

8. Corporate Performance Working Group - Update
9. Task Group Updates
10. Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Update
11. Cabinet Work Programme - to be tabled at the meeting
12. Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme (Pages 13 - 18)
13. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

22nd August 2019



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- Meeting Agendas
- Meeting Minutes
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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

8TH JULY 2019, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors J. Till (Chairman), S. R. Colella, R. J. Deeming, S. P. Douglas, C.A. Hotham, R. J. Hunter, A. D. Kriss, M. Middleton and C. J. Spencer

Observers: Councillor G. N. Denaro and Councillor M. A. Sherrey

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. D. Poole, Mrs B. Talbot, Mr. M. Bough, Ms K. Manning, Ms. J. Bayley and Ms F. Mughal

14/19 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors A. J. B. Beaumont, M. Glass and M. Thompson. It was confirmed that Councillor M. Middleton was attending as a substitute for Councillor Beaumont.

15/19 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

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

16/19 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 10th June, 2019 were submitted for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 10th June, 2019 be approved as an accurate record.

17/19 **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL LOW EMISSION VEHICLE STRATEGY - PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Climate Change and Energy Support Officer and the Housing Policy Manager presented a report in respect of introducing an Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle (ULEV) Strategy including a five year action plan. The policy was designed to assist in the development of the necessary infrastructure in light of the changeover to a wider use of electric vehicles.

It was explained that officers were seeking delegated authority to allow them to apply for central government grant funding to enable the installation of electric vehicle charging points.

Members welcomed the strategy, however it was noted that one of the challenges for the Council would be keeping up to date with the relevant technology.

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

- The Capital Programme for 2019/20, in which the funding of £300k for the (ULEV) Ultra-Low Emission Taxi Infrastructure Scheme was separate from the £4.5m funding available to be allocated for the on street residential charge point scheme.
- Concerns were raised that the cost of electric vehicle charging infrastructure could be quite high.
- The proposed strategy would cover all vehicles including taxis.
- The Council would encourage people to purchase renewable energy.

Councillor M. Sherrey, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, stated that as this was the early stage of the programme all options would be considered during the roll out of the scheme.

RESOLVED that the Bromsgrove District Low Emission Vehicle Strategy report be noted.

18/19

ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING SYSTEM - UPDATE (BRIEFING PAPER)

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources provided an update in relation to the Enterprise Resources Planning System and in doing so highlighted the following points:

- The system would be used for both Financial Services and for Human Resources purposes.
- A contract had been agreed with TechnologyOne for the new system.
- The system would be fully implemented within 18 months.
- The system would have the capacity to integrate with other systems, as and when required in the future.
- The Financial Services team was working to identify what information would need to be migrated into the new system as well as beginning the work of data cleansing.
- The total cost of the project would be £790k, however, additional savings would be identified moving forward.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

19/19

JOINT STAFF SURVEY TASK GROUP - UPDATE ON ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE SURVEY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE TASK GROUP (TO FOLLOW)

The Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager and Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development provided an update in respect of the actions arising from the work of the Joint Staff Survey Task Group review. The following points were highlighted during the presentation of this report:

- The Joint Staff Survey Task Group had been undertaken by Members of Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils in 2017. Councillors S. R. Colella, C. J. Spencer and S. A. Webb (Bromsgrove District Council) and Councillors J. Potter, T. Baker Price and J. Wheeler (Redditch Borough Council) had taken part in this exercise.
- The review had been established due to concerns amongst Members that there had been a low rate of responses when the survey had been circulated previously. The group had proposed a number of recommendations that were designed to improve response rates and to address challenging areas that were impacting on employees.
- The group's recommendations had been taken on board by Officers and a lot of work had been undertaken, particularly in respect of organisational culture, in an attempt to address the issues raised by staff in completed surveys.
- The Councils had engaged with Martin Reddington Associates (MRA) for advice as they specialised in employee engagement.
- In that latest staff survey a total of 54% of staff had provided a response, which was a significant improvement compared to the previous survey.
- The survey responses identified some areas of good practice. However, there were some issues that still needed to be addressed.
- The next survey was due to be circulated in September, 2019.
- The same questions would be included in the survey as in previous years to ensure that the data arising from the survey was comparable.

Councillor Colella, the Chairman of the Task Group, explained that he and Councillor Potter, the Vice Chairman of the group, had been consulted prior to the circulation of the last survey. However, neither they nor the rest of the group had received further information about the feedback that had been provided in response to that survey and he expressed the view that it was important to ensure that these details were shared with Members prior to the circulation of the next survey. Officers explained that the data arising from the latest survey had been shared with Corporate Management Team. In addition, the Leaders of both Councils had met to discuss the data.

