



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY 11TH JANUARY 2021

AT 6.00 P.M.

PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE

MEMBERS: Councillors M. Thompson (Chairman), J. Till (Vice-Chairman), A. J. B. Beaumont, S. R. Colella, R. J. Deeming, M. Glass, C.A. Hotham, R. J. Hunter, A. D. Kriss, P. M. McDonald and C. J. Spencer

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence and Named Substitutes
2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Arrangements

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 Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 23rd November 2020 (Pages 1 - 12)
4. Safer Roads Partnership - Presentation
5. Homelessness, Flexible Homelessness Support and Homelessness Reduction Grants 2020/21

(Report to Follow)
6. Notice of Motions - Request to Investigate (Pages 13 - 20)
 - a) Notice of Motion - Councillor R. Hunter
 - b) Notice of Motion – Councillor P. McDonald

7. Finance and Budget Working Group - Update
8. Task Group Updates
 - a) Equalities Task Group – Chairman, Councillor P. McDonald
 - b) Impact of Review of Library Services Task Group – Chairman, Councillor S. Colella
 - c) Impact of Flooding in the District Task Group – Chairman, Councillor R. Hunter
9. Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Update
10. Cabinet Work Programme

The next edition of the Cabinet Work Programme is due to be published on 4th January 2021 and will be provided for Members' consideration in a Supplementary Papers Pack for this meeting.
11. Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme (Pages 21 - 28)

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

31st December 2020

If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact
Jo Gresham

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GUIDANCE ON VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic Bromsgrove District Council will be holding this meeting in accordance with the relevant legislative arrangements for remote meetings of a local authority. For more information please refer to the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police Crime Panels meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Please note that this is a public meeting conducted remotely by Skype conferencing between invited participants and live streamed for general access via the Council's YouTube channel.

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[Overview and Scrutiny Board Meeting - 11th January 2021](#)

If you have any questions regarding the agenda or attached papers please do not hesitate to contact the officer named above.

Notes:

As referred to above, the virtual Skype meeting will be streamed live and accessible to view. Although this is a public meeting, there are circumstances when Council might have to move into closed session to consider exempt or confidential information. For agenda items that are exempt, the public are excluded and for any such items the live stream will be suspended and that part of the meeting will not be recorded.



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Agenda Item 3

Overview and Scrutiny Board
23rd November 2020

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

23RD NOVEMBER 2020, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors M. Thompson (Chairman), J. Till (Vice-Chairman), A. J. B. Beaumont, S. R. Colella, R. J. Deeming, M. Glass, C.A. Hotham, R. J. Hunter, A. D. Kriss (minute 46-52), P. M. McDonald (minute 46-51) and C. J. Spencer

Observers: Councillor K. May, Councillor G. Denaro, Councillor S. Webb

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mrs. S. Hanley, Mrs. C. Felton, Mrs R. Bamford, Mr. O. Paparega, Ms. J. Willis, Mrs J. Heyes, Mr. J. Smith, Ms I. Karimi Fini, Ms. A. Scarce and Mrs. J Gresham

46/20 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

No apologies for absence were received.

47/20 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

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

48/20 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 12TH OCTOBER 2020**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 12th October 2020 were submitted for Members' consideration. Councillor C. Spencer advised that her name did not appear in the list of Members Present at the meeting and asked that the minutes be updated to reflect her attendance. The Democratic Services Officer undertook to make the amendment.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 12th October 2020 be approved as an accurate record.

49/20

BROMSGROVE MARKET UPDATE

The Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services presented the item in respect of the Bromsgrove Market. Also in attendance for this item was the Business Improvement Manager for this area and the Bromsgrove Market Manager.

Members were invited to ask questions on the performance of the market during the pandemic. There was particular interest from Members regarding the number of traders that had received financial support from Bromsgrove District Council and the current number of traders. Officers confirmed that due to the Government guidelines regarding permission to trade and the sale of essential items there were currently 7 traders on the market. The Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services would confirm with relevant officers in respect of the amount of financial support received by traders during the pandemic and circulate the information to Members outside of the meeting.

