were committed in areas bordering Birmingham and often involved theft of car keys from a property.

Agenda Item 4

Overview and Scrutiny Board
27th March 2017

- The increase in Police patrols to address the higher crime levels in border areas of the district.
- The increase in shoplifting in Bromsgrove and Redditch and the use of the online Facewatch platform to enable retailers to share information about shoplifting. Members were advised that the Police managed this system and used it to help support businesses.
- The increase in cases of violence without injury and the types of crimes covered by this category. Officers advised that violence without injury applied to cases where an assault did not result in any form of abrasions to the skin (e.g. a push).
- The inclusion of crime type figures for HMP Hewell in the data for Bromsgrove district and the potential for these figures to be viewed separately. The Board requested that Officers circulate this information for Members' consideration after the meeting.
- The responsibility of the partnership for crime and ASB within HMP Hewell. Members were advised that HMP Hewell was a member of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership though various organisations in the criminal justice system had statutory responsibilities in respect of the prison.
- The links between the Safer Bromsgrove Group and the Street Pastors and the funding provided by the partnership to enable the Street Pastors to operate effectively in the district.
- The work of the Community Safety and Private Sector Housing teams in respect of illegal traveller encampments.
- The action undertaken to secure Churchfields Car Park, which had included a review of the physical security arrangements. These works had helped to make the site less attractive for youths who had previously committed ASB whilst gathering there.
- The availability of literature informing residents about the Safe Place Scheme. Officers explained that leaflets were available and were promoted to various local advocacy groups to help raise awareness.
- The decline in vehicle crimes during the last 12 months. Members were informed that this had been accompanied by a rise in burglaries involving thefts of car keys.
- The impact of the night time economy on levels of violence with injury and violence without injury and action that could be taken to address this. The Board was informed that the Bromsgrove Town Centres Management Group was working to establish a new Local Watch initiative.
- The number of Crime Prevention Managers in West Mercia Police, which had reduced from 6 to 2 for the whole county in recent years.
- The training that had been provided, both to Police Officers and members of the Community Safety team, to enable them to help support crime prevention initiatives.
- The impact of reductions in resources within the public sector on the work of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership.

- The need for partners to work in innovative and different ways in the future to meet the needs of residents using existing resources.
- The partnership's links to the PCC and West Mercia Police and Crime Panel which held the PCC to account. Members were advised that the Council's representative on the panel was Councillor Sherrey who could raise issues on behalf of the Council during these meetings.
- The number of business crimes recorded for the period, which were relatively low compared to other parts of the county, and the type of crimes within this category. Members were advised that the business crime category was relatively broad and took into account any crime where there was a connection to a business.
- The board requested a breakdown of the cases that had been recorded as business crimes for the period.
- The work of the Bromsgrove and Redditch Schools Respect programme in a range of First, Middle and High Schools.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

105/16

DOLPHIN CENTRE - UPDATE ON WORK WITH DISPLACED GROUPS

The Head of Leisure and Cultural Services delivered a presentation which updated Members on the work undertaken by officers to support groups that would be displaced following the closure of the Dolphin Centre (Appendix 1). Members were asked to note that a number of assumptions had informed the content of this presentation including:

- Daytime users of the sports hall at the Dolphin Centre had been consulted as they would be directly affected by its closure.
- The potential to provide alternative accommodation to groups that met in the evening had been reviewed by officers as part of a desktop exercise. Groups that met in the evening had therefore not yet been consulted.
- Bookings might be rescheduled depending on the programme, due to different start times.
- An assumption had been made that the agreement with BAM would proceed.
- There had also been an assumption that football sessions would be available through SBHS on the 3G Pitch.
- There had been an assumption that there would be a need to offer pay and play badminton on a daily basis.
- Finally there had been an assumption that where it was not possible for groups to use the new leisure centre or BAM's facilities we would look to use the Ryland Centre as a first option. However, it was accepted that there would be some groups that would prefer to meet at an alternative venue.

Following delivery of the presentation a number of points were discussed in detail:

Agenda Item 4

Overview and Scrutiny Board
27th March 2017

- The operator that would manage the new Leisure Centre would need to submit a programme to the Council before they commence operating the site.
- The age profile of participants in various community activities and the extent to which this had been taken into account by the Sports Development team when assessing potential slots for evening sessions. Officers advised that every attempt had been made to take this into account, though there remained some flexibility where needed.
- Officers would review the information provided by BAM to ensure no groups had been missed by the relocation.
- There may be an option for soft play activities and children's parties to take place at the new Leisure Centre; this would be at the operator's discretion.
- The length of slots that community groups would be able to book in the future was confirmed at 55 minutes per session.
- The potential for community groups to meet transfer to other leisure centres outside of the district was discussed. The Board was advised that the preference of most groups would be to continue to meet within the catchment area for the Dolphin Centre.
- The extent to which groups that already meet at North Bromsgrove High School had been consulted about the changes was discussed and Officers confirmed that priority was being given to current Dolphin Centre users.
- Officers covered details of the proposed agreement with BAM.
 - The length of the contract with BAM - 21 years in line with BAM's remaining contract with Worcestershire County Council.
 - The annual cost of the contract with BAM of £50,000, which would be transferred from the Council to the operator of the new leisure centre once this had been confirmed.
 - The period covered by the contract with BAM of 48 weeks. This provided time for BAM to meet various maintenance obligations.
 - The availability of BAM facilities during term times and examination periods.
- The risk that community groups' bookings at the Ryland Centre might be cancelled if the number of participants declined. Officers explained that the Ryland Centre had indicated they were interested in accommodating the displaced groups where possible.

Members thanked the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services and his Team for the detailed work which had been undertaken to ensure the impact on the community groups was minimised.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(During consideration of this item the Chairman invited the public to participate in the debate).

106/16

FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP - UPDATE

The Chairman of the Finance and Budget Working Group, Councillor L. C. R. Mallett, advised that there had been no further meetings of the group since the last meeting of the Board. However, following the resignation of Councillor Baxter from the Board and Councillor Cooper's appointment to Cabinet 2 vacancies had arisen in the membership of this group. The Board agreed that Councillor C. A. Hotham should be appointed as a replacement.

The roles of the Finance and Budget and Measures Dashboard Working Groups during the year were also discussed during consideration of this item. These groups had both made a significant contribution to the scrutiny process and the Chairman suggested that this should be reflected in the Overview and Scrutiny Board's Annual Report 2016/17. As the groups were undertaking a lot of scrutiny work Members were asked to note that there might be the potential to cancel some scheduled meetings of the Board in 2017/18.

RESOLVED that Councillor C. A. Hotham be appointed to serve on the Finance and Budget Working Group.

107/16

MEASURES DASHBOARD WORKING GROUP - UPDATE

Councillor S. A. Webb, Chairman of the Measures Dashboard Working Group, explained that the group had held 2 meetings over the last 6 weeks. During these meetings Members had agreed to work as a group rather than to take responsibility for monitoring the measures for specific strategic purposes as originally envisaged. The group had reviewed measures associated with 'help me run a successful business' at their latest meeting and had found that some of the data was incomplete. At future meetings the group aimed to invite relevant Heads of Service and Portfolio Holders to discuss specific measures.

The group had made more progress in recent weeks because a solution had been identified in relation to the limited access that Members had had to the dashboard. Unfortunately Members still had limited access the dashboard on their iPads. This was an ongoing issue which the ICT team were trying to address. In the meantime Members had been provided with sunray cards to enable them to access computers at Parkside which had been installed in the Members' Lounge.

108/16

TASK GROUP UPDATES

The Board received updates in respect of ongoing Task Groups and Short Sharp Reviews.

Agenda Item 4

Overview and Scrutiny Board
27th March 2017

a) Staff Survey Joint Scrutiny Task Group

In the absence of the Chairman of the group, Councillor S. R. Colella, Officers advised that there had been 2 meetings of the group since the last meeting of the Board had taken place. Members had considered information about staff sickness absence levels to find out whether there was any correlation with the feedback provided in completed staff surveys. Some of the data provided in respect of sickness absence levels had been inconsistent and therefore relevant Officers had been invited to attend the second meeting of the group to discuss this in further detail. The following meeting of the group would take place on 27th April when Members would brainstorm future areas to address.

b) Social Media Task Group

In the absence of the Chairman of the Social Media Task Group, Councillor R. J. Laight, Councillor M. Thompson provided an update on the work of the group. The Board was informed that the group had held a number of meetings. At the first of these meetings responses received from other Councillors to the group's survey had been assessed and it had been interesting to learn about the different ways in which Members used social media both in their personal and professional lives. At the latest meeting of the group Members had interviewed a representative of the Bromsgrove Standard and had learned a lot about the various ways in which social media could be used to engage with the public. There was the possibility that some of these techniques could be utilised to enhance the Council's approach to communications and consultation in future.

c) CCTV Short Sharp Review

In the absence of the Chairman of the CCTV Short Sharp Review, Councillor S. R. Colella, Officers explained that the group had held a meeting to discuss their terms of reference. Meeting dates and expert witnesses had been identified. However, following the appointment of Councillor Cooper to the Cabinet the membership of the group had been reduced to 2 Councillors. Officers advised that it was good practice to have at least 3 Members appointed to scrutiny reviews and that any Member who was not on the Cabinet could be appointed. As there were no volunteers during the meeting the Board agreed that all eligible Members should be invited to express an interest in participating in the group. In the meantime until the membership of the group had increased to at least 3 Councillors the meetings of the group would be postponed.

RESOLVED that

- (1) all Members not serving on the Cabinet be invited to express an interest in taking part in the CCTV Short Sharp Review; and
- (2) meetings of the CCTV Short Sharp Review be postponed until further Members have been appointed to the group.