Members questioned whether the next staff survey might need to be circulated at a later date than September 2019 to provide time for Councillors to review the feedback from the previous survey. Officers explained that a delay could occur if required, though the survey was due to be circulated in September.

RESOLVED that a further update in respect of the outcomes of the previous staff survey together with information about the new staff survey to be provided for Members' consideration at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board due to take place in September 2019.

20/19 **FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP - VERBAL UPDATE**

Members were informed that the first meeting of this municipal year would be held in August 2019. At this meeting Members would be asked to consider the work programme for 2019/20.

21/19 **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE WORKING GROUP - VERBAL UPDATE**

Members were informed that the first meeting of this municipal year had been arranged to take place on 25th July, 2019.

22/19 **TASK GROUP UPDATES**

Business Rates Relief Short Sharp Review

Members were advised the group met on 27th June, 2019. The outcomes and findings of the review would be presented to the Committee in September 2019, for consideration.

Bromsgrove Sporting Task Group

Councillor C.A. Hotham informed Members that the Group had recently held a meeting and Members were keen to invite relevant officers to attend meetings to answer questions on the subject. Members were also keen to look at rent charges for Alvechurch F.C. as it was in the same league as Bromsgrove Sporting F.C. and in a similar position.

23/19 **WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - UPDATE**

Councillor J. Till, the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), provided an update with regard to the HOSC meeting held on 27th June, 2019. Members were advised that during this meeting the following matters had been considered:

- West Midlands Ambulance Service. The Director of Clinical Commissioning and Service Development provided an update in respect of the service.

- An update had been provided on the subject of Worcestershire Acute Hospital Services, specifically for patients who had had strokes.
- The proposed merger of the Worcestershire and Herefordshire NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). Consultation was being undertaken in respect of the potential to merge the CCGs.

24/19

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED that the content of the latest edition of the Cabinet Work Programme be noted.

25/19

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered the Overview and Scrutiny Board's Work Programme.

Officers explained that items identified during the Overview and Scrutiny training event in June 2019 as potentially suitable for scrutiny would be considered in more detail at the following meeting of the Board. Any urgent items had already been incorporated onto the Board's work programme.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Board's Work Programme be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.50 p.m.

Chairman

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OVERVIEW AND SRUTINY BOARD – 11TH FEBRUAR 2019

MINUTE NO 108/18

SUGGESTED AREA FOR SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION - CUSTOMER SERVICE RESPONSE PROTOCOL

The Board considered a verbal proposal that had been brought forward by Councillor S. Colella for a scrutiny review in respect of the Customer Services Response Protocol. In particular, reference was made to the process for customers logging an issue (and the response timescales) and for the Council to look at the potential introduction of an electronic system. Members were asked to consider whether this would be a suitable topic for further scrutiny.

It was suggested that Members may wish to consider inviting the relevant officer to discuss the process of customer services. Councillor Webb informed the Board that the Corporate Performance Working Group had reviewed the customer services and that information was available on the Corporate Measures Dashboard.

It was concluded that the Customer Support Manager be invited to attend a future meeting of the Board to discuss the matter further. It was also suggested that some examples of where Members felt the service had not responded adequately or in a timely manner would be useful in order for the Customer Support Manager to be able to understand the areas of concern.

RESOLVED that the Customer Support Manager be invited to attend a future meeting of the Board to discuss the process in respect of Customer Services.

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Business Rates Relief Short Sharp Review

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor G Denaro – Finance and Enabling
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director Finance & Resources
Wards Affected	All

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 A Short Sharp Review into the Business Rates Relief fund was set up by the Overview and Scrutiny Board following a referral made by Council on 21st November 2018, when a Notice of Motion was put forward by Councillor M. Thompson. Following debate at Council the Motion was amended and approved as detailed below:

“In 2017 the Chancellor committed a £435m business rate relief package intended on helping high street businesses. The Communities Secretary at the time, Sajid Javid, promised ‘absolutely no delay’ in allocating and using the money. However, a table of ‘worst offending councils’ shows that Bromsgrove District Council failed to spend almost 70% of their grant.

Council notes this waste of central government funding and will refer this matter to the Overview and Scrutiny Board to investigate how this was allowed to happen.”

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Board recommend to Cabinet that:

The Section 151 Officer uses her delegated powers to use the 2018/19 balance for business scheme and reflects this in the allocation for subsequent years.

3. KEY ISSUES

Background Information

- 3.1 At its meeting held on 3rd December 2018 the Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed to set up a short sharp review, made up of Members of the Board, to investigate this matter further. It was agreed that as

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Councillor Thompson had put forward Notice of Motion he would chair the review.