Officers confirmed that the market could be mobilised quickly once an announcement was made as to which Tier Bromsgrove would be included in after the second lockdown. In addition to this, there was scope to include extra trading days of the market in the run up to Christmas. This news was welcomed by the Board.

Members were pleased to hear that there had been no adverse reaction to Council staff during a difficult period for the market and that residents and traders had been supportive of the staff during the pandemic.

There was detailed discussion in respect of the potential use of the Bird Box for the market. The Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure advised Members that it might not be appropriate to move stalls from the High Street and that it was a priority to promote the Bird Box as an event space.

The Chairman invited Councillor K. May, who was in attendance in her role as Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, the Town Centre and Strategic Partnerships to comment on the report from officers. She thanked the team for all of their hard work during an unprecedented time. It was acknowledged by some Members that the decision taken by Council to return the market to a Council run operation had now proved to be fortuitous and an appropriate one in light of the pandemic and particularly given the status of Bromsgrove as a market town.

It was queried what the financial loss in respect of the markets had been during the pandemic. Officers confirmed that inevitably there had been losses experienced and between the first lockdown to early November £21,441 in income had been received. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services confirmed that the actual figures were not currently known but that the Council were claiming for all available financial support from Central Government and that Members would be informed once further information was available.

RESOLVED that the update in respect of the Bromsgrove Market be noted.

50/20

HEAD OF PLANNING, REGENERATION AND LEISURE SERVICES TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF THE PROCESS AND POLICY FOR THIRD PARTY EVENTS

The Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services was welcomed to the meeting in order to answer Members' questions in respect of the process and policy for third party events.

During this item the following information was provided to Members:

- There were three categories of events that the Council might be involved in. They were as follows:
 - Council Run Events this included fireworks displays or Christmas Lights switch on lights were the sole responsibility of the council.
 - Civic or Community Lead Events where the Council provided some sort of support e.g. Remembrance Sunday Services
 - Other Events – events that the Council were not involved in from a Leisure perspective

Further information was requested by Members regarding events where fireworks were featured and what procedures were in place so that residents could take precautions if necessary, prior to the event taking place. The Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure explained that Council run events were well-publicised in advance. It was further clarified to Members that for private events, such as a fireworks display in a resident's back garden, no prior intervention could be made. The Board were advised if they wished to consider the types of events held on behalf of the Council, they should engage with the Portfolio Holder for Leisure Services.

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There was concern from some Members that there seemed to be very little communication between Ward Members and Parish Councils prior to some particular events taking place. This included access to risk assessments that had been undertaken and potential road closures.

During the presentation, the following was highlighted for Members' attention:

- Some regular events occurred at the same time every year and that residents, Members and Parish Councillors would be aware of those dates due to their regularity.
- Road closures were posted by the Council even in the case of third-party events.
- Risk assessments were carried out by the company or organisation who hosted the event. At the current time in addition to the usual risk assessments, Covid-19 risk assessments were also carried out for all events. The Council did have sight of the risk assessments for the Alvechurch Mop and in conjunction with partners including Police and Fire Authority ensured that any mitigations within the risk assessment were appropriate and implemented effectively. The timelines for receipt of any risk assessment were reported to Members.
- Some third-party event organisers were members of the Showmans' Guild. Guild rules regulated access to land which had to be provided on a repeated and predictable basis. These rules were in place in order to protect the livelihoods of the Showmans' Guild members.
- It was reported that firework events could be cancelled at very short notice as a result of an inclement weather forecast, and regular assessments were made in the run up to these types of events.

The Chairman invited Councillor P. Thomas, who was in attendance in his role as Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Cultural Services and Community Safety for comment. He thanked the officers for their detailed responses to Members' questions.

RESOLVED that the presentation in respect of the process and policy for third party events be noted.