109/16

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Board considered the content of the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme for the period 1st April to 31st July 2017.

A number of concerns were raised by Members during consideration of the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme:

- The majority of the items listed on the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme were scheduled for the consideration of Cabinet in April 2017.
- As many of these items appeared to have been added since the last meeting of the Board there had been limited notice provided to enable Members to identify items that might have been suitable for pre-decision scrutiny.
- Unfortunately some items on the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme had been postponed for consideration, sometimes multiple times, which made it difficult to determine when the Board might undertake pre-decision scrutiny.
- Questions were also as to whether the proposed timing for consideration of items was realistic in all cases. For example Members suggested that the Alvechurch Parish Neighbourhood Plan would probably not be ready for consideration by the Cabinet in April 2017.
- Members suggested that Heads of Service needed to take more responsibility for items on the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme and to improve forward planning arrangements.
- There was a risk that the Board might need to resort to calling in important items which had been added to the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme with limited notice, particularly key decisions.
- Such an outcome would not be ideal as it could delay the implementation of decisions. Members therefore suggested that updating the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme so as to enable more pre-decision scrutiny would be preferable.

Members noted that the Burcot Lane Site Future Development, which had originally been scheduled for the consideration of Cabinet in April, had been postponed. The item remained on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme. However there was the possibility that an extra meeting of the Board would need to be scheduled to enable Members to pre-scrutinise the report.

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet Members work with senior Officers and Heads of Service to ensure that items are placed on the Cabinet

Agenda Item 4

Overview and Scrutiny Board
27th March 2017

Leader's Work Programme in a timely manner so that the Overview and Scrutiny Board has the opportunity to identify items for pre-scrutiny.

110/16

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

Members were advised that the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2016/17 was scheduled for consideration at the following meeting of the Board on 24th April. In advance of this meeting Members were asked to notify the Democratic Services Officers of any subjects which they felt should be included within the report.

The meeting closed at 7.45 p.m.

Chairman

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

24TH APRIL 2017 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors L. C. R. Mallett (Chairman), S. A. Webb (Vice-Chairman), C. Allen-Jones, S. R. Colella (until Minute Item No. 117/16), C.A. Hotham, C. J. Spencer, P.L. Thomas (from Minute Item No. 115/16) and M. Thompson

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering and Ms. J. Bayley

111/16 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor R. J. Laight.

The Board was advised that there was the possibility that absent Members had provided their apologies in advance to a member of staff who was unable to attend the meeting due to unforeseen circumstances. Members agreed that any such apologies should be noted and approved at the following meeting of the Board.

112/16 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

There were no declarations of interest nor of any whipping arrangements.

113/16 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 27TH MARCH 2017**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on Monday 27th March 2017 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 27th March 2017 be approved as a correct record.

114/16 **TASK GROUP UPDATES**

The Board received updates in respect of ongoing Task Groups and Short Sharp Reviews.

a) **Staff Survey Joint Scrutiny Task Group**

The Chairman of the Task Group, Councillor S. R. Colella, reported that the group had undertaken detailed scrutiny of the staff survey

at various meetings. A number of lessons had been learned about joint scrutiny working and these needed to be taken into account for the future. However, during the course of the review it had become apparent that the situation in respect of the staff survey was changing and some of the group's terms of reference were out of date. The group's findings would be recorded in an interim report and this would be presented for Members' consideration at the following meeting of the Board.

b) Social Media Task Group

In the absence of the Chairman of the Task Group Councillor M. Thompson explained that there had been no meetings of the group since March.

c) CCTV Short Sharp Review

The Chairman of the group, Councillor S. R. Colella, explained that no meetings had been held since the last meeting of the Board. As agreed during the previous meeting Officers had consulted with non-executive Members to find out whether any would be willing to participate in the review. Councillors C. J. Spencer and S. A. Webb explained that they would be interested in becoming Members of the group.

RESOLVED that Councillors C. J. Spencer and S. A. Webb be appointed to serve on the CCTV Short Sharp Review.

115/16

JOINT SCRUTINY WORK WITH REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Board considered a proposal that had been received from Redditch Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to undertake joint performance scrutiny where appropriate.

Members were advised that Redditch Members had established a Performance Scrutiny Working Group, which had a similar remit to Bromsgrove District Council's Measures Dashboard Working Group, in June 2016. At the latest meeting of the Redditch Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members had agreed that the Performance Scrutiny Working Group should continue with its work in 2017/18. Redditch Members had become aware that there were similarities between the work of the Performance Scrutiny Working Group and the Measures Dashboard Working Group and had felt that it might be useful to hold informal meetings to enable Members to share ideas and best practice. The Redditch Overview and Scrutiny Committee had also proposed that joint scrutiny meetings could be held, involving Members of both working groups, where the same issues were identified as suitable for further scrutiny.

Councillor S. A. Webb, the Chairman of the Measures Dashboard Working Group, explained that the group had discussed this proposal at

their latest meeting. Members had had some concerns that due to delays accessing the dashboard on their iPads the group was at a different stage in terms of scrutinising the performance of Council services to Redditch Members. For this reason Members concurred that it would be premature to hold joint scrutiny meetings in 2017/18. However, there was recognition that informal meetings, every 6 months, could add value as it would provide an opportunity for Members from the 2 Councils to share ideas.

RESOLVED that in 2017/18 informal meetings should be arranged every 6 months between Redditch Borough Council's Performance Scrutiny Working Group and Bromsgrove District Council's Measures Dashboard Working Group to share ideas and understanding of best practice in performance scrutiny.

116/16

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17 AND REVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE BOARD

Members considered a draft copy of the Overview and Scrutiny Board's Annual Report 2016/17. During consideration of the document the following points were raised:

- A similar format had been used for the content of the annual report as had been adopted in previous years.
- The final version of the annual report would be presented by the Chairman of the Board at a meeting of Council in the new municipal year.
- A copy of the Chairman's foreword was circulated for Members' consideration during the meeting and it was agreed that this should be added to the final version of the report prior to publication.
- There was general agreement that reference to the staff survey in the Chairman's foreword should reflect the concerns that had led to the launch of the joint scrutiny review.
- A number of typographical errors were identified in the membership gallery and it was noted Councillor Spencer's profile had been missed accidentally and needed to be added.
- Members suggested that it would be helpful if the report could clarify that the annual report covered the municipal year 2016/17 and the months included within this period.
- The Board agreed that the information provided in respect of the staff survey review should be amended to recognise that the exercise had been launched after the second survey results had been reviewed by Members due to concerns about the level of progress that had been achieved since the first survey had been conducted.

The Board also considered the role of the Finance and Budget and Measures Dashboard Working Groups during the year. There was general consensus that these groups had made a constructive contribution to the scrutiny process and should be retained in 2017/18. Due to the workload of these groups the possibility of reducing the

number of Board meetings had been discussed by the Chairman and Vice Chairman with Officers. However, Members agreed that until the work programme planning process was improved for the Cabinet the number of meetings should remain the same to provide the Board with opportunities to pre-scrutinise relevant items of business.

Finally Members concluded this item by discussing the timing of meetings of the Board. Some Members suggested that it would be preferable to reschedule meetings of the Board so that these did not take place on Monday evenings, as this often conflicted with Parish Council meetings. However, the Chairman noted that the calendar for 2017/18 had already been developed and it would be difficult to reschedule meetings of the Board at this stage. Under these circumstances Members agreed that the day when meetings of the Board were held should be reviewed for subsequent years.

RESOLVED that

- (1) The Finance and Budget Working Group and Measures Dashboard Working Group should continue to form part of the Council's scrutiny process in 2017/18; and
- (2) Subject to the amendments detailed in the preamble above, the content of the Overview and Scrutiny Board's Annual Report 2016/17 be approved.

117/16

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered the content of the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme for the period 1st May to 31st July 2017. The Board noted that the majority of items were scheduled for consideration at a meeting of the Cabinet due to take place on 7th June 2017. As this would be on the eve of the general election questions were raised as to whether this meeting would still go ahead and Officers were asked to consult with the Leader in respect of this matter.

The Board's recommendation in relation to the Work Programme, which had been proposed at the previous meeting, had been approved by Cabinet. Senior Officers were also aware of the concerns raised by Members in respect of the amount of notice provided for items on the Work Programme. The subject would be raised again at forthcoming meetings of the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Members were advised that it was possible some of the items due to be considered in June would need to be rescheduled. In particular, Officers suggested that the *Burcot Lane Site Future Development* item might need to be considered on a different date potentially necessitating an extra meeting of the Board to enable pre-scrutiny of the report.

The inclusion of a number of shared service business cases on the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme was noted by the Board. Members suggested that given the potential relevance of these items to future

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service delivery these reports might be suitable for pre-scrutiny. As such the suggestion was made that consideration should be given to postponing these items until July 2017, though it was noted that the business case for Legal and Democratic Services might need to remain on the agenda for the June meeting of Cabinet due to recent changes in personnel.

118/16

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered the contents of the Board's work programme and in so doing noted that a number of items which had been scheduled for consideration in April had been postponed. This included an update report in respect of the Council's economic priorities, which had been rescheduled for consideration at the June meeting of the Board to provide time for additional detail to be gathered. The latest biannual update on the planning backlog data, for the period up to 31st March 2017, had also been postponed and it was anticipated that this would now be received in June 2017.

The Chairman concluded the meeting by thanking every Member of the Board for their hard work as well as the 2 Democratic Services Officers and the Executive Director for Finance and Corporate Resources for their support during the year. Members also extended their thanks to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board.

