



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY 23RD OCTOBER 2019
AT 6.00 P.M.

COMMITTEE ROOM, PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE

MEMBERS: Councillors K.J. May (Leader), G. N. Denaro (Deputy Leader),
A. D. Kent, M. A. Sherrey, P.L. Thomas and S. A. Webb

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 4th September 2019 (Pages 1 - 8)**
4. **Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 2nd September 2019 (Pages 9 - 16)**
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes or arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 21st October 2019 (to be tabled at the meeting if any)
5. **Asset of Community Value - High House Wood (Pages 17 - 30)**
6. **Wyre Forest Local Plan - BDC Response to pre submission plan (Pages 31 - 44)**
7. **Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2018/19 (Pages 45 - 48)**

8. **Medium Term Financial Plan - Financial Framework (Pages 49 - 52)**
9. **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

14th October 2019



INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

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Declaration of Interests - Explained

Definition of Interests

A Member has a **PERSONAL INTEREST** if the issue being discussed at a meeting affects the well-being or finances of the Member, the Member's family or a close associate more than most other people who live in the ward affected by the issue.

Personal interests are also things relating to an interest the Member must register, such as any outside bodies to which the Member has been appointed by the Council or membership of certain public bodies.

A personal interest is also a **PREJUDICIAL INTEREST** if it affects:

- The finances, or
- A regulatory function (such as licensing or planning)

Of the Member, the Member's family or a close associate **AND** which a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of the facts would believe likely to harm or impair the Member's ability to judge the public interest.

Declaring Interests

If a Member has an interest they must normally declare it at the start of the meeting or as soon as they realise they have the interest.

EXCEPTION:

If a Member has a **PERSONAL INTEREST** which arises because of membership of another public body the Member only needs to declare it if and when they speak on the matter.

If a Member has both a **PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTEREST** they must not debate or vote on the matter and must leave the room.

EXCEPTION:

If a Member has a prejudicial interest in a matter being discussed at a meeting at which members of the public are allowed to make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter, the Member has the same rights as the public and can also attend the meeting to make representations, give evidence or answer questions **BUT THE MEMBER MUST LEAVE THE ROOM ONCE THEY HAVE FINISHED AND CANNOT DEBATE OR VOTE.**

However, the Member must not use these rights to seek to improperly influence a decision in which they have a prejudicial interest.

For further information please contact Committee Services, Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, Bromsgrove District Council, The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove, B60 1AA

Tel: 01527 873232 Fax: 01527 881414

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

4TH SEPTEMBER 2019, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors K.J. May (Leader), G. N. Denaro (Deputy Leader), A. D. Kent, M. A. Sherrey, P.L. Thomas and S. A. Webb

Observers: Councillor M. Thompson

Officers: Mrs. S. Hanley, Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. D. Poole, Ms. C. Flanagan, Mr. D. Allen, Mr. M. Dunphy, Mrs. R. Green and Ms. A. Scarce

22/19 **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

23/19 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

24/19 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 10th July 2019 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 10th July 2019 be approved as a correct record.

25/19 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 8TH JULY 2019**

The Leader thanked Councillor M. Thompson for attending to present both these minutes and the minute extract from the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 2nd September, which had been tabled at the meeting (attached as an appendix to these minutes) and which contained a number of recommendations in respect of the wording in the Council Plan, Minute No 31/19.

Councillor Thompson reminded Members of the background to the Short Sharp Review which the Overview and Scrutiny Board had carried out in respect of Business Rates Relief. Following discussions, over a number of meetings, with the Executive Director, Finance and Resources an alternative method of calculating those who were eligible for this relief had been found. This would enable the Council to take advantage of the

full amount of funds available to them, to the benefit of businesses in the District. The Leader also commented that a large proportion of business had had a reduction in business rates following a review.

In respect of the Council Plan recommendations, Councillor Thompson talked through each of the recommendations and provided some context as to why the changes were being made. Particular reference was made to ii) and the inclusion of those with reduced mobility as there had been concern that there may not be sufficient data to support this.

The Leader thanked the Overview and Scrutiny Board for its input into the Council Plan and was happy for the recommendations to be incorporated in to the final version.

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 8th July 2019 be noted;
- b) that the Section 151 Officer uses her delegated powers to use the 2018/19 balance from the business rates scheme and reflect this in the allocation for subsequent years be approved; and
- c) that the following amendments to the wording in the Council Plan be agreed:
 - i) Work and financial independence – Ensure people get the benefits they need – amend the measure to read:
“Number of emergency Essential Living Fund payments”.
“Number of emergency Discretionary Housing payments”.
 - ii) Live independent, active & healthy lives – Why? – amend to read:
“Increasing numbers of people living with reduced mobility, dementia and diabetes are a particular issue for the District”.
 - iii) Affordable & sustainable homes – Priority: A balanced housing market – include this priority within the “We will” and “How we will measure progress” section.
 - iv) An effective & sustainable Council – amend “Sustainability – We Will” to read:
“Focus more on commercialisation of services, and where appropriate, maximising every opportunity to generate income”.

26/19

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD - MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 27TH JUNE 2019

Councillor A. Kent, as Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services, introduced this item and explained that it was a recommendation from the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board in respect of the Enforcement Policy for 2019.

RECOMMENDED that, the Council for each Member Authority adopts the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy 2019, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

27/19

NHB COMMUNITY GRANTS PANEL - RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

Councillor G. Denaro was invited to introduce this report, as he, together with Councillor S. Webb had sat on the Panel. Councillor Denaro confirmed he was happy to support the allocation of funds as detailed in the appendix to the report and thanked all those concerned for their work in bringing this year's Grants Panel to a satisfactory conclusion. He commented that the scheme would benefit from a full review, as recommended, should there be funds available in future years.

RESOLVED:

- a) that the NHB Grants Panel recommendations attached at appendix 1 to the report, be approved; and
- b) that should the scheme continue into 2020/21 a full review of the process be carried out prior to the commencement of the grants allocation for that year, be approved.

28/19

BROMSGROVE PLAN REVIEW UPDATE

Councillor A. Kent, as Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services presented this report and explained that a great deal of work had gone into it, with the responses from the earlier consultation being detailed at appendix 1. This, together with appendix 3, was over 600 pages and had therefore been published as a supplementary agenda, which was available on the Council's website.

The Leader thanked officers for their work to date and advised that this matter had been discussed in detail at a recent meeting and Cabinet was working towards the long term sustainability of the District as a whole and all options would therefore be considered. Councillor Kent reiterated that currently evidence was being collected and that no formal decisions would be made until all that evidence was available.

RECOMMENDED:

- a) that Council notes the response to the Issues and Options Consultation (Appendix 1);
- b) that Council notes and publishes for consultation, the Plan Update and Further Consultation document (Appendix 2), for a period of 6 weeks from 30th September to the 11th November 2019;
- c) that Council notes the contents of the Stage 1 Green Belt Purposes Assessment (Appendix 3).

- d) that Council opens the Call for Sites process for a period of 6 weeks between 30th September to the 11th November 2019; and
- e) that delegated authority is given to the Head of Planning and Regeneration Services in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services, to make any minor technical corrections and editorial changes deemed necessary to aid the understanding of the documentation prior to final publishing.

29/19

RESPONSE TO WCC PASSENGER TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Councillor A. Kent, as Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services, advised Members that Cabinet were asked to endorse the detailed response to the Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Transport Strategy which had been out to consultation for some time. It was important to note that the Council was committed to working alongside WCC to improve the infrastructure across North Worcestershire and within the Bromsgrove District.

The Leader thanked officers for the in depth response and reiterated Councillor Kent's comments.

RECOMMENDED that the response at Appendix A to the Worcestershire County Council Passenger Transport Strategy be endorsed.