51/20

DISTRICT LEVEL ECONOMIC RECOVERY FRAMEWORK - PRE-SCRUTINY

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23rd November 2020

The Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWEDR) presented the item in respect of the District Level Economic Recovery Framework and in doing so highlighted the following to Members:

- The District Level Economic Recovery Framework set out the priorities for recovery in the District and was a 'live' document and could be amended to reflect any changes in circumstances. The document outlined what plans were in place with key partners.
- There were three key priorities contained within the plan; Supporting People, Supporting Businesses and Improving Places.
- Data that was used within the plan captured the number of people claiming out of work benefits, the number of job vacancies and the number on furlough and comparisons between pre-lockdown figures had been analysed. It was clarified to Members that the number of claimants of benefits was increasing and there had been a significant drop in job vacancies. This had led to a more competitive labour market in the District. Members were informed that there had been an error within the District Level Economic Recovery Framework report in respect of the numbers of people eligible for employment within Bromsgrove. The figures were clarified as being 45,000 residents who were eligible for employment and not 42,800. The take up rate was confirmed as 11.5%.
- It was difficult to identify the number of businesses that had stopped trading during Covid-19 and the associated lockdown as there was an inevitable time lapse in the collection of data and its publication in this area.
- North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration, Worcestershire County Council, Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership and Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership were working with residents who were at risk of redundancies or who had lost their jobs during the pandemic. The work included matching skills to vacancies and ensuring that the existing workforce were equipped with the appropriate skills to satisfy the labour market.
- Guidance and ensuring information in respect of grants and available support were key components within the plan and it was highlighted to Members that there had been a significant increase in people requesting information on starting up their own business during the pandemic. Support for larger businesses in Bromsgrove was also available and it was hoped that this would prevent the potential for large numbers of redundancies in the

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future. The pandemic had highlighted the need for better resilience for businesses.

- It was hoped that the plan would improve access and layout in the Town Centre would encourage people to spend more time and money there.
- A Business Support Officer and Engagement Support Officer had been appointed by NWEDR in order to help facilitate the work contained within the plan.

After the presentation there was detailed debate regarding the matching of skills to vacancies in the current climate and the process that was to be undertaken in order to carry this work out. It was explained to Members that the plan would provide the framework for this work and that discussions had already taken place in respect of working with businesses to match up vacancies and skills that were available. It was noted that historically Bromsgrove had a good record of incubating businesses and was at an advantage compared to other Districts due to its location and higher education facilities. It was reported to Members that there had been recent investment in the District by two large digital companies. It was hoped that these investments would demonstrate there were opportunities in the District for local people.

There was a suggestion that perhaps this might be an opportunity to bring forward the date for regeneration of the Town Centre and that local centres were not all in need of re-purposing. It was suggested that local Ward Members be involved in discussions regarding any potential changes to their local centres. Members were advised that work was already taking place in respect of the regeneration of the Town Centre.

After lengthy debate, the following recommendation was proposed by Councillor S. Colella:

'That the Strategic Planning Team and Economic Regeneration Team engage with the town centre ward member to develop a master regeneration plan and a timeline for that plan.'

On being put to the vote this recommendation was lost.

Several sites were identified as potential areas of opportunity and innovative approaches for partnership working in the Town Centre particularly heritage buildings. Members were advised that as some of the buildings were privately owned this made plans more difficult to initiate.

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Members were encouraged at the number of businesses in the District, however it seemed that they were not businesses that employed a large number of people. In previous years, it had been the case that business had been registered in the District but were not operating businesses. The Head of NWEDR agreed that the data might have been distorted by businesses that were registered but not actively trading. Members requested that the figures of the internal wage of the District compared to other Local Authorities in the County be provided. These figures Median Gross Weekly Pay (full time 2018) were as follows:

	People who live and work in Bromsgrove
Bromsgrove	£500 per week
Redditch	£480 per week
Wyre Forest	£450 per week

It was clarified to Members that there was a big discrepancy in respect of wages of those that lived in Bromsgrove and worked elsewhere where the Gross Median weekly wage was £650 per week.