The meeting closed at 6.40 p.m.

Chairman

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APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

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

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The Cabinet makes appointments and nominations to a number of Outside Bodies each year; some of these are for executive functions and these are made by the cabinet. This report sets out the details of the relevant appointments.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that appointments are made to the bodies listed in the appendix to the report.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

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

Legal Implications

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

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.4 A number of bodies ask the authority to make appointments to them for terms of office which vary from one year upwards.
- 3.5 The Council's constitution sets out that appointments to appropriate outside bodies may be made at Cabinet. A number of appointments, usually to national or regional bodies and carrying out an executive function, are made by office. In

most cases the portfolio holder for the function carried out by the outside body is the most appropriate appointment.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

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

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - list of appointments to outside bodies - cabinet

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Terms of reference and governing documents of organisations are held by Democratic Services.

7. KEY

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name:
email:
Tel.:

Outside Bodies By Office (Cabinet appointments)

Organisation	Number of representatives and length of term	Representation 2016-17	Nominations 2017-18
Age UK Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest branches have recently combined to create a new charity. Details of nominations are awaited and we are asked not to appoint to the charity in the meantime.	Portfolio holder with responsibility for older people	None to be made; await clarification from Age UK	
Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	One Leader and one Substitute nominated from 3 North Worcestershire Councils	Cllr G. Chance, Redditch BC Sub: Cllr T Ian Hardiman, Wyre Forest DC	
Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP Supervisory Board	Leader by office Substitute – Deputy Leader Check each year	Councillor Denaro Substitute Councillor Taylor	
Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP Area EU Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) Committee	One representative and one substitute to represent the 3 North Worcestershire Districts	Cllr J Fisher, Redditch BC Sub: Dean Piper, North Worcs Economic Development	
Bromsgrove Partnership (Local Strategic Partnership)	Leader (Portfolio holder) Substitute – Deputy Leader	Councillor May Councillor Taylor	
District Councils Network	Leader Substitute – Deputy Leader	Councillor Denaro Councillor Taylor	

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Organisation	Number of representatives and length of term	Representation 2016-17	Nominations 2017-18
Local Government Association General Assembly	Leader Substitute – Deputy Leader	Councillor Denaro Councillor Taylor	
North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership	Cabinet member	(Councillor Smith)	
PATROL (Parking And Traffic Regulations Outside London) Adjudication Joint Committee	Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services Substitute:	(Councillor Smith) Sub:	
West Midlands Employers (previously West Midlands Councils)	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources	Councillor Denaro Sub: Councillor May	
Shared Services Members Board (by office and 2 further representatives appointed at Council)	Leader Deputy Leader	Councillor Denaro Councillor Taylor	
Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board	1 rep for North Worcestershire and 1 substitute	Cllr Sherrey Sub: Cllr P Witherspoon, Redditch BC	
Health Improvement Group (HIG – a sub group of the Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board)	1 rep for North Worcestershire	Cllr Sherrey	
Worcestershire Intermediate Body to Deliver European Structural Investment	One representative and one substitute to represent the 3 North	Cllr J Fisher (Redditch BC) Sub: Dean Piper,	

Agenda Item 5

Cabinet 14th June 2017

Organisation	Number of representatives and length of term	Representation 2016-17	Nominations 2017-18
Funds (ESIF)	Worcestershire Districts	(NWEDR)	
Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership	One representative on behalf of the 3 North Worcestershire Councils – required by LEP constitution	Cllr May Sub: Leader from Wyre Forest (Cllr Marcus Hart) or Redditch (Cllr Bill Hartnett)	
Worcestershire Local Strategic Partnership	Leader Nominated substitute of the Deputy Leader	Councillor Denaro Councillor Taylor	
Worcestershire Local Transport Board	Two representatives and one substitute from the North Worcestershire authorities	Cllr G Chance, Redditch BC (Cllr T Onslow) Wyre Forest DC Substitute: Councillor R Laight	

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor G. N. Denaro
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Deb Poole, Head of Business Transformation
Ward(s) Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	n/a
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To endorse the new Community Engagement Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is requested to resolve that

- 2.1 **that the Community Engagement Strategy attached at Appendix 1 be noted and endorsed.**

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report; however, having a robust Community Engagement Strategy will help the Council to understand the needs of residents supporting the design and delivery of more relevant, coordinated and appropriate services, which are generally more cost effective. Working towards the aims of the strategy could also be beneficial in regards of the council's reputation and may help to reduce potential complaints.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 The Community Engagement Strategy addresses the legal standards surrounding consultation, including the doctrine of legitimate expectation (common law) and the Gunning Principles (1985).
- 3.3 Other specific legislation, including the Local Government Act 1999 and the Equality Act 2010 must be taken into account where appropriate.
- 3.4 Certain functions of the Council, including planning and community safety have statutory requirements to consult.
- 3.5 Failure to consult or inadequate consultation could leave the Council open to challenge through a judicial review.

- 3.6 The strategy will be reviewed every four years or sooner to comply with changes to the law or policy and practice.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.7 The strategy will help all parts of the Council, staff and Elected Members, in ensuring that we design and deliver appropriate services which meet the needs of our communities. It will also help in providing a clear direction for service areas around community engagement and the support available.
- 3.8 Consultation on the strategy was also undertaken with several service managers/officers, including the Community Safety Manager and the Senior Marketing and Communications Officer. The Unison representative has been consulted on the strategy and expressed support for the content and structure.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.9 The Community Engagement Strategy sets out our approach to enabling residents and customers to be informed, involved, share their opinions and influence decision making. The Systems Thinking approach that the Council has adopted necessitates looking at what we do from the customers (or residents) point of view and understanding their different and sometimes multiple needs (including those who do not actively engage with the Council). By listening to residents and customers and recognising different needs, the Council will be better placed to design and deliver appropriate, coordinated and relevant services to the communities it serves.
- 3.10 The strategy supports the Council's approach to equality and diversity and will form overarching principles for how we engage all members of our community. Consultation and engagement are a key process in considering the equality impacts that decisions and policies may potentially have on the public.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Draft Community Engagement Strategy

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Rebecca Dunne, Policy Manager
email: r.dunne@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel.: 01527 881616

DRAFT

Bromsgrove District Council

Community Engagement Strategy

2017-2020

1. Why engagement?

Bromsgrove District Council wants to ensure that people feel well informed about local issues, have opportunities to get involved, influence local decision making and to tell the Council what they think about its policies, procedures, service delivery and work with partner organisations.

Community engagement helps the Council to understand different views within the community. Ensuring that the needs of groups or areas that are harder to reach or do not traditionally engage with us are not overlooked is really important. By identifying the 'cold spots' in demand data the Council can start to understand the barriers that might be stopping certain voices being heard. We also need to use the most appropriate engagement technique/s so we get meaningful data. This will help the Council to make better decisions and meet the needs of our communities more effectively. Community engagement is vital if we are to deliver the strategic purposes and priorities of the Council as there are elements of our work which can only be understood by engaging directly with our communities.

The purpose of this Community Engagement Strategy is to build on the good practices that already exist within the Council; plan a way forward for engaging with local people in the future and ultimately increase the number and diversity of people who engage with the Council. Community engagement is a powerful tool that can provide invaluable information and help to build confidence within the community but only if it is conducted in a meaningful manner; engagement must always have a purpose and we must be able to demonstrate the impact the responses have had on our decision making.

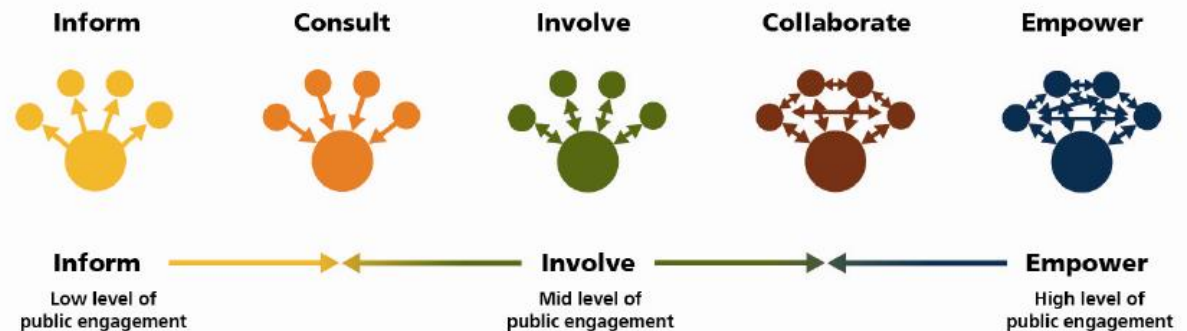
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2. What do we mean by 'community engagement'?

Community engagement is about giving people the confidence, skills and power so they can get involved, shape and influence the planning, development and delivery of services. Delivering engagement activities can take many different forms and the level of involvement can vary greatly.

One way to think about community engagement is as a set of steps ranging from providing information right up to decision making responsibilities.

Every type of involvement is important in the community engagement process and different methods will be used depending on the activity and circumstances. Sometimes it may be appropriate to inform or consult on some activities, while at other times involving communities and individuals in much greater depth would be more appropriate.



Inform

Where local people are given a wide range of information on issues affecting them, such as how to access public services, how they are performing or proposed changes to how a service is delivered, but are not invited to influence them directly.

Methods can include

- Posters, postcards, fliers, banners, newsletters, advertising, press releases, email, texts alerts, Twitter, web updates, Facebook, podcasts
- Information stalls/ roadshows, public meetings

Consult

This happens when the views of local people are appropriately sought to influence decision making processes about issues that might affect them. This could be a future change to a service or an area specific issue.