30/19

WORCESTERSHIRE HOMELESS STRATEGY

Councillor S. Webb as Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Health and Well Being introduced the report and in so doing provided background information and explained that the Strategic Direction for Tackling Homelessness contained within the report expanded on the High Level Partnership Plan which had been produced by the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership in 2017. The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018 had meant that the Strategic Direction document needed to be updated to take account of the legislative changes. Councillor Webb went on to invite Members to take part in a physical count of homeless people in the District, which would take place in November, with officers and partners. The Leader confirmed her interest in joining this count.

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Worcestershire Strategic Direction for Tackling Homelessness be noted;
- b) that Cabinet note that this document expands on previously agreed high level actions within the Housing Partnership Plan that relate to tackling homelessness be noted; and

- c) that Cabinet note this document will need to be updated and renamed within the next 12 months to ensure compliance with the new national Rough Sleeping Strategy with amendments being made at officer level.

31/19

BROMSGROVE COUNCIL PLAN

The Head of Transformation and Organisational Development introduced the report and explained that following feedback from a Cabinet Away Day in July, the Council Plan had been refreshed to incorporate the areas discussed.

A revised copy of the Plan, containing the more detailed graphics and incorporating the feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Board was circulated for Members and it was confirmed that any further comments from this meeting would be included in the final version which would be considered by Council at its meeting on 25th September.

The Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager went through the Council Plan in more detail with Members and highlighted the following areas:

- The strategic purposes together with the Council's priorities and how these were supported.
- The inclusion of the "green thread" throughout which acknowledged the Council's commitment to environmental issues.
- How the Plan would be delivered.
- An explanation around the headings under each section (the sections were broken down into the Council's Strategic Purposes).
- How progress would be measured in implementing the Plan.

The Leader thanked officers for pulling together all the ideas and discussions which had taken place at the away day and invited Members to comment on any particular areas.

Reference was made to the recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Board in respect of data supporting the inclusion of reduced mobility and it was confirmed that Officers had checked and there was sufficient data available to include this.

Councillor Denaro, as Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling commented that, in view of the announcements in today's statement from the Chancellor, there may be a number of changes that needed to be made in respect of the Council's financial position. The Executive Director, Finance and Resources, confirmed that whilst there would be a number of small changes, as the Council would not receive its settlement figure until December, the current position would remain as stated.

The Leader commented that the Plan gave a clear vision for the Council to work towards in order to ensure that residents could see that all those in need would receive the support and help required over the next four years.

RECOMMENDED that the Council Plan attached at Appendix 1 be approved.

32/19

BUDGET FRAMEWORK - PRESENTATION

The Executive Director, Finance and Resources, gave a short presentation (attached as an appendix to these minutes) in respect of this item, including a number of points which had been picked up from the Chancellor's statement made earlier in the day. It was clarified that detail around some of this information was still awaited. The presentation covered the following areas:

- The challenges facing this Council in the coming years.
- The possibility of the Council Tax threshold being reduced to 2%, if this proved to be correct it could have an impact of around £50-60k in the budget
- No mention of the rollover of the Business Rates Pilot Scheme, which would be disappointing if not continued.
- The Negative Revenue Support Grant – it appears that this will be funded by the Government in 2020/21.
- The ongoing issues around Universal Credit and the demand these have on our services – the Council was working with the Citizens' Advice Bureau and other organisations to assist residents with managing debt. It was further explained that this referred to those with a private landlord as the rental payment was made direct to the individual as opposed to the landlord.
- Actions which had been put in place to mitigate overspends and how these would be monitored.
- The need to protect the level of balances.
- The predicted financial position over the next four years and the amount of the shortfall for each period.
- How those gaps will be filled.
- The need to reduce the enabling costs down to between 8-10%.
- The Capital Programme and the need to make improvements in how this was managed and making any business cases much more robust.
- The External Auditors were comfortable with the Council's current financial position and had no immediate concerns.
- The role of the Finance and Budget Working Group in assisting with the process.
- Actions to develop savings, including detailed review of the 2018/19 actual budgets against current allocated budgets for 2019/20.

- The Council Plan being able to help to engage with the public in order for them to understand the need for a sustainable budget and how monies were spent.

Councillor G. Denaro, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling, commented that there remained a lot of work to be done and challenges to face going forward, but the Council was in a good position overall.

RESOLVED that the budget framework presentation be noted.

33/19

FINANCE MONITORING QUARTER 1 REPORT

The Executive Director, Finance and Resources presented the report and in so doing highlighted the following:

- The first quarter always contained a number of costs and income from the year end, such as invoices which needed to be paid from the previous year.
- A small underspend was already showing which was good news and helped to protect the Council's balances.
- The increase in income from the Core Waste Services.
- Enabling services and funds from vacant posts. In the case of the Finance Team the vacant posts would be offset against the new Enterprise Resource System and to protect current posts.
- Savings and the monitoring of them.
- Capital budgets – Portfolio Holders were encouraged to work with the relevant Heads of Service to ensure they were up to speed with this and that any projects included in it were current and if not, whether it was possible to give up the Capital budget in some cases. A more detailed breakdown was provided in appendix 1 of the report.
- Background information supporting the increase in the Capital Programme for the replacement CCTV cameras, which was included in the recommendation to Council.

Following presentation of the report Members raised a number of questions, including the saving made from the pension payment adjustment. Councillor Denaro, as Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling confirming that each department was within the 10% guideline set down, but this would be monitored closely to ensure that no area was above or below it in future months.

The Leader reiterated the Executive Director, Finance and Resources request for Portfolio Holders to work with Heads of Service in going through the budgets line by line to ensure that any savings available have been realised.

RESOLVED that Cabinet notes the current financial position in relation to revenue and capital budgets for the period April – June 2019 as detailed in the report.

Agenda Item 3

Cabinet
4th September 2019

RECOMMENDED that an increase in the 2019-20 Capital Programme of £80K (as detailed at 6.1 of the report) for CCTV Cameras funded by releasing funds allocated in 2020-21 £40k and 2021-22 £40k to increase the existing budget already approved in 2019-20 be approved.

The meeting closed at 6.42 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY, 2ND SEPTEMBER 2019, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors M. Thompson (Chairman), J. Till (Vice-Chairman), S. J. Baxter (substituting for Councillor C. A. Hotham), A. J. B. Beaumont, S. R. Colella, R. J. Deeming, S. P. Douglas, R. J. Hunter, A. D. Kriss and C. J. Spencer

Observers: Councillor G. N. Denaro

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. D. Poole, Mrs. R. Green, Ms. A. Scarce and Mrs. P. Ross

26/19 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors M. Glass and C. A. Hotham. It was confirmed that Councillor S. Baxter was attending as the substitute for Councillor Hotham.

27/19 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

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

28/19 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 8th July 2019 were submitted for Members' consideration.

With the agreement of the Chairman, the Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development took the opportunity to update the Board with regard to the next Staff Survey.

Members were informed that the next Staff Survey, which was due to be circulated to staff in September 2019, would now be circulated early 2020.

The Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development informed the Board that Chief Executive had scheduled a number of staff briefings, during September 2019, to provide staff with information on the Council's current financial situation; and that the Deputy Chief Executive was also looking to arrange another series of staff culture presentations / events. It was therefore felt, that it would be more appropriate to carry out the next Staff Survey in the New Year.

RESOLVED

- a) that the Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme be updated to reflect the new proposed date for the Staff Survey; and
- b) that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 8th July 2019, be approved as an accurate record.

29/19

COUNCIL PLAN - PRE SCRUTINY

The Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development briefly informed the Board, that with new Members being elected for 2019/2023 and a new Leader of the Council; officers had seen this as an opportunity to update and refresh the Council Plan. An 'Away Day' was held for Cabinet Members and the Corporate Management Team, in order to capture their full input. A lot of data was presented including information from members of the public. All of the input from the 'Away Day' had now been incorporated within the Council Plan. A full review and consultation on the Council Plan would be carried out in 2020.

The Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager drew Members' attention to the diagram, as detailed on page 3 of the Supplementary Agenda Pack.

This detailed the Council's Vision, Strategic Purposes and Priorities for 2019/2023. At the 'Away Day', Cabinet Members had identified eight priorities for 2019/2023. The six Strategic Purposes had been reduced to five. 'Provide me with good things to see, do and visit' had been incorporated into 'Living independent, active and healthy lives'.

It was also agreed at the 'Away Day' that it was important to have 'green thread' actions running throughout, which would refer to the environment. Page 5 of the Supplementary Agenda Pack highlighted 'Our Challenges'.

It was hoped that the new measures information under 'How will we measure progress' would be easier and make more sense for members of the public.

Members thanked officers for the update on the Council Plan.

An in depth discussion followed whereby Members questioned, if there was a potential risk of mixing the Council's priorities, (namely diabetes), with other agencies priorities.

Councillor Baxter expressed some concern that the strategic priority 'Living independent, active and healthy lives' appeared to be moving away from young people, there was not a lot in the Plan to encourage young people.

Councillor Kriss commented that diabetes was not just linked to the elderly; young people were also diagnosed with diabetes. The cost

pressure on the NHS was one of the most expensive, mainly due to complications as a result of diabetes. The key factor was to look at ways to help prevent and reduce diabetes with lifestyle changes, which included diet and exercise. We should be looking at promoting lifestyle changes to young people as a preventative measure against the onset of diabetes.

Members raised a number of questions with regard to some of the wording used within the Plan.

Following on from this discussion, it was

RECOMMENDED that the following wording be included / changed within the Council Plan as follows:-

- a) Work and financial independence – Ensure people get the benefits they need – amend the measure to read:

“Number of emergency Essential Living Fund payments”.
“Number of emergency Discretionary Housing payments”.

- b) Live independent, active & healthy lives – Why? – amend to read:

“Increasing numbers of people living with reduced mobility, dementia and diabetes are a particular issue for the District”.

- c) Affordable & sustainable homes – Priority: A balanced housing market – include this priority within the “We will” and “How we will measure progress” section.

- d) An effective & sustainable Council – amend “Sustainability – We Will” to read:

“Focus more on commercialisation of services, where appropriate, maximising every opportunity to generate income”.

30/19

CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS PROTOCOL - PRESENTATION

The Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources provided a brief presentation on the Customer Services Response Protocol.

During the commencement of the presentation it became apparent that there had been some miscommunication. At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Colella confirmed that this item had been placed on the Board’s Work Programme following his request at the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 11th February 2019.

Councillor Colella provided clarification as follows; in that he had wanted information with regard to customers who contacted the Council regarding service requests and the responses they had received and the time it had taken to respond to those customers. He was aware of

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Overview and Scrutiny Board
2nd September 2019

customers who had contacted the Council, but had not received a response or follow up to their service request.

In response to the Chairman, Members agreed to continue with the presentation.

The Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources continued and informed Members that all complaints were logged on an electronic system and that the system was available to every member of staff. A Customer Service Advisor would check for any unassigned complaints on a daily basis and assign them. Managers for each service area were responsible for managing their own complaints. Customer Services were not in control of the system. There was no overall responsibility from Customer Services to respond to complaints or measure the performance of the service areas. There was no overarching view of complaint response times, hence slight inconsistencies. However, the Customer Services Team was working on achieving a more consistent approach and she was happy to bring that information to the next meeting of the Board.

The Chairman thanked the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources.

A further discussion continued, whereby Councillor Colella further explained that he was aware that customers who contacted Worcestershire County Council, by phone or via their on-line service were provided with a reference / log number, which could be quoted during any further contact regarding their service request. He had wanted information with regard to the Council's customer response system and not customer complaints. Members were in agreement that a customer log or reference number would be extremely useful for customers. They would be able to quote this number should they need to contact the Council for an update / response to their service request. It was felt that this would also create more transparency for both customers and officers.

Councillor Douglas also commented that it would be useful to have an 'App' made available to Councillors to log, track or follow up any resident's queries or complaints received by Councillors. Councillor Denaro suggested that this could be raised at a future meeting of the Member Development Steering Group.

The Chairman asked Members if they felt it might be informative to invite partner agencies to a future meeting of the Board, with regard to how they log / respond to any issues / queries / service requests from their customers. Members were in agreement that this might prove useful and agreed that an invitation be extended to Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) to attend a future meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED

- a) that Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BHDT) be invited to attend a future meeting of the board;
- b) that the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources to provide an update with regard to the Customer Services Team, as detailed in the pre-ambles above; and
- c) that the presentation be noted.

31/19

BUSINESS RATES RELIEF - SHORT SHARP REVIEW FINAL REPORT

The Board considered a report on the Business Rates Relief Short Sharp Review, which was carried out following a referral made by Council on 21st November 2018, when a Notice of Motion was put forward by Councillor M. Thompson. The amended and approved Motion is detailed below:-

“In 2017 the Chancellor committed a £435m business rate relief package intended on helping high street businesses. The Communities Secretary at that 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”.

Councillor Colella stated that it had been a really positive Task Group and that he would like to express his sincere thanks to Task Group Members and the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources and officers who had supported the work of the Task Group.

RECOMMENDED

- a) 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.

32/19

FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP - UPDATE

It was noted that the next meeting of the Group was due to take place after the Overview & Scrutiny Board meeting on 2nd September 2019.

33/19

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE WORKING GROUP - UPDATE

The Senior Democratic Services Officer (Bromsgrove) informed Members that the next meeting of the Group had been put back; pending the approval of the new Council Plan strategic purposes, priorities and measures.

Therefore, it had been agreed that the next meeting of the Group would be scheduled for early 2020.

34/19

TASK GROUP UPDATES

Bromsgrove Sporting Task Group

The Chairman informed Members that the next meeting of the Group was scheduled for Wednesday 18th September 2019; and that Board Members from Bromsgrove Sporting had been invited to attend the meeting.

WCC LTP4 Task Group

The Chairman asked Councillor Colella if he was happy for this item to be considered by the Strategic Planning Steering Group.

In response Councillor Colella stated that he was of the opinion that it was still an essential Task Group proposal. The LPT4 document should be a dynamic document detailing how it was going to tackle the infrastructure needs of the future, it was not just about the A38. There was pressure for new developments in the district, so it merited having a Task Group and he felt that it would be positive for newly elected Members to be involved in this Task Group.

RESOLVED that the WCC LTP4 Task Group be included on the Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme 2019/20.

35/19

WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - UPDATE

Councillor J. Till, the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), confirmed that there had not been another meeting since she had updated the Board on the last meeting, held on 27th June, 2019.

A brief discussion took place on the age criteria for bowel cancer screening, it was clarified that Worcestershire NHS currently invited men and women, aged 60 to 74, for bowel cancer screening.

36/19

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme from the 1st October 2019 to 31st January 2020.

RESOLVED

- a) that the Domestic Abuse Policy be added to the Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme 2019/2020; and
- b) that the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme from 1st October 2019 to 31st January 2020, be noted.

37/19

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Board considered the Overview and Scrutiny Board's Work Programme for 2019/20.

Agenda Item 4

Overview and Scrutiny Board
2nd September 2019

The Chairman reiterated that, as stated earlier, he was frustrated that due to items being moved on the Cabinet Leaders Work Programme, this had created a rather large Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme for October 2019, which would see an overloaded Overview & Scrutiny agenda for the meeting to be held on 21st October 2019.

Councillor Denaro commented that Cabinet Members had also expressed their frustration with items being moved on the Cabinet Leaders Work Programme. He had spoken with the Chief Executive with regard to this and the possibility of bringing more items forward.