RESOLVED that the report in respect of the District Level Economic Recovery Framework be noted.

52/20

HOUSING STRATEGY - PRE-SCRUTINY

The Head of Community and Housing Services presented the report in respect of the Housing Strategy for consideration by the Board.

Members were informed that this strategy complemented the countywide strategy and took a more localised approach. The strategy had been drafted prior to the pandemic however Covid-19 had been included in the final document presented before Members. The proposed strategy would be put out to public consultation for a 4-week period.

Councillor S. Webb was invited to speak in her capacity as Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Health and Wellbeing who thanked the team for bringing the strategy together in difficult circumstances.

A suggested amendment was made in respect of the wording used within the report. However, Officers confirmed that the existing wording was part of the countywide Strategic Housing Plan which had already been approved therefore no changes could be made. Members were assured that Officers would feedback the suggestion back to Worcestershire County Council in order that changes might be made in future iterations of the countywide strategy. It was however agreed that

'affordable' be inserted into the strategy on page 40 of the main agenda pack to reflect that this was a key strand within the strategy.

The Chief Executive clarified to Members further context in respect of the countywide Housing Strategy. He explained that this was a longer-term housing strategy across Worcestershire and that affordability was a key area going forward.

Members' attention was drawn to another potential change on Page 36 of the main agenda pack detailing the number of complaints in the private rental sector in contrast to the number of complaints in the social housing sector. The Head of Community and Housing Services undertook to finding further information in respect of the number of complaints regarding social housing for possible inclusion in the report.

Some concerns were raised in respect of green initiatives and their place within the Housing Strategy going forward. Members were advised green initiatives were considered and were already being included in projects that had been undertaken.

RESOLVED that the Housing Strategy be noted.

53/20

DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY - PRE-SCRUTINY

The Domestic Abuse Policy was presented for Members' consideration by the Head of Community and Housing Services. The policy set out the Council's commitment to addressing and preventing Domestic Abuse and that ensured that Council staff were equipped in identifying abuse in customers and service users. The strategy also served to satisfy the requirements set out in the Domestic Abuse Bill which would come into effect in April 2021. Members were advised that they would be provided with training to aid Members in this area.

The Chairman invited Councillor S. Webb to speak on this report and she thanked officers for their hard work in putting such an important policy together and although there had been a slight rise in the instances of domestic abuse during the pandemic, officers were working closely with partners in order to manage any increase.

Members were advised that this was a new policy for the Council and that Domestic Abuse had previously been included in the Safeguarding Policy. This new, separate policy reflected the additional duty that Local Authorities would have placed on them when legislation came into effect from April 2020.

RESOLVED that the report in respect of the Domestic Abuse Policy be noted.

54/20

FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP - UPDATE

The Chairman introduced the Finance and Budget Working Group update in his role as Chairman of the Group. He explained that the Working Group had met once since the last Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 18th November 2020.

At the meeting of the 18th November the Group looked closely at Fees and Charges, Budget Bids and the impact of Covid-19 and Capital Expenditure on Strategic Assets. In attendance for the items were the Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services and the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services.

Concerns were raised by the Group in respect of the Capital Programme and it was agreed that this area would be closely monitored in the coming months.

The Group requested further updates at the next meeting regarding the impact of Covid-19 on the Council's budget and information on grants that were available from Central Government. Members would also continue to monitor the Council's position in this area.

A motion that had been brought before Council by Councillor R. Hunter was discussed during the meeting and Members requested that he attend the next meeting of the Group, due to be held on 16th December 2020, to understand the motion in more detail.

The Chairman asked if there were any further comments for the Board and it was noted that if the Council made a decision to not provide a service during the pandemic there would be no remuneration from Central Government. However, it was confirmed that if closures were mandatory, then remuneration would be made.

RESOLVED that the update in respect of the Finance and Budget Working Group be noted.