Methods can include

- Questionnaires, surveys, interviews, resident/citizen/user panels, community groups consultation events, workshops
- Online consultation- using SmartSurvey platform

Involve

Where local people influence issues such as service delivery and design on a district-wide or more local basis by being included in decision making. Involvement may be ongoing and give opportunities for the community to put forward ideas, options and actions.

Methods can include

- Community led plans (e.g. parish plans/neighbourhood plans)
- Comments, complaints, petitions, existing demand data, interaction with Members of Parliament, elected District Councillors

Collaborate

Where both the council and the community are working in partnership on all aspects of decision making including the development of options and identifying preferred solutions.

Methods can include

- Focus groups
- Community needs analysis

Empower

This is where communities are empowered to make decisions and take control of projects and service delivery.

Methods can include

- User led commissioning e.g. delegated budgeting, community asset transfer or direct service delivery

3. What do we mean by community?

A community is not always determined by a geographical area; therefore understanding how the community is defined is key to planning and delivering effective engagement. Ways to define a community include:

Community of place or neighbourhood: A community linked to a particular geographical location such as a ward, village, market town or a housing estate. This location will usually have physical boundaries although they are not always obvious to people who do not live there.

Community of interest: A group of people with a shared interest or experience. A community of interest includes service users (for example, service users of the council) as well as people interested in a particular issue (for example climate change).

Community of identity: A community that is defined by how people identify themselves or how they are identified by society, usually by demographic characteristics (for example, young people, faith groups, older people, black and minority ethnic people, lesbian, gay, Bisexual and transgender people).

Generally, people do not associate themselves to just one community, but to several different communities at any one time. This can relate to where they live, work and their interests. So it is important to let people define for themselves which communities they wish to be identified with.

4. Legal standards

Certain functions of the Council are subject to statutory requirements to consult and there is specific legislation that needs to be taken account of, including the Local Government Act 1999 and the Equalities Act 2010. Community Engagement is particularly important when making difficult financial decisions; if we are proposing to stop, reduce or change a service then we need have relevant evidence as to how we have engaged with communities who are potentially affected by the proposal.

Doctrine of legitimate expectation (common law) (taken from LGA Guide to Engagement February 2017)

It is now seen as common law that consultees have the right to expect a fair process which incorporates guidance and management promises. The legitimate expectation applies:

- when there has been a clear promise of consultation
- where official guidance or policies imply a promise to act in a particular way
- where there is a withdrawal of a benefit with significant impacts to be considered
- where the nature of the relationship would create unfairness if there were to be inadequate consultation.

Where people have come to legitimately expect a process of consultation there are grounds for a judicial review should a public consultation not take place. A consultation must also be conducted properly should the choice be taken to embark on one (whether a legal requirement exists for it or not).

The Gunning Principles (1985)

The Gunning Principles define that a consultation is only legitimate when these four principles are met:

1. **proposals are still at a formative stage** A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers
2. **there is sufficient information to give 'intelligent consideration'** The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response
3. **there is adequate time for consideration and response** There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. The length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation
4. **'conscientious consideration' must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made** Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account

The Gunning Principles have formed a strong legal foundation from which the legitimacy of public consultations is assessed, and are frequently referred to as a legal basis for judicial review decisions.

5. Benefits of effective community engagement

There are benefits to both the council and the community when engagement activities are delivered well. Community engagement helps the Council to:

- better understand and respond to the needs of local people;
- be more accountable to local people;
- plan and deliver better services;
- make more efficient use of public resources;
- take transparent decisions based on strong evidence;
- build strong and positive relationships within and between local communities;
- test out ideas and explore emerging issues;
- measure the performance of the Council in delivering services;

The local community will:

- have a greater say and choice in the design and delivery of local services
- develop new skills and expertise
- become better informed about the Council's work.

However, engagement activities which are done badly can lead to misleading results, undermine the whole process and reduce the prospect that people will engage again. Engaging with the public when a decision has already been made is pointless and could mean that relevant and potentially costly issues are missed. It is much easier to address issues before decisions have been made as they can be incorporated into a new service design or policy proposal.

There are also times when community engagement is not appropriate, for example:

- If the decision is under strict direction from Government
- If we have already recently asked for views on a similar topic
- If the Council is in the process of implementing plans that have previously been adopted and to which it has committed significant resources.

6. How are we going to deliver this strategy?

This is the responsibility of the whole Council, as ensuring that we understand the issues affecting our residents and customers is essential if we are to deliver effective and targeted services. This is particularly relevant when making difficult financial decisions; if we are proposing to stop, reduce or change a service then we must have the relevant evidence to justify this. This is where community engagement linked to other areas such as system performance, communications, equalities and customer service.

Targeted community engagement must be led by the relevant service area as they are the experts in their field, enabled by the Policy Team, who can support with the development, implementation and analysis of engagement activities. Community engagement also forms a statutory requirement for service areas such as community safety and planning (articulated through the Statement of Community Involvement). Corporate engagement activities will involve key officers and stakeholders to ensure that these opportunities provide the Council with the most relevant and timely evidence possible.

Elected Members are a key part of engagement with communities; managers and the Policy Team can support Councillors with engagement activities and the scrutiny process allows formal consultation and engagement to inform and influence decision making.

To ensure consistence, the following principles set out how we are going to make certain that our engagement activity is flexible, focused and appropriate for the diverse needs of the communities. To achieve this, the Council will:

- Develop a strategic approach that provides clear guidance and promotes successful engagement across all service areas.
- Plan and co-ordinate activities, the use of resources and, where possible, work collaboratively.
- Actively encourage involvement from all communities, including those from traditionally 'hard-to-reach' groups.
- Use the most appropriate method to consult and engage making the experience interesting, relevant and worthwhile for participants.
- Develop and implement new approaches to how we carry out engagement activities.
- Communicate results and ensure that the outcomes are used to inform the Council's policies and decision-making processes.
- Use the information from our engagement activities, alongside other evidence, to inform the design and delivery of effective and efficient services, within our current financial constraints.

7. Measuring our progress

It is important to know whether this strategy is making a difference and that we are working to our principles. Examples of ways we can measure success will include:

- Responses received to our engagement activities
- Attendance at council committee meetings
- Statistics from the website
- Statistics from Facebook and Twitter

8. How to contact us

To give us your views, get involved or for further information please contact the Policy Team at policy@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk or 01527 548284

To find out about the councils engagement activities please contact us or just go to www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/consultations

If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

Email: equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk or Phone: 01527 548284

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor G. N. Denaro
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Deb Poole, Head of Business Transformation
Ward(s) Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	n/a
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To endorse the new Community Engagement Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is requested to resolve that

- 2.1 **that the Community Engagement Strategy attached at Appendix 1 be noted and endorsed.**

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report; however, having a robust Community Engagement Strategy will help the Council to understand the needs of residents supporting the design and delivery of more relevant, coordinated and appropriate services, which are generally more cost effective. Working towards the aims of the strategy could also be beneficial in regards of the council's reputation and may help to reduce potential complaints.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 The Community Engagement Strategy addresses the legal standards surrounding consultation, including the doctrine of legitimate expectation (common law) and the Gunning Principles (1985).
- 3.3 Other specific legislation, including the Local Government Act 1999 and the Equality Act 2010 must be taken into account where appropriate.
- 3.4 Certain functions of the Council, including planning and community safety have statutory requirements to consult.
- 3.5 Failure to consult or inadequate consultation could leave the Council open to challenge through a judicial review.

- 3.6 The strategy will be reviewed every four years or sooner to comply with changes to the law or policy and practice.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.7 The strategy will help all parts of the Council, staff and Elected Members, in ensuring that we design and deliver appropriate services which meet the needs of our communities. It will also help in providing a clear direction for service areas around community engagement and the support available.
- 3.8 Consultation on the strategy was also undertaken with several service managers/officers, including the Community Safety Manager and the Senior Marketing and Communications Officer. The Unison representative has been consulted on the strategy and expressed support for the content and structure.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.9 The Community Engagement Strategy sets out our approach to enabling residents and customers to be informed, involved, share their opinions and influence decision making. The Systems Thinking approach that the Council has adopted necessitates looking at what we do from the customers (or residents) point of view and understanding their different and sometimes multiple needs (including those who do not actively engage with the Council). By listening to residents and customers and recognising different needs, the Council will be better placed to design and deliver appropriate, coordinated and relevant services to the communities it serves.
- 3.10 The strategy supports the Council's approach to equality and diversity and will form overarching principles for how we engage all members of our community. Consultation and engagement are a key process in considering the equality impacts that decisions and policies may potentially have on the public.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Draft Community Engagement Strategy

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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**Bromsgrove District Council
Equality Strategy**

2017-2020

1. Introduction

As an employer and deliverer of services, Bromsgrove District Council is committed to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promoting equal opportunities and fostering good relations between people from all communities. This Strategy sets out our commitment for progressing equality over the next four years.

The Strategy and Action Plan outlines our equality objectives, describes how we will fulfil our moral, social and legal obligations and what we will do to make Bromsgrove a place where people get along with each other and treat each other with dignity and respect.

The Strategy covers inequality in terms of age, disability, gender reassignment (transgender/trans), marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and is aimed at those who live, work in and visit the district, as well as elected Councillors and employees of the Council.

2. The Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 came into force in October 2010 and legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. The Act covers nine protected characteristics and these are the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful. The characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment (1)
- marriage or civil partnership (in employment only)
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

(1) before, during and after transition. This wording is the terminology used in the Equality Act; transgender (or trans) is now the accepted terminology. The Council understands there are many different identities which fall under the trans umbrella, including identities outside of the gender binary.