- 3.2 The full membership of the review was; Councillors S. Colella, M. Glass, R. Laight, P. McDonald, P. Thomas and S. Webb. However, following the Elections in May 2019 and changes to the membership of the Board, Councillors Laight, Thomas and Webb were no long eligible to be part of it.
- 3.3 The review met on three occasions and interviewed the then Portfolio Holder (former Councillor B. Cooper), The Executive Director for Finance and Resources and the Revenue Services Manager. The meetings were held on 14th December 2018, 9th January and 27th June 2019.
- 3.4 The review Members discussed a number of areas in detail and considered relevant documentation. Those discussions included:
 - The Cabinet report dated 4th October 2017 and the subsequent urgent decision notice which was reported to Council on 22nd November 2017.
 - A detailed presentation in respect of the methodology in calculating the allocation of the funds and alternative models.
 - Comparative data in respect of other local authorities' schemes and distribution of the funds.
- 3.5 At its final meeting the review Members received an update in respect of the current position, where it was confirmed that the funds did not need to be allocated until the end of September 2019, which provided the Council with more time to amend the scheme in order to take advantage of the funds available. Initial modelling work had been carried out which allowed for the funds to be maximised and the Scheme amended appropriately. It was further confirmed that the Executive Director, Finance and Resources had delegated power to amend the scheme. The Short Sharp Review therefore make the recommendation as detailed in 2.1 of this report.

Financial Implications

- 3.6 The Government has provided funding for the award of Discretionary Revaluation Support. The amount of funding available to Bromsgrove District Council for the award of the scheme will be:

Amount of Discretionary Funding awarded (£000s)			
2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
135	65	27	4

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- 3.7 The level of funding available to the authority for award of the relief has been fixed and will not be adjusted should the costs of the scheme exceed Government funding. Therefore if the overall cost of Revaluation Support exceeds funding the authority would be required to meet a proportion of the costs.

Legal Implications

- 3.8 Billing authorities have the power to award discretionary relief under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. Section 47 prevents the award of relief to any billing authority or precepting authority.
- 3.9 The Non-Domestic Rating (Discretionary Relief) Regulations 1989 (The Regulations) provide the requirements for notifying ratepayers of their entitlement to relief, and limiting the authorities powers to vary or alter the decision.
- 3.10 The criteria for the award of relief have been designed to account for the legal requirements of the act and regulations. All relief will be conditional upon eligibility criteria and rules for calculating relief.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.11 The operation of the Revaluation Support Scheme will provide the Customer Access and Financial Support Service with an additional administrative and operational requirement. To minimise the impact on the service the Revaluation Support Scheme is designed to ensure that relief is calculated automatically and will not require a manual recalculation on changes in circumstances.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.12 None

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The criteria for the award of the relief have been designed to limit the financial risks to the authority and to ensure that the overall cost of the relief remains within the level of Government Funding
- 4.2 Reporting on the costs of Non-Domestic Rates relief are produced on a monthly basis and these reports will be used to highlight any financial risks associated with the costs of the relief.

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2nd September 2019

5. APPENDICES

None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Report and minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 4th October 2017.
- Council Minutes 22nd November 2017 – Report of Urgent Decision
- Department of Communities and Local Government – Business Rates Consultation on proposals on the design and implementation of the locally administered Business Rates Relief Scheme.
- Discretionary Rate Relief and High Streets – A guide for local authorities

7. KEY

None

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Amanda Scarce – Senior Democratic Services Officer
E Mail: a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel: 01527 881443

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

WORK PROGRAMME

2019/20

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board considers and agrees the work programme and updates it accordingly.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Date of Meeting	Subject	Additional Information
2nd September 2019	Bromsgrove Enterprise Park – Build Out Pre-scrutiny (Chief Executive/Head of Economic Development & Regeneration, NWEDR)	Picked up from the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme 1 st Feb – 31 st May 2019
	North Worcestershire Economic Growth Strategy – pre-scrutiny	Picked up from the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme 1 st April – 31 st July 2019
	Bromsgrove Council Plan	Picked up from the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme 1 st July – 31 st October 2019
	Customer Complaint Protocol – Presentation	Arising following verbal topic suggestion by Cllr S. Colella at meeting on 11 th February 2019
	Review of Council Tax Support Scheme – pre-scrutiny	Picked up from the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme 1 st July – 31 st October 2019
	Joint Staff Survey Task Group – update in respect of the outcomes of the previous staff survey together with information about the new Staff Survey.	Requested by Members at meeting held on 8 th July 2019
	Working Group Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance and Budget Corporate Performance 	
	Task Group Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bromsgrove Sporting Football Club Task Group Business Rates Relief Short Sharp Review 	