55/20

TASK GROUP UPDATES

- a) Equalities Task Group – Chairman, Councillor P. McDonald

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In the absence of Councillor P. McDonald the Senior Democratic Officer presented this update and highlighted to Members that there had been two meetings of the Task Group since the last meeting. Members were informed that attendees included the Policy Manager and a Union Representative. Members were advised that the report was in the process of being completed in readiness for the February Board meeting.

b) Impact of Review of Library Services Task Group – Chairman, Councillor S. Colella

Councillor S. Colella gave a verbal update in respect of this item and informed Members that the group had met once since the last meeting of the Board and were due to meet on 15th December 2020. Councillor L. Hodgson Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities at Worcestershire County Council (WCC) had been invited to this meeting to provide further context of the new countywide Library Strategy.

c) Impact of Flooding in the District Task Group – Chairman, Councillor R. Hunter

Councillor R. Hunter updated the Board regarding the Task Group and informed Members that during previous meetings there had been an opportunity to interview officers from Bromsgrove District Council, North Worcestershire Water Management and WCC. Members were advised that officers from Severn Trent had been invited to the next meeting which was due to be held on 10th December 2020.

RESOLVED that the verbal updates in respect of the Task Groups be noted.

56/20

WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - UPDATE

Councillor J. Till presented the update from the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) and advised the Board that there had been a meeting held on 16th November 2020. Health Partner representatives were in attendance at the meeting and the Covid-19 vaccination programme was discussed in detail. Also discussed at this meeting was the Restoration Plan for the NHS post Covid.

Councillor J. Till undertook to circulate to the Board any information or minutes received.

RESOLVED that the verbal update in respect of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

57/20

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Senior Democratic Services Officer presented the Cabinet Work Programme and drew Members' attention to the following items which were already included on the Board's Work Programme:

- Final Council Tax Support Scheme
- Homelessness, Flexible Homelessness Support and Homelessness Reduction Grants 2020/21
- Fees and Charges - this item was to be included in the Finance and Budget Working Group work programme and would be brought to the main Overview and Scrutiny Board if there was anything that needed to be further scrutinised.

RESOLVED that subject to the preamble above the Cabinet Work Programme be noted and that the Overview and Scrutiny Board's Work Programme for 2020-21, be updated to include the items discussed and agreed during the course of the meeting.

58/20

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

This item was discussed as part of the previous item.

The meeting closed at 8.18 p.m.

Chairman

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

11th January 2021

SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION PROPOSAL

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Phil Thomas
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford – Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services
Wards Affected	None
Ward Councillor Consulted	No
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Board are requested to investigate the use of fireworks at community events in the District. This follows a notice of motion put forward by Councillor r. Hunter at the Council meeting held on 2nd December 2021 as follows:

Council notes that fireworks are an important part of many traditional celebrations including Bonfire Night, Diwali and New Years Eve. Council has for many years run a very successful Bonfire Night celebration which attracts a substantial number of visitors, positively promotes Bromsgrove and its community and raises considerable sums for charity.

Council also notes that leading animal charity the RSPCA has warned of the harm and distress that fireworks can cause to vulnerable members of society, pets and wildlife.

Council resolves to find the right balance between bringing the community together to enjoy traditional celebrations and protecting wildlife and vulnerable people.

Council commits to:

- 1. Ensure our annual Bonfire Night event and all other public firework displays within the district are advertised well in advance, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people*
- 2. Actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks*
- 3. Encourage local suppliers of fireworks to also stock quieter fireworks*

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

11th January 2021

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Board considers the request and agrees to one of the following:
- (a) that the request is included on the work programme and the Board undertakes the investigation, discuss broad terms of reference and sets a time scale for completion of the investigation; OR
 - (b) that the request is included on the work programme and a Task Group is established to undertake a more in-depth investigation, appoint a Chairman for the Task Group and set a time scale for completion of the investigation; OR
 - (c) that further information be requested from a relevant source before deciding whether or not further investigation is required; OR
 - (d) decide to take no further action.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications directly relating to this report, however, if the proposal is accepted, any implications would be considered as part of the subsequent investigation undertaken.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 There are no legal implications directly relating to this report, however, if the proposal is accepted, any implications would be considered as part of the subsequent investigation undertaken.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.3 A request from full Council has been made to investigate the use of fireworks at community events in the District.
- 3.4 If the Board decides that it does wish to investigate this topic further, it then needs to decide whether it is appropriate for the Board itself to undertake the investigation or whether a more in-depth investigation is required and a task group established.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