Public Sector Equality Duty

As part of the Equality Act 2010, public authorities must comply with the public sector equality duty (the equality duty). The equality duty replaced the previous race, disability and gender equality duties and was developed to extend across all the protected characteristics. It consists of a general equality duty, supported by specific duties and requires public authorities to consider or think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. Private organisations and individuals don't have to comply with the duty.

The general duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

In addition, public authorities also have specific duties and must do the following:

- publish equality information at least once a year to show how they've complied with the equality duty
- prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years

The publication of our Equality Strategy will support us in meeting the general and specific duties placed on us as part of the Equality Act.

3. Why is equality important to the Council?

Bromsgrove District Council is using the systems thinking method to change the way services are delivered to the customer. This is about looking at what we do from the outside-in or from the customers/residents point of view; it means understanding the different and sometimes multiple needs of our residents, including those who do not actively engage with the Council.

As a public service provider, it is important we recognise that our residents and customers come from different backgrounds; this will enable the Council to design and deliver services that meet the needs of the communities we serve. By understanding these differences and encouraging others to do the same, we can improve the quality of life for everyone by ensuring people who live, work or visit our district are treated fairly, with respect and are given the same chances and opportunities by taking into consideration their different needs.

As an employer, we believe that it is in the Council's interests and in the interests of all who work for the Council that we ensure that every possible step should be taken to ensure that individuals are treated equally and fairly and that decisions in recruitment and selection, training, promotion and career management are based solely on objective and job related criteria and that reasonable adjustments are made where feasible.

4. Equality in the delivery of our services

Equality Impacts

There is no longer a specific legal requirement for the Council to undertake an equality impact assessment. However, we *are* legally required to demonstrate that we have given ‘due regard’ to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. In practice this means that equality considerations still need to be evidenced in our decision-making processes and policies. Any potential impact on equality should be considered before any key decisions are made and should be integrated into day-to-day policy-making, business planning and other decision-making arrangements. This is particularly relevant when making difficult financial decisions; if we are proposing to stop, reduce or change a service then we must have relevant equalities evidence to justify this.

Equality Assessment Guidance is available for officers on the Orb and the Policy Team can provide direct support for service areas and projects to help them to gather and interpret equalities evidence.

Equality Monitoring

The Council has a requirement to publish equality information at least once a year to show how we have complied with the equality duty. The Council recognises this also makes good business sense as it can help local people assess the Council’s performance on equality, the impact our policies and practices have had, tell us who is and isn’t using our services; understand why our services may not meet their needs and help us to improve the delivery of our services by identify any data gaps and address any issues. Any monitoring undertaken must be proportionate and relevant and of a benefit to our communities.

Procurement & Commissioning

The Council provides a wide range of services to residents and businesses in the district. In some cases these are provided directly by the Council, in other by our partners and contractors. When a supplier provides goods, services or works on our behalf, we will ensure the equality obligations are part of the terms of a contract so that we know they will monitor the impact on service users and those they employ. The ultimate legal responsibility for meeting the requirements of the Equality Act remain with the Council for any services delivered on our behalf..

Specifically we will:

- Communicate this strategy to all potential contractors and service providers;
- Ensure contractors and service providers have policies, procedures and practices that do not discriminate and deliver goods, facilities and services that are appropriate and accessible;
- Provide opportunities for all to be in a position to bid and win council contracts from an equal basis; and
- Monitor the contracts and service arrangements to ensure they are meeting their equality commitments.

5. Equality in employment

The Council is working towards achieving a diverse workforce and offering equality of opportunity in employment, recruitment selection, training and development. We aim to ensure that the workplace is free from discrimination, victimisation or harassment of any kind where staff are treated with respect.

Employment policies

The Council has a wide range of policies in place for our staff and prospective employees. These policies support our staff and provide clear guidance to all employees about what is expected of them and what they can expect from us as an employer. We will continue review the range of policies and be pro-active in promoting and supporting equality in the workforce. This includes eliminating bullying and harassment, addressing discrimination, ensuring equality in pay and creating a flexible work-life balance.

The Equal Opportunities Policy pulls together the Council's commitment to equality within the workplace.

Equality Training

Equality training is provided for staff to ensure they are made aware of their rights and responsibilities. In particular all managers will be trained on a regular basis in equalities matters concerning employment. Similarly there is an expectation that all Members will attend Equality training. Equality issues are an integral part of our training and development programmes, regardless of whether the council uses internal or external trainers. In addition to the generic equality training, tailored equality training to reflect the needs of specific services will be encouraged, particularly for services engaging with external customers and / or where there is a significant engagement with protected group(s).

The council makes a strong commitment to training and development for all staff. All staff will have equal access to training and development and we will take positive action where appropriate for those who are underrepresented in our workforce.

6. Consultation & engagement

The Council wants to ensure that anyone who accesses council services either as a resident, visitor, customer or employee feels well informed about local issues; has the opportunity to get involved, influence local decision making and gets the opportunity to tell the Council what they think about its policies, procedures, service delivery and work with partner organisations.

To ensure consistency, the council has developed a Community Engagement Strategy with the following principles setting out how we are going to make certain that our engagement activity is flexible, focused and appropriate for the diverse needs of the communities. To achieve this, the Council will:

- Develop a strategic approach that provides clear guidance and promotes successful engagement across all service areas.
- Plan and co-ordinate activities, the use of resources and, where possible, work collaboratively.
- Actively encourage involvement from all communities, including those from traditionally 'hard-to-reach' groups so that everyone has a chance to represent their viewpoints on issues relevant to them.
- Use the most appropriate method to consult and engage making the experience interesting, relevant and worthwhile for participants.
- Development and implement new approaches to how we carry out engagement activities.
- Communicate results and ensure that the outcomes are used to inform the Council's policies and decision-making processes.
- Use the information from our engagement activities, alongside other evidence, to inform the design and delivery of effective and efficient services, within our current financial constraints.

If you would like to get involved taking part is easy and you can do as little or as much as you like e.g. from completing surveys on local issues to being part of a focus group. Your views can make a difference.

7. Our successes & achievements

The Council is committed to supporting equality through its services, including:

- Promoting Lesbian Gay Bi-sexual and Transgender (LGBT) History Month
- Supporting the quarterly Bromsgrove Engagement & Equalities Forum
- Disabled Facility Grants
- Translations and alternative formats
- Community Safety – support for Hate Incident Reporting and the Safe Places scheme
- Bromsgrove Small Grants in partnership with the Engagement & Equalities Forum
- Providing assisted bin collections for people who struggle to get their bins to the roadside for collection, such as older residents and people with disabilities
- Supporting people through LifeLine and Shopmobility

8. Measuring our progress

We will inform the public and staff about our progress through:

- An annual equality report
- Our information and advice services
- Council website
- Media (including social media) for advertising and press releases
- Through our community networks

9. How to contact us

To give us your views, get involved or for further information please contact the Equalities Team at equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk or 01527 548284

To find out about the councils engagement activities please contact us or just go to www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/consultations

If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

Email: equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk or Phone: 01527 548284

Appendix 1

Bromsgrove District Council Equality Objectives 2017-2020

Our equality objectives set out the direction for the council –

Objective 1: To understand the needs of the community so they can access our services, facilities and information

To achieve this we will:

- Collect, analyse and where appropriate publish equality data order to monitor who is and isn't using our services and facilities and to understand their satisfaction.
- Work with partners to identify and share issues facing specific groups of people in the district to inform future service delivery.
- Use the information from our engagement activities, alongside other evidence, to inform the design and delivery of effective and efficient services, within our current financial constraints
- Continue reviewing our policies and activities to monitor the impact on different groups
- Review our Customer Service Centres and procedures to ensure we are meeting the different needs within the community
- Ensure equality is considered in processes for procuring works, goods and services and contract management

Objective 2: To engagement and communicate with the community in the most appropriate and accessible ways

Community engagement is about giving people the confidence, skills and power so they can get involved. The Council wants to ensure that people feel well informed about local issues; have the opportunity to get involved, influence local decision making and get the opportunity to tell the Council what they think about its policies, procedures, service delivery and work with partner organisations.

To achieve this we will:

- Develop a strategic approach that provides clear guidance and promotes successful engagement across all service areas.
- Plan and co-ordinate activities, the use of resources and, where possible, work collaboratively.
- Actively encourage involvement from all communities, including those from traditionally 'hard-to-reach' groups so that everyone has a chance to represent their viewpoints on issues relevant to them.

- Use the most appropriate method to consult and engage making the experience interesting, relevant and worthwhile for participants.
- Development and implement new approaches to how we carry out engagement activities.
- Communicate results and ensure that the outcomes are used to inform the Council's policies and decision-making processes.

Objective 3: To support Council's employees and Elected Members to deliver accessible, non-discriminatory services.

To achieve this we will:

- Continue to collect, monitor, report and review information available on our workforce and job applicants
- Promote an environment where everyone is treated fairly and with dignity and we recognise and value the differences skills, abilities and experience people bring to the workplace
- Have policies and procedures that comply with legislation and ensure existing policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and amended so they conform to any new legislation
- When appropriate, work with teams to ensure equalities information is available for managers and Elected Members to use in decision making
- Provide all employees with the training and development to enable us to achieve our equality objectives
- Offer equalities related training and development to all Elected Members and make relevant resources available to them
- Continue to develop and promote work/life balance initiatives to enable employees to achieve a better balance between home and work responsibilities where feasible in line with business need.