Agenda Item 12

	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – update from Representative	
	Cabinet Leader's Work Programme	
	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme	
21st October 2019	Review of Customer Access and Financial Support Service – pre-scrutiny	Picked up from the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme 1 st July – 31 st October 2019
	Bromsgrove Sports and Physical Activity Strategy – pre-scrutiny	Picked up from the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme 1 st July – 31 st October 2019
	Scrutiny of the Crime and Disorder Partnership	There is a statutory requirement for the Board to have a meeting dedicated to this subject at least once a year.
	Speeding – The Overview and Scrutiny Board to call in representatives of the Safer Roads Partnership to discuss issues with speeding.	These 3 items were raised as areas of interest at the Work Programme planning event held on 5 th June 2019.
	Recycling – the Overview and Scrutiny Board to receive information about what can and cannot be recycled and how to communicate this to the public.	
	Dog Mess and Litter – a campaign. This should consider how many fines have been issued.	
	Working Group Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance and Budget • Corporate Performance 	
	Any Task Group Updates	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – update from Representative	
	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme	
	Cabinet Leader's Work Programme	
2nd December 2019	Overview and Scrutiny – Select Committee Findings and Government Guidance	This item was first considered at the meeting on 10 th June and Members agreed to reconsider it at a later date.
	Working Group Updates	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance and Budget • Corporate Performance 	
	Any Task Group Updates	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – update from Representative	
	Cabinet Leader’s Work Programme	
	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme	
13th January 2020		
	Working Group Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance and Budget • Corporate Performance 	
	Task Group Updates	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – update from Representative	
	Cabinet Leader’s Work Programme	
	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme	
10th February 2020		
	Working Group Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance and Budget • Corporate Performance 	
	Any Task Group Updates	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – update from Representative	
	Cabinet Leader’s Work Programme	
	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme	
30th March 2020		
	Working Group Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance and Budget • Corporate Performance 	
	Any Task Group Updates	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – update from Representative	
	Cabinet Leader’s Work Programme	
	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme	
27th April 2020		
	Working Group Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance and Budget • Corporate Performance 	
	Any Task Group Updates	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – update from Representative	
	Cabinet Leader’s Work Programme	
	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme	

Areas Identified at the Work Programme Planning Event held on 5th June 2019 and to be scheduled in to meetings on an as and when basis

Potential Task Groups

- Public Transport / Bus Routes / Community Transport - Members agreed that this subject should be reviewed by a Task Group. The review could focus on public transport provision in rural areas and would require Members to consult with both the bus companies, Worcestershire County Council and BURT.
- Affordable and Social Housing Task Group - This review could focus on the accommodation provided by social housing organisations, planning enforcement and housing development controls and the impact of planning on the green belt.

Potential Items for Board discussion

- Protecting Local Shops – Members concluded that this was not a suitable subject for scrutiny as stated. However, Members agreed that the relevant Portfolio holder and the Town Centres Manager could be invited to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board to answer questions about town centre economic development. Members agreed that the focus should be on how to increase footfall in the town centres.
- Removal of Early Morning Bus Passes - Members expressed concerns that early morning bus passes had been removed impacting on those travelling to work. Members noted that there was an ongoing review of public transport and consultation was being held over the summer of 2019. Members concluded that they could revisit the subject of bus passes after this consultation has been completed.
- Town Centre Congestion - A review of this subject should take into account planning enforcement.

Previous Task Groups to be revisited

- Pavement Parking – The Overview and Scrutiny Board to receive an update on the recommendations arising from previous reviews of car parking.
- Anti-Social Behaviour and CCTV – the Overview and Scrutiny Board to receive an update on the recommendations arising from the previous review of CCTV.
- Air quality – The Overview and Scrutiny Board to receive an update on the recommendations arising from the previous review of air quality.
- Homelessness - The Overview and Scrutiny Board could revisit recommendations made by a previous Task Group on this subject.

Outstanding Items and Potential Items for pre-scrutiny

- Demonstration of modern.gov on an iPad together with data regarding paperless agendas.

Agenda Item 12

- Worcestershire Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) – To investigate whether HOSC is fit for purpose (possibly invite the Chairman of HOSC to a future meeting.)
- Bromsgrove Market Update – following presentation at the June 2019 meeting, it was agreed that a further update would be received in 12 months' time - schedule in for meeting in June 2020

When considering topics for investigations Members may wish to take into account the Council's Strategic Purposes as detailed below:

Our Strategic Purposes for Bromsgrove



Help me to live my life independently

Help me to be financially independent

Keep my place safe & looking good

Help me find somewhere to live in my locality

Provide good things for me to see, do & visit

Help me run a successful business

Support services enable us to deliver our purposes

For more information view the Council Plan at:
<http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/cms/council-and-democracy/council-plan.aspx>



**Bromsgrove
District Council**
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