The Chairman asked Members if they would consider holding an additional meeting early November 2019, for Scrutiny of the Crime and Disorder Partnership; and look at moving Speeding, Recycling and Dog Mess and Litter to the Overview & Scrutiny Board meeting scheduled for 2nd December 2019.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer (Bromsgrove) reminded Members that, as detailed on the Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme, it was a statutory requirement for the Board to have a meeting dedicated to Scrutiny of the Crime and Disorder Partnership at least once a year.

In response to Councillor Colella, the Senior Democratic Services Officer (Bromsgrove) stated that she would liaise with the Community Safety Manager with regard to inviting relevant stakeholders / partners to the additional Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting to be scheduled early November 2019.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme 2019/20, be updated to include an additional meeting in November 2019, as detailed in the pre-amble above; and to include all of the items discussed and agreed during the course of the meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.00 p.m.

Chairman

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CABINET

20 SEPTEMBER 2019

NOMINATION OF AN ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Adam Kent
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford – Head of Planning & Regeneration
Wards Affected	Cofton Lickey Hills Marlbrook
Key Decision – N/A	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To consider whether to support a nomination to list High House Wood an Asset of Community Value [“ACV”].

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet, as consultee, consider the contents of the report and decide to either:-

- (a) Support the listing of High House Wood as an Asset of Community Value; or**
- (b) Not support the listing of High House Wood as an Asset of Community Value**

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 As Members are aware from previous reports the Localism Act gave communities a right to identify a building or other land that they believe to be of importance to their community’s social well-being and nominate such land / buildings to be registered with the Local Authority as an “Asset of Community Value”.
- 3.2 Registration lasts for six years and if the property comes up for sale, the legislation allows a community group six weeks to express an interest in its purchase and if they do so, there is a six month period within which they can prepare their bid to buy the asset. The property in question can then be sold on the open market. Community groups have the same rights as any other bidders and there is no preference given to the local community bid.
- 3.3 The Council has received a nomination from Lickey and Blackwell Parish Council to list High House Wood as an ACV. The nomination is attached at Appendix 1.

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- 3.4 It has been nominated by Lickey and Blackwell Parish Council, which is a qualifying community entity under the legislation, to make a nomination.
- 3.5 The Parish Council states in its nomination form that its “main aim is to preserve/safeguard High House Wood by making this application on behalf of all residents of Lickey and Blackwell Parish”. However, nomination lasts for six years and will need to be re-nominated after that time to maintain registration on the ACV register.
- 3.6 The High House Wood meets all of the statutory criteria for listing, as set out at 3.8 below.
- 3.7 Members are reminded that the final decision regarding whether to list an asset rests with the Head of Planning and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration and Cabinet is being consulted by The Head of Planning and Regeneration as part of the consultation process.

Financial Implications

- 3.8 Property owners who believe they have incurred costs as a result of complying with these procedures can apply for compensation from the Council. As previously reported to Council, Government recognises this as a potential risk to local authorities and will provide a safety net whereby any verified claims of over £20,000 will be met by Government. The owners also have a right to appeal the decision made by the Council in agreeing that the building be included on the Assets of Community Value.

Legal Implications

- 3.9 The Localism Act 2011 made provision for a system to list “assets of community value”, giving community groups the right to make nominations, and requiring local authorities to maintain local registers. Detailed rules around the operation of assets of community value are set out in the Assets of Community Value Regulations 2012.
- 3.10 The test for listing an Asset of Community Value as set out in Section 88 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 is as follows:-
- “A building or other land in a Local Authority’s area is land of community value if in the opinion of the authority:-
- (a) an actual current use of the building or other land that is not an ancillary user furthers the social well-being or social interests of the local community, and

(b) it is realistic to think that there can continue to be non-ancillary use of the building or other land which will further (whether or not in the same way) the social well-being or social interests of the local community.”

Service/Operational Implications

3.11 There are no specific operational implications for the District. The list of nominated assets is maintained by Land Charges officers and is available on the Council’s Website.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

3.12 None from this report.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 The ACV register is maintained by the Council to ensure that all assets nominated are included to mitigate any risks associated with assets not being included on the register. Consideration by officers and members will be undertaken at each nomination to ensure a consistent approach is taken.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Nomination Form
Appendix 2 – High House Wood plan

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Ruth Bamford
E Mail: r.bamford@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881202

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<p style="text-align: center;">BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE – THE COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOMINATION FORM</p>
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Section A: About your organisation

A1 Organisation's name and address

Name of organisation* LICKEY AND BLACKWELL PARISH COUNCIL
Address including postcode THE TRINITY CENTRE, OLD BIRMINGHAM ROAD, LICKEY, B45 8ES

**full name as written in your constitution or rules (if appropriate)*

A2 Contact details

Name LISA WINTERBOURN
Position in organisation EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Address including postcode THE TRINITY CENTRE 411 OLD BIRMINGHAM ROAD LICKEY B45 8ES
Daytime telephone no. 07930837770
Email address seo@lickeyandblackwellpc.org
How and when can we contact you? By phone/text or email in office hours – preferably 10.30-4 Wednesday and Friday

**by email or phone, and days of the week and/or times of day you would prefer*

A3 Type of organisation

Description	Put a cross against all those that apply	Registration number of charity and/or company (if applicable)
Neighbourhood forum		
Parish Council	X	
Charity		
Community interest company		
Unincorporated body		
Company limited by guarantee		
Industrial and provident society		

A4 Number of members registered to vote locally (unincorporated bodies only)

In the case of an unincorporated body, at least 21 of its members must be registered to vote in the Bromsgrove District. If relevant, please confirm the number of such members. If they are registered to vote in the area of a neighbouring local authority, rather than in Bromsgrove, please confirm which area that is.

N/A

A5 Local connection

Your organisation must have a local connection, which means that its activities are wholly or partly concerned with the administrative area of Bromsgrove District Council or a neighbouring local authority. In some cases this will be obvious, eg. a parish council in Bromsgrove, or an organisation whose activities are confined to the district. If your connection may not be obvious to us please explain what your organisation's local connection is.

WE ARE A PARISH COUNCIL

A6 Distribution of surplus funds (certain types of organisation only)

If your organisation is an unincorporated body, a company limited by guarantee, or an industrial and provident society, its rules must provide that surplus funds are not distributed to members, but are applied wholly or partly for the benefit of the local area (ie. within the administrative area of Bromsgrove or a neighbouring local authority). If relevant, please confirm that this is the case, and specifically which area this applies to.

N/A

A7 More about your organisation

What are the main aims and activities of your organisation?

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AS WITH ANY PARISH COUNCIL

A8 Your organisation's rules

Please send us a copy of the relevant type of document for your organisation, and put a cross in the next column to indicate which one this is	X
Memorandum and Articles of Association (for a company)	
Trust Deed (for a trust)	
Constitution and/or rules (for other organisations)	X STANDING ORDERS

Part B: About the land or building(s) you are nominating

B1 Description and address

What it is (eg. pub, local shop) WOODLAND
Name of premises (eg. Post office , Community Centre) HIGH HOUSE WOOD
Address including postcode (if known) HIGH HOUSE LANE, LICKEY, B45 (8ES?)

B2 Sketch plan

<p>Please include (here or on a separate sheet) a sketch plan of the land. This should show:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The boundaries of the land that you are nominating• The approximate size and position of any building(s) on the land.• Any roads bordering the site.• <p>PLEASE SEE ATTACHED</p>

Agenda Item 5

B3 Owners and others with an interest in the building or land

You should supply the following information, if possible. If any information is not known to you, please say so.