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Bromsgrove
District Council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

(Draft) Equal Opportunity Policy May 2017

1. Introduction

The Equal Opportunity Policy for is an important document for all staff and Elected Members (Councillors) as it forms the overarching principles that guide how we approach everything we do as a Council.

The Council believes that it is in the Council's interests and in the interests of all who work for the Council that we ensure that the human resources, talents and skills available throughout the community are considered when employment opportunities arise. Every possible step will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated equally and fairly and that decisions in recruitment and selection, training, promotion and career management are based solely on objective and job related criteria.

2. Scope

The Equal Opportunity Policy applies to all aspects of employment and vocational training including work experience within the remit of the Council.

It applies to all aspects of

- Recruitment, selection and appointment of staff
- Training and development of staff including appraisal
- Disciplinary and grievance procedures and their application
- Sickness absence and performance management
- Promotion including temporary or permanent and secondment opportunities
- Selection for redundancy and all other forms of dismissal
- Dignity at Work

All members of staff are bound by this policy. Managers are required to ensure that they abide by the standards set out in this policy at all times and that all staff are made aware of their responsibilities under the policy.

3. The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act of 2010 establishes the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which is comprised of a General Equality Duty and Specific Duties.

The General Equality Duty has three aims: it requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

For further details of these Duties refer to the Managers Guide to the Equality Act 2010 – available on the ORB.

Elected Members (Councillors) are explicitly covered in the Equality Act 2010- see APPENDIX TWO.

4. The Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act establishes protection against discrimination, harassment and victimisation because of

- Age (1)
- Disability (2)
- Gender Re-assignment (3)
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race – includes colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins
- Religion or belief – includes lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Equal Pay (in relation to Sex only)

(1) only applies to those aged 18 or over in relation to the provision of goods, facilities & services. There are permitted exceptions relating to age and employment, including different scales of the National Minimum Wage and differential pay for apprentices. There are also additional health and safety requirements for young workers; those under 18 may not work more than 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week.

(2) see ANNEX ONE for definition of disability

(3) before, during and after transition. This wording is the terminology used in the Equality Act; transgender (or trans) is now the accepted terminology. The Council understands there are many different identities which fall under the trans umbrella, including identities outside of the gender binary.

Agenda Item 7

This protection will not apply where a Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR) applies or where some other justification applies. These cases will be very rare and specialist advice must be sought in every such instance from HR.

In addition, staff will be protected from discrimination and any unfair treatment based on Trade Union membership or activity.

Sensitive personal data will be processed in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. Sensitive personal data is defined in the Data Protection Act 1998 as information pertaining to:

- Racial or ethnic origin
- Political opinions
- Religious beliefs or beliefs of a similar nature
- Membership of a trade union
- Physical or mental health or condition
- Sexual life
- Commission or alleged commission of an offence
- Proceedings for any offence or alleged offence, or sentence of court

5. Our Commitment

As a Council we recognise and accept that intentionally or unintentionally, some individuals, groups or communities can and do experience discrimination, social exclusion or unequal treatment. However it is our commitment that we will do everything we can to prevent this from happening. Where we do find inequality, we will take steps to challenge it in all its forms.

We will show our commitment to equality by

- Promoting equality in all that we do
- Challenging discrimination, inequality and social exclusion
- Providing responsive and accessible services to all who want or need them wherever possible
- Considering the needs of the public first and operate a fair and accountable local government
- Giving everyone a fair and equal chance of obtaining employment, promotion, development and training opportunities with the council while aiming for a workforce that reflects the make-up of the local population
- Ensuring that contractors and other organisations that are providing a service to or on behalf of the Council are required to meet, and are complying with The Equality Act and with the equality policies of the Council as set out in our terms of contracts or agreements with suppliers
- Acting promptly on any complaints of harassment, discrimination or bullying
- Monitoring, reviewing and assessing our policies and procedures for their impact on equality on an ongoing basis
- Consult with and seek out the views of citizens, service users and potential users and partner agencies on the quality and relevance of the services that we provide
- By being an exemplary employer and employer of choice, create an organisation that values all staff and is fair, supportive and free from discrimination, harassment or bullying
- Regularly consulting our staff and listening to what they say

6. Leadership

The Council's leadership takes full responsibility for this Equal Opportunity Policy. It is the responsibility of the Council's Cabinet and Senior Management Team to ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive are fully committed to the implementation of this policy. The Head of Business Transformation is responsible for all procedures relating to recruitment, selection, career development, discipline and grievance, and for ensuring that these are carried out in accordance with the Equal Opportunity Policy.

Managers are responsible for fostering a culture in which compliance with this policy is regarded as integral to their area of work. Managers are expected to actively promote the principles of equality and take account of the need to ensure equality of access and opportunity in the planning and delivery of their services. In managing staff, managers are expected to identify appropriate development for themselves and their staff to meet the needs of their respective areas in relation to equality.

Staff are expected to behave in a respectful and fair manner to everyone that works for the Council, visits the Council or receives a service from the Council. All breaches of this policy will be taken very seriously and the Council will deal with individuals through the staff disciplinary procedures.

Staff are made aware of Council policies and the standards that are expected of them through induction, regular reviews and training.

7. Consultation

This Policy and any subsequent revisions will be subject to standard consultation processes with the aim of reaching agreement on the content of the Policy and commitment to abide by the Policy between :-

- Corporate Management Team
- Staff and their representatives
- The Cabinet

8. Policy Approval

This Policy was approved and ratified on [date] by [] and is fully in effect from [date].

We will review this policy at least every two years, or sooner to comply with changes to the law or policy and practice.

APPENDIX ONE

Disability Policy (Employment and Training including Work Experience)

1. Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act of 1995 (as amended in 2005) has now been rescinded and all provisions can now be found in the Equality Act 2010.

The Office for Disabilities Guidance on the Equality Act 2010 on matters to be taken into account in determining questions relating to the definition of disability states

“The Equality Act 2010 states that a person has a disability for the purposes of the Act if he or she has a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

The Office for Disabilities Guidance on the Equality Act 2010 states that a disability can arise from a wide range of impairments which can be:

- sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing;
- impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects such as rheumatoid arthritis, myalgic encephalitis (ME)/chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), fibromyalgia, depression and epilepsy;
- progressive, such as motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy, forms of dementia and lupus (SLE);
- organ specific, including respiratory conditions, such as asthma, and cardiovascular diseases, including thrombosis, stroke and heart disease;
- developmental, such as autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), dyslexia and dyspraxia;
- learning difficulties;
- mental health conditions and mental illnesses, such as depression, schizophrenia, eating disorders, bipolar affective disorders, obsessive compulsive disorders, as well as personality disorders and some self-harming behaviour;
- produced by injury to the body or brain.

This is not an exhaustive list and the definition of disability covers a wide range of physical and mental impairments whether they are from birth or have been acquired during a person's lifetime.

The protection against discrimination because of a disability is from the date of a diagnosis regardless of whether any symptoms are having an effect on the person's ability to carry out “Day to day activities” as defined in the Equality Act and the associated Guidance.

See Guidance on “Day to day activities” in paragraphs 7. to 9.

This policy applies to all staff employed by the Council, including those employed on a temporary or part-time basis, or on work experience.

2. Equality of Treatment – Statement

The Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure that treatment of disabled people enables equality with non disabled people. We will provide fair and equal access to employment, training and development (including work experience) for disabled people by taking account of their disabilities and making reasonable adjustments.

This may mean treating disabled people differently and more favourably in order to create an equal opportunity for that person compared to a non disabled person.

3. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Human Resources Department to:

- Advise and support line managers in a consistent and timely way, in cases where further action by the line manager may be required.
- Provide specialist advice and training to managers/supervisors to assist them to manage the Council's disability policy.
- Provide line managers with advice on the application of the disability provisions of the Equality Act and any other relevant legislation.

4. Discrimination arising from Disability

The Equality Act says that treatment of a disabled person amounts to discrimination where

- an employer treats the disabled person unfavourably;
- this treatment is because of something arising in consequence of the disabled person's disability; and
- the employer cannot show that this treatment is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim (formerly described as "justifiable")
- unless the employer does not know, and could not reasonably be expected to know, that the person has the disability.
- Failure to make reasonable adjustments for disabled persons
- Enquiries about disability and health before the offer of a job is made

5. Types of Disability Discrimination

- **Direct Discrimination**

Direct discrimination occurs when a person treats another less favourably than they treat or would treat others because of a protected characteristic. Direct discrimination is generally unlawful. However, it may be lawful in relation to the protected characteristic of disability, where a disabled person is treated more favourably than a non-disabled person.

The Act only protects disabled people from discrimination. This means that it is not discrimination to treat a disabled person more favourably than a non-disabled person.

- **Indirect Discrimination**

Indirect discrimination may occur when an employer applies an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice which puts workers sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. In relation to disability, this would not be about disabled people as a whole but people with a particular disability – for example, with an equivalent level of sight impairment.

6. Reasonable Adjustments

The Employment Statutory Code of Practice Equality Act gives examples of the type of adjustments which an employer may have to make:-

- Making adjustments to premises
- Providing information in accessible formats
- Allocating some of the disabled person's duties to another worker
- Transferring the disabled worker to fill an existing vacancy
- Altering the disabled worker's hours of work or training
- Assigning the disabled worker to a different place of work or training or arranging home working
- Allowing the disabled worker to be absent during working or training hours for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment
- Giving, or arranging for, training or mentoring (whether for the disabled person or any other worker)
- Acquiring or modifying equipment
- Modifying procedures for testing or assessment
- Providing a reader or interpreter
- Providing supervision or other support
- Allowing a disabled worker to take a period of disability leave
- Participating in supported employment schemes, such as Workstep
- Employing a support worker to assist a disabled worker
- Modifying disciplinary or grievance procedures for a disabled worker
- Adjusting redundancy selection criteria for a disabled worker
- Modifying performance-related pay arrangements for a disabled worker

The Act lists a number of factors which will have a bearing on whether it will be reasonable for an employer to have to make a particular adjustment.

- the effectiveness of the adjustment in preventing the disadvantage
- the practicality of the step
- the financial and other costs of the adjustment and the extent of any disruption caused
- the extent of the employer's financial or other resources
- the availability to the employer of financial or other assistance to help make an adjustment.

Guidance on the Equality Act 2010 has been issued by the Office for Disability Issues and can be accessed through this link

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85010/disability-definition.pdf

7. Meaning of 'normal day-to-day activities'

The Equality Act does not define what is to be regarded as a 'normal day-to-day activity'. It is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of day-to-day activities, although guidance on this matter is given here and illustrative examples of when it would, and would not, be reasonable to regard an impairment as having a substantial adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities are shown in the Appendix.

In general, day-to-day activities are things people do on a regular or daily basis, and examples include shopping, reading and writing, having a conversation or using the telephone, watching television, getting washed and dressed, preparing and eating food, carrying out household tasks, walking and travelling by various forms of transport, and taking part in social activities.

The term 'normal day-to-day activities' is not intended to include activities which are normal only for a particular person, or a small group of people. In deciding whether an activity is a normal day-to-day activity, account should be taken of how far it is normal for a large number of people, and carried out by people on a daily or frequent and fairly regular basis. In this context, 'normal' should be given its ordinary, everyday meaning.

A normal day-to-day activity is not necessarily one that is carried out by a majority of people. For example, it is possible that some activities might be carried out only, or more predominantly, by people of a particular gender, such as applying make-up or using hair curling equipment, and cannot therefore be said to be normal for most people. They would nevertheless be considered to be normal day-to-day activities.

8. Work-related and other specialised activities

Normal day-to-day activities do not include work of any particular form because no particular form of work is 'normal' for most people. In any individual case, the activities carried out might be highly specialised. For example, carrying out delicate work with specialised tools may be a normal working activity for a watch repairer, whereas it would not be normal for a person who is employed as a semi-skilled worker. The Act only covers effects which go beyond the normal differences in skill or ability.

The same is true of other specialised activities such as playing a musical instrument to a high standard of achievement; taking part in a particular game or hobby where very specific skills or level of ability are required; or playing a particular sport to a high level of ability, such as would be required for a professional footballer or athlete.

However, many types of work or specialised hobby, sport or pastime may still involve normal day-to-day activities. For example; sitting down, standing up, walking, running, verbal interaction, writing, making a cup of tea, using everyday objects such as a keyboard, and lifting, moving or carrying everyday objects such as chairs. The effects experienced by a person as a result of environmental conditions, either in the workplace or in another location where a specialised activity is being carried out, should not be discounted simply because there may be a work-related or other specialised activity involved. It is important to consider whether there may also be an adverse effect on the ability to carry out a normal day-to-day activity.

9. Indirect effects

An impairment may not directly prevent someone from carrying out one or more normal day-to-day activities, but it may still have a substantial adverse long-term effect on how he or she carries out those activities. For example:

- pain or fatigue: where an impairment causes pain or fatigue in performing normal day-to-day activities the person may have the ability to do something but suffer pain in doing so; or the impairment might make the activity more than usually fatiguing so that the person might not be able to repeat the task over a sustained period of time.
- medical advice: where a person has been advised by a medical practitioner or other health professional, as part of a treatment plan, to change, limit or refrain from a normal day-to-day activity on account of an impairment or only do it in a certain way or under certain conditions.

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APPENDIX TWO

Extract from the Equality 2010; Part 5 Work; 58. Local authority members

Official business of members

- (1) A local authority must not discriminate against a member of the authority in relation to the member's carrying out of official business—
- (a) in the way the authority affords the member access, or by not affording the member access, to opportunities for training or for receiving any other facility;
 - (b) by subjecting the member to any other detriment.
- (2) A local authority must not, in relation to a member's carrying out of official business, harass the member.
- (3) A local authority must not victimise a member of the authority in relation to the member's carrying out of official business—
- (a) in the way the authority affords the member access, or by not affording the member access, to opportunities for training or for receiving any other facility;
 - (b) by subjecting the member to any other detriment.
- (4) A member of a local authority is not subjected to a detriment for the purposes of subsection (1)(b) or (3)(b) only because the member is—
- (a) not appointed or elected to an office of the authority,
 - (b) not appointed or elected to, or to an office of, a committee or subcommittee of the authority, or
 - (c) not appointed or nominated in exercise of an appointment power of the authority.
- (5) In subsection (4)(c), an appointment power of a local authority is a power of the authority, or of a group of bodies including the authority, to make—
- (a) appointments to a body;
 - (b) nominations for appointment to a body.
- (6) A duty to make reasonable adjustments applies to a local authority.

APPENDIX THREE

All Council Policies support this Equal Opportunity Policy but the main ones are listed below with relevant Codes of Practice and Guidance

1. The Equality Act 2010 – Equality and Human Rights Commission Guidance and Codes of Practice – for details see <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/>
2. Policies and procedures covering Recruitment Selection and Employment
3. Harassment and Bullying Policy
4. Members Code of Conduct
5. Dignity at Work Policy
6. Procurement, Tendering and Contractor Policies/ Strategy
7. Equality Strategy

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APPENDIX FOUR

Relevant legislation – please note that this is not an exhaustive list

1. The Equality Act 2010
2. Work and Families Act 2006
3. Human Rights Act 1998
4. Civil Partnerships Act 2004
5. Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
6. The Gender Recognition Act 2004
7. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples Act) 2013
8. Agency Worker Regulations 2010
9. The Working Time Regulations 1998

DRAFT

Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy



Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

Agenda Item 8

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Bromsgrove District Council, like every Local Authority, has a duty to ensure that it safeguards the public money that they are responsible for.

The Council expects the highest standards of conduct and integrity from all that have dealings with it including staff, members, contractors, volunteers and the public. It is committed to the elimination of fraud and corruption and to ensuring that all activities are conducted ethically, honestly and to the highest possible standard of openness and accountability so as to protect public safety and public money.

All suspicions or concerns of fraudulent or corrupt practise will be investigated. There will be no distinction made in investigation and action between cases that generate financial benefits and those that do not. Any investigations will not compromise the Council's commitment to Equal Opportunities or the requirements of the Human Rights Act or any other relevant statutory provision.

This policy has been created with due regard to the CIPFA better Governance Forum's Red Book 2 'Managing the Risk of Fraud', the CIPFA 2014 Code of practice on managing the risk of fraud and corruption and the TEICCAFF Publication 'Protecting the English Public Purse'.

2.0 OVERVIEW

This policy provides an overview of the measures designed to combat any attempted fraudulent or corrupt act. For ease of understanding it is separated into four areas as below:-

- Culture
- Responsibilities & Prevention
- Detection and Investigation
- Awareness & Monitoring

Fraud and corruption are defined as:-

Fraud

'Wrongful or criminal deception intended to result in financial or personal gain'

Corruption

"The offering, giving, soliciting or acceptance of an inducement or reward which may influence the action of any person"

Bribery

The Council also abides by the Bribery Act 2010 which covers, amongst other things, the offences of bribing another person, of allowing to be bribed and organisational responsibility. Such offences include:

- The offer, promise or giving of financial or other advantage to another person in return for the person improperly performing a relevant function or activity

- Requesting, agreeing to receive or accepting a financial or other advantage intending that, in consequence a relevant function or activity should be performed improperly.
- Commercial organisation responsibility for a person, associated with the organisation, bribing another person for the purpose of obtaining or retaining business for the organisation

In addition, this policy also covers “the failure to disclose an interest in order to gain financial or other pecuniary benefit.”

3.0 CULTURE

The prevention/detection of fraud/corruption and the protection of public money are responsibilities of everyone, both internal and external to the organisation. The Council’s elected members and employees play an important role in creating and maintaining this culture. They are positively encouraged to raise concerns regarding fraud and corruption, immaterial of seniority, rank or status, in the knowledge that such concerns will, wherever possible, be treated in confidence. The public also has a role to play in this process and should inform the Council if they feel that fraud/corruption may have occurred.

Concerns must be raised when members, employees or the public reasonably believe that one or more of the following has occurred, is in the process of occurring or is likely to occur:

- A criminal offence
- A failure to comply with a statutory or legal obligation
- Improper or unauthorised use of public or other official funds
- A miscarriage of justice
- Maladministration, misconduct or malpractice
- Endangering an individual’s health and/or safety
- Damage to the environment
- Deliberate concealment of any of the above

The Council will ensure that any allegations received in any way, including by anonymous letter or telephone call, will be taken seriously and investigated in an appropriate manner. The Council has a whistle blowing policy that sets out the approach to these types of allegation in more detail. The Council will deal firmly with those who defraud the Council or who are corrupt, or where there has been financial malpractice. There is, of course, a need to ensure that any investigation process is not misused and, therefore, any abuse (such as employees/members raising malicious allegations) may be dealt with as a disciplinary matter (employees) or through Group procedures (members).

When fraud or corruption has occurred due to a breakdown in the Council’s systems or procedures, Directors / Heads of Service will ensure that appropriate improvements in systems of control are implemented in order to prevent a re-occurrence.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES & PREVENTION

4.1 Responsibilities of Elected Members

As elected representatives, all members of the Council have a duty to protect the Council and public money from any acts of fraud and corruption. This is done through existing practice, compliance with the National and Local Code of Conduct for Members, the Council’s Constitution including Financial Regulations and Standing Orders and relevant legislation. Conduct and ethical matters are specifically brought to the attention of members during induction and include the

declaration and registration of interests. Officers advise members of the new legislative or procedural requirements.