	Name(s)	Address(es)
Names of all current occupants of the land	As below, and Lickey and Blackwell PC who pay to maintain the site and the High House Wood Management Group who volunteer and manage alongside the PC	<i>The Trinity Centre 411 Old Birmingham Road B45 8ES</i>
Names and current or last known addresses of all those owning the freehold of the land (ie. owner, head landlord, head lessor)	Judith Sleet, Susan Jeanes and Ian Mackee.	
Names and current or last known addresses of all those having a leasehold interest in the land (ie. tenant, intermediate landlord, intermediate lessor)		

B4 Why you think the building or land is of community value

Note that the following are not able to be assets of community value:-

- *A building wholly used as a residence, together with land “connected with” that residence. This means adjoining land in the same ownership. Land is treated as adjoining if it is separated only by a road, railway, river or canal.*
- *A caravan site.*
- *Operational land. This is generally land belonging to the former utilities and other statutory operators.*

Does it currently further the social wellbeing or social interests* of the local community, or has it done so in the recent past? If so, how?

The wood is managed for biodiversity – wildlife, plants, trees etc. There is a group of residents and parish council members who manage the wood including maintenance and planting and information boards etc.

HHW is in the Green Belt and abuts the Lickey Hills Country Park which is open to the public and widely used for leisure purposes – there is no real fence between the 2 areas

There is a TPO (Tree Preservation Order) across the whole site – the trees of course offering visual amenity to the area and wildlife/environmental benefits

Managed wood for biodiversity – wildlife, plants, trees etc.

HHW is in the Green Belt and abuts the Lickey Hills Country Park

There are Rights of Way through the wood which are regularly used by dog walkers and school children to get to school

Appreciable public monies have been spent on its maintenance since 2005

Used for educational visits by local school

Used by the community for recreational purposes

Inclusion in the local Neighbourhood Development Plan and in the CPRE

Worcestershire (Campaign to Protect Rural England) June 2019 report) – Lickey Hills ‘Very High’ overall landscape value – please see our PC website for more information

Could it in future further the social wellbeing or social interests* of the local community? If so, how? (This could be different from its current or past use.)

Yes of course, as highlighted above the woods have a very beneficial impact on the local environment as well as offering the opportunity for people to go outdoors and enjoy the outdoor space. Forest school learning takes place there as well as being a safe alternative to travelling/walking along the busy road for local school children.

The local community can/ and do hold small events there related to tree planting and the environment.

**These could be cultural, recreational and/or sporting interests, so please say which one(s) apply.*

Section C: Submitting this nomination

C1 What to include

- The rules of your organisation (question A8).
- Your sketch plan (question B2).

C2 Signature

By signing your name here (if submitting by post) or typing it (if submitting by email) you are confirming that the contents of this form are correct, to the best of your knowledge.

Signature L Winterbourn

C3 Where to send this form

You can submit this nomination:-

- **By post to:** Ruth Bamford, Head of Service, Planning and Regeneration, Bromsgrove District Council , Parkside, Market Street, Bromsgrove, B61 8DA
- **By email to:** r.bamford@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
-

Appendix 2: High House Wood Plan



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Response of BDC on Wyre Forest Local Plan Pre-Submission Version

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Adam Kent
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	Yes
Non-Key Decision	Yes

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) has republished the Wyre Forest Local Plan Review pre submission plan (WFLP), the representation period on this plan and its supporting evidence is taking place between 1st September 2019 and 14th October 2019.
- 1.2 It is requested that the objection as summarised below and included in full at appendix A, is submitted to WFDC as BDC's formal response to the pre submission plan. Due to the deadline of the representations period, the initial response had to be submitted as an officer response.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That cabinet endorses the officer response to the Wyre Forest Local Plan Review Pre submission plan (as attached at Appendix A)**
- 2.2 **That Cabinet recommends to Council, that the officer response to the Wyre Forest Local Plan Review Pre submission plan be approved by Council as its formal response, and that it is confirmed with Wyre Forest District Council as such.**
- 2.3 **That Delegated Authority is given to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to ensure that BDC is represented at the Examination in Public element of the Wyre Forest Local Plan review.**

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 WFDC has republished its pre submission plan in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 3.3 It is important that the Bromsgrove District Council submit a representation at this stage as this is the last opportunity to respond to the plan before the Examination in Public. Not responding at this stage would end BDC's ability to influence the content of the WFLP.

Service / Operational Implications

Summary of Response - Wyre Forest Local Plan pre-submission

- 3.4 The WFLP is in effect the final draft version of the plan and that which WFDC will be submitting to the Secretary of State to undergo Examination in Public, this is the second time this version of the plan has been published.
- 3.5 BDC has responded to previous versions of the WFLP, most notably at preferred option stage in August 2017 and at the first pre submission representations period in December 2018. At both stages the Council expressed concerns that the transport implications of the proposed development sites in Wyre Forest were not able to be quantified; and therefore possible mitigation strategies not properly identified.
- 3.6 Within the WFLP the focus for major new development remains predominantly to the north and east of Kidderminster, and adjacent to transport routes that flow towards Bromsgrove. The concerns expressed at the preferred option stage and first pre submission stage largely remain as the transport evidence that supports the plan has not advanced enough to be able to clearly see the level of impact from development contained within the WFLP.
- 3.7 Of particular concern is the outcome of the modelling which shows additional traffic flows on the routes into Bromsgrove District and most notably through Hagley. The information only shows an increase in traffic, it does not compare it with a base information, therefore it is not possible to clearly understand what the impacts are likely to be. As a result it is not entirely clear how the schemes in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) have been developed to mitigate the impacts, when the impacts have not been shown in the evidence available. In addition to this no modeling has been done with the mitigation in place to demonstrate if the schemes do indeed mitigate the impacts.

- 3.8 The concerns outlined above are almost identical to the concerns raised at the same point in the process last year. Officers have been working with WFDC and WCC to attempt to address these concerns. Meetings have taken place where actions were agreed by all parties in an attempt to ensure that the revised evidence supporting the WFLP contains the information for the judgments outlined above to have been made.
- 3.9 Unfortunately arrangements made in the summer of 2019 which would have allowed more evidence to be available for this representation period, have not resulted in the delivery of the evidence. Therefore in addition to the concerns raised about the availability and quality of the evidence supporting the plan, it is felt that the Council has to raise the possibility of non-compliance with the duty to co-operate.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.10 There are no Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications associated with this report.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The risks associated with not submitting a representation is that BDCs views will not be taken into account by the inspector examining the WFLP.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix A – BDC officer response to WFLP

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- WFLP Pre submission Document
- WFLP Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- WFLP evidence base
- BDC response to WFLP December 2018

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Mike Dunphy
Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager

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Tel:01527 881325

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Wyre Forest District Local Plan Pre-Submission Publication 2019

Consultation Response Form

2 September – 14 October 2019

REF OFFICE USE ONLY:

Representor number:

Representation number:

Plan reference:

Tests of soundness:

This form has two parts: **Part A** Personal Details and **Part B** Your Comments

To help present your comments in the best way for the inspector to consider them, the Planning Inspectorate has issued this standard comment form for you to complete and return. We ask that you use this form because it structures your response in the way in which the inspector will consider comments at the public examination. Using the form to submit your comments also means that you can register your interest in speaking at the examination.

Please read the guidance notes carefully before completing the form. If you responded to the last Pre-Submission consultation held in 2018, you do not have to respond again unless you want to add to them, withdraw them or make completely new comments.

Please fill in a separate part B for each issue/comments you wish to make. Any additional sheets must be clearly referenced. This form can be submitted electronically. If hand writing, please write clearly in blue or black ink. Consultation response forms can be completed and submitted online at www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/localplanreview

Comments must be received by 5:00pm on 14 October 2019. Comments received after this time will not be considered.

Part A

(Please complete in full; in order for the Inspector to consider your representations you must provide your name and postal address).

1. Personal Details		2. Agent's Details (if applicable)
Title	Mr	
First Name	Mike	
Last Name	Dunphy	
Organisation (where relevant)	Bromsgrove District Council	
Job title (where relevant)	Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager	
Address – line 1	Parkside	
Address – line 2	Market Street	
Address – line 3	Bromsgrove	
Postcode	B61 8DA	
E-mail Address	m.dunphy@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk	
Telephone Number	01527 881325	

Part B - Please use a separate sheet for each comment

Your representation should cover all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested change, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations following this publication stage.

After this stage, further submission will only be at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination.

Name or Organisation

3. Did you submit a consultation response form to the last Pre-Submission consultation held in 2018?

Yes No

a) If yes, would you like to withdraw any/all of your previous comments?

Yes, all Yes, specific comments

b) If specific comments only, please specify which ones?

BDC made comments to the 2018 pre submission. Previous comments still stand and BDC would like to add to them, as per section 9 below.

4. To which document of the Local Plan does this representation relate?

Amendments to Pre-Submission Local Plan (July 2019 version) Yes No

Pre-Submission Local Plan (October 2018 version) Yes No

5. Please specify which part of the Local Plan you are commenting on (e.g. paragraph, policy, map, table or figure reference)?

Paragraph Policy Other: e.g. Policies map, table, figure, key diagram

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6. Do you want to support/object/comment on this part of the Local Plan?:

Support

Comment

Object

7. Do you consider the Local Plan is:

a) Legally Compliant Yes No

b) Sound Yes No

c) Complies with the Duty to co-operate Yes See section 9 comments No See section 9 comments

8. If you answered 'No' to Question 7b, please specify on what grounds you consider the Local Plan to be unsound? (see guidance notes part 3 for explaining of terms)

Positively Prepared
Please Tick as appropriate

Justified

Effective

Consistent with National Policy

9. Please give details of why you consider the Local Plan is not legally compliant or is unsound or fails to comply with the Duty to co-operate. Please be as precise as possible. If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Local Plan or its compliance with the Duty to co-operate, please also use this box to set out your comments.

See separate document

Agenda Item 6

10. Please set out what modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound, having regard to the Matter you have identified at 9 above where this relates to soundness. (NB Please note that any non-compliance with the Duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination). You will need to say why this modification will make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It would be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

BDC considers that the wording of policies 12 and 13 could be amended to strengthen them and provide more clarity in relation to the mitigation required. However, as the fundamental issue is with the evidence which underpins these policies, without more robust evidence base BDC still does not consider this plan can be made sound with simple policy wording changes.

If it can be demonstrated clearly what the impacts of development are on infrastructure in Bromsgrove, then a clear policy requirement for the delivery of cross boundary infrastructure will need to be included in the plan.

Please note your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested modification, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations based on the original representation at publication stage. **After this stage, further submissions will be only at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination.**

11. If your representation is seeking a modification, do you consider it necessary to speak at the examination?

No I do not wish to speak at the examination.

Yes I would like to speak at the examination.

12. If you wish to speak at the examination, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

To hopefully aid the inspector's understanding of the particular local circumstances specific to the objections raised.

Please note the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to speak at the examination.

13. Are there any other comments you would like to make?:

All our comments have been made in the relation to section 9 above.

Expand box / continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Data Protection

The information you provide on the form will be stored on a database used solely in connection with the Local Plan. Representations will be available to view on the council's website, but address, signature and contact details will not be included. However, as copies of representations must be made available for public inspection, they cannot be treated as confidential and will be available for inspection in full. Copies of all representations will also be provided to the Planning Inspectorate as part of the submission of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan. By submitting this form you are agreeing to these conditions.

Please see the Councils Data Protection and Privacy statement:

<http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/the-council/data-protection-and-privacy.aspx>

By signing this form you are agreeing to The Council's Data Protection Policy above and the storage of your information.

Signature

Mike Dunphy

Date

14th October 2019

Please return the completed form by **no later than 5:00pm on 14 October 2019** to:

Email: LPR@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Or post to: Planning Policy Team, Wyre Forest District Council, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF

Consultation response forms can be completed and submitted online at: www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/localplanreview



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Introduction

1. The previous comments submitted by Bromsgrove District Council BDC in relation to this plan still stand, the comments below expand on those submitted previously. At the time of submission they are submitted as officer comments, they will be presented to BDC members in due course for their consideration.
2. It remains the view of BDC that unfortunately The Wyre Forest Local Plan (WFLP) is unsound, BDC do not consider that the plan is Justified, Effective, or Consistent with National Policy. It is also unfortunate that BDC also now raises concerns about whether the requirements of the Duty to Co-operate to have been met.

Evidence concerns

3. Without repeating the previous concerns verbatim the issue that BDC has is that it is still unclear as to what the transport impacts are, of the WFLP on Bromsgrove District. Concerns were expressed previously on the clarity of the work provided to support the 2018 publication version of the plan. Although efforts have been made to address these concerns, the fact remains that from the published information it is, in the view of BDC, not possible to clearly see what the impacts of the developments sites are, and then clearly understand the mitigation strategy.
4. The need for a more robust transport evidence base has been something that BDC has been raising throughout the development of the WFLP. In response to BDCs November 2018 objection, further discussions took place in February and March 2019 where BDC continued to express its position, with WCC officers in attendance. It is BDCs understanding that these discussion in part led to the additional document that has been published, *Wyre Forest Local Plan Review, Transport Evidence June 2019*. It had been hoped that the content of this document would have addressed the previous concerns BDC raised but unfortunately it does not do this. The position of BDC is, and has always been, that the Council would like to be able to understand the impacts of the plan on the infrastructure within Bromsgrove District, and then to clearly understand how the proposed mitigation and its delivery has been arrived at.
5. Unfortunately the Wyre Forest Local Plan Review, Transport Evidence June 2019 does not satisfy this information gap. It is the view of BDC that the document has flaws. The document at section 4 attempts to suggest that an assessment has been done to confirm that the model is fit for purpose. BDC does not see how any actual assessment has been done, and consider that it is not possible to make the conclusion at para 4.6 based on the information in the preceding section.
6. A more significant concern is that although there is new information in this report, it is still not possible to ascertain from the information provided what the actual impact of development would be. The document shows that flows and journey times will increase in many locations, but without a base year, or updated base year to compare against, all that can be concluded is that there will be more trips on the network. Without being able to compare a scenario where WFLP developments are not present, and where WFLP developments are present, understanding what the actual impacts of development are, is impossible.
7. Another concern with this piece of evidence is that there is no modelling with any mitigation included. Therefore from the evidence available it is not possible to understand if the suggested mitigation in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) actually mitigates both individual development sites and also the cumulative impacts of the WFLP.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan

8. Turning to the IDP the BDC position remains the same as previously expressed. The Council's previous concerns centered on the untested and in some cases un-costed schemes and proposals in the IDP. Whilst it is acknowledged that changes have been made to the IDP it is still unclear what the links are between the impact of development and the mitigation that is specified. This is a particular concern for the A456 through Hagley, where previous proposals for a bypass have been softened and the need for a wider review working with other councils seems to have replaced this proposal. BDC has no objection in principle to a wider review of transport infrastructure; indeed it would expect this consideration to come to the fore as the review of the Bromsgrove District Plan gathers momentum. However it is not considered appropriate at this stage to leave it to a wider infrastructure review to mitigate the specific impacts of the WFLP, should they ever be clearly identified, it maybe that the impacts are not significant to warrant such a review or if the impacts are proved to be significant, it is something which may be too late to address via plan making.
9. It is also considered that the Duty to Cooperate and Statements of Common ground that BDC will prepare to support its plan are not the place to decide what infrastructure is required to support the developments in Wyre Forest, as para 3.1.21 of the IDP seems to be suggesting. It is the view of BDC that the infrastructure needs of the WFLP need to be clearly identified in the evidence that supports that plan, and mechanisms put in place to allow for any cross border infrastructure to be delivered. BDC has a strong track record of such an approach both working with Birmingham City Council on the Longbridge Area Action plan, and more recently in working with Redditch Borough Council in providing cross boundary allocations in Bromsgrove District to meet the needs of Redditch Borough.
10. Para 3.1.24 of the IDP discusses the rail enhancement taking place at Blakedown station. BDC does not have an objection in principle to this enhancement. However there are concerns with the following statement:

'Enhancements to parking facilities at Blakedown Station will also help to mitigate the impact of growth on Hagley within Bromsgrove District. Hagley currently suffers from congestion at peak times and this is considered to be a first step in reducing congestion before wider strategic improvements can be considered and implemented.'