4.2 Responsibilities of the Monitoring Officer (*Head of Legal, Equality & Democratic Services*)

The Monitoring Officer is responsible for ensuring that all decisions made by the Council are within the law. The Monitoring Officer's key role is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct throughout the Council by developing, enforcing and reporting appropriate governance arrangements including codes of conduct and other standards policies.

4.3 Responsibilities of the Section 151 Officer (*Director of Finance & Corporate Resources*)

The Director of Finance has been designated with the statutory responsibilities of the Finance Director as defined by s151 of the Local Government Act 1972. These responsibilities outline that every local authority in England & Wales should: "make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has the responsibility or the administration of those affairs"

'Proper administration' encompasses all aspects of local authority financial management including:

- Compliance with the statutory requirements for accounting and internal audit;
- Managing the financial affairs of the Council
- The proper exercise of a wide range of delegated powers both formal and informal;
- The recognition of the fiduciary responsibility owed to local tax payers.

Under these statutory responsibilities the Section 151 Officer contributes to the anti-fraud and corruption framework of the Council.

4.4 Responsibilities of the Senior Management Team

Managers at all levels are responsible for the communication and implementation of this policy. They are also responsible for ensuring that their employees are aware of the Council's personnel policies and procedures, the Council's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders and that the requirements of each are being met. Managers are expected to create an environment in which their staff feel able to approach them with any concerns they may have about suspected irregularities. Special arrangements may be applied from time to time for example where employees are responsible for cash handling or are in charge of financial systems and systems that generate payments, for example payroll or the Revenues & Benefits computer system. These procedures will be supported by relevant training.

The Council recognises that a key preventative measure in dealing with fraud and corruption is for managers to take effective steps at the recruitment stage to establish, as far as possible, the honesty and integrity of potential employees, whether for permanent, temporary or casual posts and agency staff. The Council's formal recruitment procedure contains appropriate safeguards in the form of written references, the verification of qualifications held and employment history. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are undertaken for employees working with or who may have contact with children or vulnerable adults.

4.5 Responsibilities of Employees

Each employee is governed in their work by the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, and other policies on conduct and IT usage. Included in the Council policies are guidelines on Gifts and Hospitality, and codes of conduct associated with professional and personal conduct and conflict of interest. These are issued to all employees when they join the Council. In addition, employees are responsible for ensuring that they follow any instructions given to them, particularly in relation to the safekeeping of the assets of the Council. Employees are expected always to be aware of the possibility that fraud, corruption and theft may exist in the workplace and be able to share their concerns with management.

4.6 Role of Internal Audit (*Worcestershire Internal Audit Shared Service*)

Internal Audit plays a preventative role in trying to ensure that systems and procedures are in place to prevent and deter fraud and corruption. Internal Audit may be requested to investigate cases of suspected financial irregularity, fraud or corruption, in accordance with agreed procedures. Within the Financial Procedure Rules in the Constitution, representatives of Internal Audit are empowered to:

- enter at all reasonable times any Council premises or land
- have access to all records, documentation and correspondence relating to any financial and other transactions as considered necessary
- have access to records belonging to third parties such as contractors when required
- require and receive such explanations as are regarded necessary concerning any matter under examination
- require any employee of the Council to account for cash, stores or any other Council property under his/her control or possession

Internal Audit liaises with management to recommend changes in procedures to reduce risks and prevent losses to the Authority.

4.7 Role of the Fraud & Compliance Team

As of 01/02/2016, the responsibility for investigating Housing Benefit (and any other welfare benefits) lies with the Department for Work and Pensions (www.gov.uk/benefit-fraud)

The Fraud and Compliance Team within Bromsgrove District Council is responsible for the investigation of any discounts that may have been awarded, including business rates, empty property relief, and any false applications/late reporting of changes within the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS). More information can be viewed at bromsgrove.gov.uk/fraud

4.8 Role of the External Auditors

Independent external audit is an essential safeguard of the stewardship of public money. This is currently carried out by Grant Thornton through specific reviews that are designed to test (amongst other things) the adequacy of the Council's financial systems and arrangements for preventing and detecting fraud and corruption. It is not the external auditors' function to prevent fraud and irregularities, but the integrity of public funds is at all times a matter of general concern. External auditors are always alert to the possibility of fraud and irregularity, and will act without undue delay if grounds for suspicion come to their notice. The Council contributes to the bi-annual Audit Commission led National Fraud Initiative which is designed to cross match customers across authorities too highlight areas where there are potential fraudulent claims.

4.9 Role of the Public

This policy, although primarily aimed at those within or associated with the Council, enables concerns raised by the public to be investigated, as appropriate, by the relevant person in a proper manner.

4.10 Conflicts of Interest

Both elected members and employees must ensure that they avoid situations where there is a potential for a conflict of interest. Such situations can arise with externalisation of services, internal tendering, planning and land issues etc. Effective role separation will ensure decisions made are seen to be based upon impartial advice and avoid questions about improper disclosure of confidential information.

4.11 Official Guidance

In addition to Financial Regulations and Standing Orders, due regard will be had to external and inspectorate recommendations.

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The Council is aware of the high degree of external scrutiny of its affairs by a variety of bodies such as Government Inspection bodies, the Local Government Ombudsman and HM Revenues and Customs. These bodies are important in highlighting any areas where improvements can be made.

5.0 DETECTION & INVESTIGATION

Internal Audit plays an important role in the detection of fraud and corruption. Included within the audit plans are reviews of system controls including financial controls and specific fraud and corruption tests, spot checks and unannounced visits.

In addition to Internal Audit, there are numerous systems and management controls in place to deter fraud and corruption but it is often the vigilance of employees and members of the public that aids detection. In some cases frauds are discovered by chance or “tip-off” and the Council will ensure that such information is properly dealt with within its whistleblowing policies.

5.1 Disciplinary Action

The Council’s Disciplinary Procedures will be used to facilitate a thorough investigation of any allegations of improper behaviour by employees. Theft, fraud and corruption are serious offences which may constitute gross misconduct against the Council and employees will face disciplinary action if there is evidence that they have been involved in these activities, including Benefit fraud or falsely claiming a discount or exemption. Disciplinary action will be taken in addition to, or instead of, criminal proceedings depending on the circumstances of each individual case.

Members will face appropriate action under this policy if they are found to have been involved in theft, fraud and corruption against the Authority. Action will be taken in addition to, or instead of criminal proceedings, depending on the circumstances of each individual case but in a consistent manner. If the matter is a breach of the Code of Conduct for Members then it will be dealt with in accordance with the Arrangement agreed by the Council in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

5.2 Prosecution

In terms of proceedings the Council will endeavour to take action in relevant cases to deter others from committing offences against the Authority.

5.3 Publicity

The Council will optimise the publicity opportunities associated with anti-fraud and corruption activity within the Council. Wherever possible, where the Council has suffered a financial loss action will be taken to pursue the recovery of the loss. All anti-fraud and corruption activities, including the update of this policy, will be publicised.

6.0 AWARENESS & MONITORING

The Council recognises that the continuing success of this policy and its general credibility will depend in part on the effectiveness of training and awareness for members and employees and will therefore take appropriate action to raise awareness levels.

The Internal Audit Service Manager will provide an annual report to senior management and members outlining investigations undertaken during the year.

This policy and associated procedures will be reviewed every 2 years and will be reported to senior management and the Audit & Governance Committees at each council.

CABINET

14th June 2017

REVISED TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2017-18 TO 2019-20

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Brian Cooper
Portfolio Holder Consulted	
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	None specific
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 Members are asked to approve an increase to the authorised and operational borrowing limit of £6 million.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Cabinet is asked to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council:
- 2.1.1 the Authorised Limit for borrowing be increased from £15 million to £21 million for 2017/18.
- 2.1.2 the Operational Limit for borrowing be increased from £12 million to £18 million for 2017/18

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 The authorised and operational borrowing limits for 2017/18 were approved by the Council in March 2017 as part of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy.
- 3.2 The limits can be updated during the financial year if necessary. In 2017/18 the Council entered into an agreement to pay Worcestershire Pension Fund the pension payments for the next three years upfront. In exchange the Council will receive a discount which, after allowing for any temporary borrowing costs will provide £137k saving per annum for the three years. The total paid is £6.6m which represents the total amount the Council would be required to pay Worcestershire Pension Fund over the three years but to realise the savings the full payment is made in advance.

CABINET

14th June 2017

- 3.3 The Treasury Management Strategy was prepared in advance of the arrangement and therefore the Operational and Authorised borrowing limits need to be increased by £6m. This will enable management of cash flow during 2017/18. It is important to note that the Council has maintained its borrowing within the Authorised Limit as defined in the approved strategy and this increase will ensure there is a sufficient level in place to meet any cash flow increases during 2017/18.

Legal Implications

- 3.4 This report fulfils the Council's legal obligation under the *Local Government Act 2003* to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the CLG Guidance.

Service/Operational Issues

- 3.5 None as a direct result of this report.

Customer/ Equalities and Diversity

- 3.6 None as a direct result of this report.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Failure to manage the Treasury Management function effectively to ensure the delivery of maximum return within a secure environment. Controls in place to mitigate these risks are as follows:

- Regular monitoring of the status of the organisations we invest with
- Daily monitoring by internal officers of banking arrangements, borrowing limits and cash flow implications.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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