It is not clear how the addition of parking at this station combined with other strategies such as improving of the A450 corridor work together to reduce congestion in Hagley. It could be argued that improving the A450 corridor without complementary improvements on the Hagley area just allows the congestion to get to Hagley quicker. It is of interest to BDC to understand the amount of congestion that improvements at Blakedown will relieve in Hagley, and also the process which has been undertaken to identify this reduction.

Duty to Co-operate

11. The above paragraphs largely reiterate the concerns that BDC has over the robustness of evidence base to support the plan. BDC considers it has engaged fully in the attempts to ensure that the DTC has been met. As highlighted above these evidence related issues are longstanding concerns that BDC has expressed many times. It had been hoped that early engagement initiated by BDC in May 2018, where

concerns were expressed about the evidence base that was being worked on to support the previous publication version on the WFLP, would have ensured that no objection needed to be submitted at that time; unfortunately that was not the case, and the Council's previous objection was submitted.

12. As referred to above in an attempt to ensure constructive engagement, meetings took place in February and March 2019, where a set of actions were agreed by all parties which it had hoped would result in a robust evidence base which addresses the concerns of BDC. The work which was prepared as a result of these discussions was only seen by BDC in June 2019.
13. In June 2019 WFDC published the local plan documents as part of its Overview and scrutiny agenda for the meeting of 4th July 2019. On initial review of these documents BDC again expressed concerns that this evidence still does not address the longstanding issue of clarity of the development impacts. It was agreed that a DTC meeting needed to take place. This meeting took place on the 30th July 2019, at this meeting a set of actions were agreed which would provide BDC the information it sought, in particular the impacts of development on the Hagley area. It was agreed that this information should be provided for the 29th August 2019, prior to the representation period on the publication version of the plan opening. A meeting was penciled in to discuss this additional work on the 29th August. Subsequent to this meeting it is understood that WFDC contacted WCC separately to request that the work is not provided for the 29th August as agreed, minutes of that meeting confirm this;

Following on from this meeting WFDC reviewed the proposed meeting date for discussion of Hagley paper and next steps (29th August). They concluded that as there was not time for them to review all the information in advance of the regulation 19 consultation, they would rather the meeting was postponed until late September to allow more time for the paper to be prepared and reviewed and the consultation to commence.

14. On receiving notification on the minute above BDC requested a further amendment was made to the minutes as below,

BDC must point out on the record that the reason for the timescale was to allow for all the documents to be available for the start of the representations period. We have reservations about this revised timescale for the publication of the work and the possible implication that BDC and other stakeholders will not have full access to the evidence for the full duration of the regulation 19 representation period.

15. At the time of writing this representation the information which was agreed on the meeting of the 29th July has still not been provided, and therefore this objection has had to be drafted.

Concluding Comments

16. BDC continues to raise concerns about the lack of a robust evidence base and, also unfortunately raises potential concerns about the ability of WFDC to meet the DTC. It is hoped that working within the relevant regulations which dictate the plan making process from this point forward, and by continuing to engage with Wyre Forest District Council and Worcestershire County Council, that a solution to the issues above can be found in advance of the submission of the Wyre Forest Local

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Plan. The outcomes of this ongoing engagement can then be reported in the Statement of Common ground which we understand will accompany the submission.

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LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2018/19

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Geoff Denaro
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering
Ward(s) Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	None Specific
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	Key Decision

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 In each year the council must consider whether to revise or replace its council tax reduction scheme (CTRS).
- 1.2 The report proposes no changes are made to the scheme for 2020/21 other than the uprating of personal allowances, disregards and other financial matters as already provided for by the scheme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is asked to note the information and RECOMMEND that

2.1 No changes are made to the council tax reduction scheme for 2021/22 other than the uprating of allowances, disregards and other financial limits.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 The Council's local Council tax reduction scheme was amended with effect from 1st April 2018 and the maximum level of support for working age claimants was increased to 85% of Council Tax liability.
- 3.2 It is proposed that there are no changes to the level of support provided by the Council, and as previously agreed the various allowances be uprated in line with the Secretary of State's annual announcement.
- 3.3 There are currently 41,997 properties within the Bromsgrove District and 4,783 CTRS claimants. 2,612 claimants are working age and 2,171 claimants are pension age.
- 3.4 The total cost of council tax reduction for the 2019/20 tax year is projected to be £4,049,057. Council tax reduction is a discount on the council tax payable and the costs are shared between precepting authority with roughly 13% of the costs falling on Bromsgrove District Council (BDC).

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- 3.5 The cost of support for working age claimants is £1,880,954. This cost is based on the current 85% maximum support.
- 3.6 The costs of council tax reduction in 2020/21 will increase in-line with the general increase in the level of council tax.

Legal Implications

- 3.7 On 1 April 2013 Council Tax Benefit was abolished and replaced by a new scheme of Council Tax support called "Council Tax Reduction Schemes". Under s13A and Schedule 1A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (inserted by the Local Government Finance Act 2012), each billing authority is required to make and adopt a council tax reduction scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to the amounts of council tax payable within their districts
- 3.8 As the billing authority the Council is required by Schedule 1A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to consider whether to revise its scheme or to replace it with another scheme, for each financial year.
- 3.9 The council must adopt its scheme, and make any revisions, no later than 11th March in the financial year preceding the one when it will take effect. It will be necessary for the Council's 2019/20 scheme to be in place by 11th March 2020.
- 3.11 Paragraph 3 to Schedule 1A into The Local Government Finance Act 1992 set out the preparation that must be undertaken prior to the replacement or revision of a scheme, including prescribed consultation requirements. As the recommendation is that no revisions to the current scheme should be made for the financial year 2020/21 (to which this report applies), the requirement to consult does not have to be met. However, officers will publicise the fact that the current scheme is to continue, subject to up-lift in rates as set by the Department of Work and Pensions, as referred to at 3.12 below.
- 3.12 Instruction is received from the Department of Work and Pensions on an annual basis, of changes to benefits rates and personal allowances. These must be taken into account for housing benefit calculations and it streamlines the claims process if they are also applied to the local council tax reduction scheme.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.13 The continuation of the existing scheme into 2020/21 will provide for stability within the service and allow for capacity for a full review of the council tax reduction scheme, which is essential following the full roll-out of universal credit.
- 3.14 The existing council tax reduction scheme is structured in-line with the default scheme introduced in April 2013. This scheme does not provide for integration with universal credit and places administrative burdens on the council.

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- 3.14 The introduction of Universal Credit led to a number of challenges to the administration of CTR and also the collection of Council Tax generally. Following the Universal Credit full service roll out in Bromsgrove, and nationally, we have seen:
- The reluctance of Universal Credit claimants to make a prompt claim for CTR leading to loss of entitlement;
 - A high number of changes to Universal Credit cases are received from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) requiring a change to CTR entitlement. On average 40% of Universal Credit claimants have between eight and twelve changes in entitlement per annum.
 - These changes result in amendments to Council Tax liability, the re-calculation of instalments, re-issued bills, delays and the loss in collection; and
 - An increased cost in administration as a result creating a need for additional staff resource.
- 3.15 The existing means tested CTRS is too reactive to change and is no longer viable. UC changes frequently and each change currently results in a re-assessment of CTR because of the way the current scheme is structured. To be able to manage the workload and maintain administrative costs we must consider a scheme which is less reactive to every small change in income.
- 3.16 The move to a new more efficient scheme from 2021 must be considered to avoid increased staffing costs and to simplify the administration scheme for the Council and for applicants.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.28 The 'uprating' of the benefits rates and personal allowances to be taken into account, in line with the Secretary of States announcement on those that must be taken into account for other benefits, will potentially result in small changes to the amounts of support provided. These will vary according to circumstances.

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4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Any reduction to council tax support whilst increasing council tax income to the Council and our major preceptors has financial implications for our residents and therefore officers ensure that support on managing finances and advice on other potential benefits is made available.
- 4.2 An increase in support has a direct impact on the budgets of the main precepting authorities.

5. APPENDICES

None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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CABINET

23RD OCTOBER 2019

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN - FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK 2020/21–2023/24

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro , Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling Services
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To enable Members to consider the overall financial strategic framework and objectives for the Council for the period 2020/21- 2023/24.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.2 **That Cabinet notes the overarching financial objectives and framework to be used in developing the detailed financial plan, to enable the Council to realise savings and additional income whilst delivering the strategic priorities of the Council.**

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

Financial Framework

- 3.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is a four year strategy which sets out the Council’s commitment to provide services that meet the needs of people locally and that represent good value for money within the overall resources available to it. The MTFS is what links our Council Plan with forecasted resources and budgets and shows how our Council’s finances will be structured and managed to ensure that this fits with, and supports, the priorities of our Council and its community

- 3.10 In light of the financial pressures the Council faces the strategy aims to provide a framework in which the Council can become financially sustainable whilst delivering the priorities to our communities. The key objectives are:

- To ensure resources are directed to the council's strategic purposes
- To set financially sustainable budgets over the 4 year period
- To maintain balances at £2m to ensure funds available for future projects and to mitigate opportunities

- To maximise income opportunities whilst supporting the vulnerable
- Identify and disinvest in non priority areas
- To ensure all savings are achievable and developed with robust data
- To reduce overheads & direct costs over the 4 year period
- To maximise use of assets and disinvest surplus or non performing assets
- To further develop the commercial culture within the Council
- To consider and adapt to the uncertain future financial climate
- To work with the public, members and staff to engage and inform partners on the impact of the financial pressures of the Council

3.11 The strategy will bring together the key issues affecting the:

- Revenue Budget
- Capital Strategy and Capital Programme,
- Treasury Management Strategy.
- Investment & Acquisition Strategy

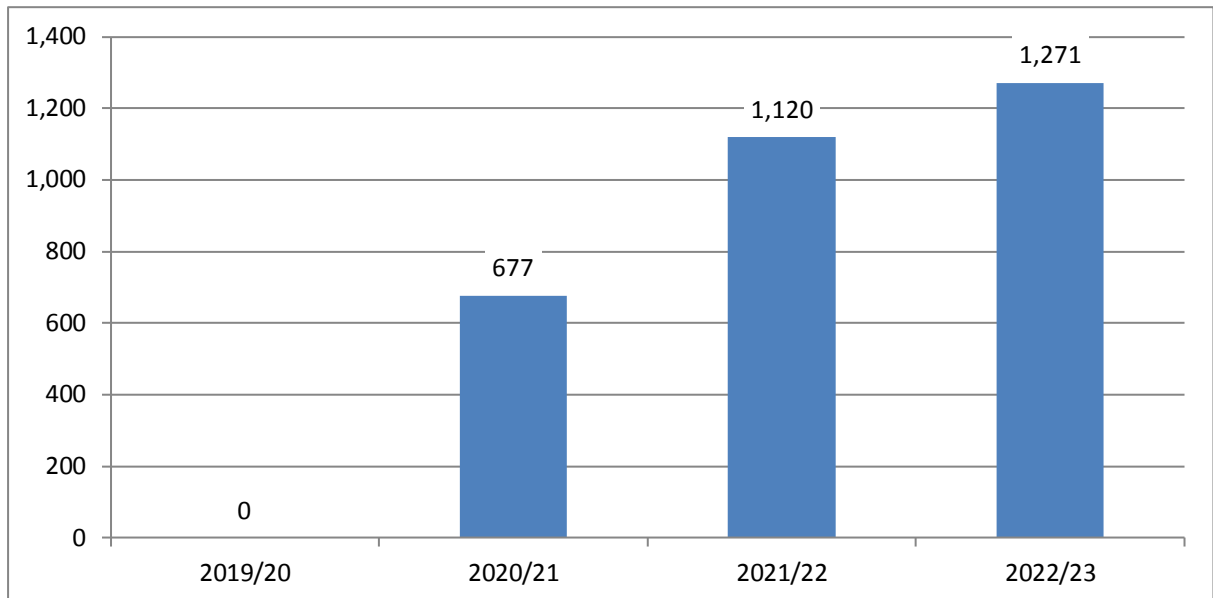
A key part of the strategy will be to highlight the budget issues that will need to be addressed by the Council over the coming financial years, by forecasting the level of available resources from all sources and budget pressures relating to both capital and revenue spending. This will include assumptions made in relation to the national and local changes to financial funding that may impact on the future financial position of the Council.

3.12 Prior to the final budget approval in February 2020 the financial strategy will be developed and presented to members to include, over the next 6 months;

- Review and approval of fees and charges
- Identification of savings plans
- Consideration of additional pressures to the budgets
- Detailed consideration of the Capital Programme
- Review of Reserves
- Consideration of Government Funding settlement and impact on the financial position

3.13 The Budget Scrutiny working group as established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will continue to meet on a regular basis to review costs, fees and charges and the capital programme and it is anticipated they will make a number of recommendations to Cabinet.

3.14 The current Medium Term Financial position for the Council presents the following gap over the next 3 years.



3.15 As can be seen from the above table the Council has to deliver £3m over the next 3 years with a £677k to be found for 2020/21.

3.16 In addition to the financial strategy objectives for 2020/21 measures are in place currently to address the financial challenge with the aim to maximise the savings in 2019/20 to enable balances to be increased. These actions are in place for both the General Fund and Capital include:

- Non essential spend freeze
- Recruitment Freeze
- Full review of Capital Spending to enable a reduction in borrowing costs
- Ensuring all commercial activities are marketed to maximise income potential

3.17 Financial position and update reports will be presented to Cabinet over the next 6 months to enable the Council strategic purposes to be delivered within a sustainable financial position and be presented in line with the Council Tax setting in February 2020.

3.18 Whilst officers will always continue to seek to make the council efficient, generate savings and additional income it has to be noted that some extremely difficult decisions will need to be made and as such it is essential that the Council has clear priorities and indeed non priorities.

4 Legal Implications

- 4.1 As part of the budget and the Council Tax approval process, the Council is required by the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to make specific calculations and decisions in approving a balanced budget for the following financial year and setting the Council Tax Level. These will be included in the report to Cabinet and Council in February.

5 Service / Operational Implications

- 5.1 The Financial Strategy will enable services to be maintained and, where achievable, improvements to the community.

6 Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.1 The link with the finances supporting the Council Plan will enable the funding to be directed to the Councils purposes to support the community.

7 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 To mitigate the risks associated with the financial pressures facing the Authority regular monitoring reports are presented to both officers and Members to enable proactive action being undertaken to address any areas of concern. Risks include:
- Reductions in government funding leading to a reduction in the level of services delivered to the public
 - Reductions in business rates income as a result of appeals or reduction in the rateable value leading to a lower level of income for the Council.
 - Identification of sufficient and ongoing revenue savings to deliver a balanced budget.
 - Allocation of sufficient resources to meet the needs of service delivery and the Councils priorities.
 - Maintain adequate revenue and capital balances as identified in the MTFP to ensure financial stability.

The regular financial monitoring by Officers and Cabinet will provide a framework to mitigate the above risks.

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