11th January 2021

- 3.5 Another option is for the Board to request further information on the topic from a relevant source to assist Members to decide whether an investigation is required.
- 3.6 Alternatively, the Board could decide that it is not a topic it wishes to investigate, in which case no further action would be required.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

3.7 N/A

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 N/A

5. APPENDICES

None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

7. KEY

None

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

11th January 2021

SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION PROPOSAL

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Deb Poole – Head of Transformation & Organisational Development
Wards Affected	None
Ward Councillor Consulted	No
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Board are requested to investigate the travel expenses claimed by officers throughout Covid-19 and associated lockdown. This follows a notice of motion put forward by Councillor P. M. McDonald at the Council meeting held on 2nd December 2021 as follows:

That this Council calls upon Overview and Scrutiny to investigate the amount of travelling expenses claimed throughout lockdown: to ensure the efficiency of working from home.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Board considers the request and agrees to one of the following:
- (a) that the request is included on the work programme and the Board undertakes the investigation, discuss broad terms of reference and sets a time scale for completion of the investigation; OR
 - (b) that the request is included on the work programme and a Task Group is established to undertake a more in-depth investigation, appoint a Chairman for the Task Group and set a time scale for completion of the investigation; OR
 - (c) that further information be requested from a relevant source before deciding whether or not further investigation is required; OR
 - (d) decide to take no further action.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

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11th January 2021

- 3.1 There are no financial implications directly relating to this report, however, if the proposal is accepted, any implications would be considered as part of the subsequent investigation undertaken.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 There are no legal implications directly relating to this report, however, if the proposal is accepted, any implications would be considered as part of the subsequent investigation undertaken.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.3 A request from full Council has been made to investigate the implications for the Council in respect of travel expenses claimed by officers during Covid-19 and associated lockdowns.
- 3.4 If the Board decides that it does wish to investigate this topic further, it then needs to decide whether it is appropriate for the Board itself to undertake the investigation or whether a more in-depth investigation is required and a task group established.
- 3.5 Another option is for the Board to request further information on the topic from a relevant source to assist Members to decide whether an investigation is required.
- 3.6 Alternatively, the Board could decide that it is not a topic it wishes to investigate, in which case no further action would be required.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.7 N/A

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 N/A

5. APPENDICES

None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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7. **KEY**

None

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

WORK PROGRAMME

2020/21

RECOMMENDATION:

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

ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Date of Meeting	Subject	Additional Information
11 th January 2021	Homelessness Grants 2021-22	
	Speeding – The Overview and Scrutiny Board to call in representatives of the Safer Roads Partnership to discuss issues with speeding	Delayed from March 2020 meeting. Officers to contact Safer Road Partnership
	Finance and Budget Working Group	
	Any Task Group Updates	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – update from Representative	
	Cabinet Leader’s Work Programme	
	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme	
Monday 8 th February 2021	Staff Survey	Following presentation at the February 2020 meeting it was agreed that a further update would be received work programme in September 2020
	Council Tax Support Scheme	
	Budget Update 20-21	
	Working Group Updates	
	Finance and Budget Working Group	
	Equalities Task Group	
	Impact of Libraries Review Task Group	
	Impact of Flooding Task Group	
	Any Task Group Updates	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – update from Representative	
	Cabinet Leader’s Work Programme	
	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme	
Monday 29 th March 2021	Working Group Updates	
	Finance and Budget Working Group	
	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.
- WCC LPT4 – It was agreed at the O & S meeting on 2nd September 2019, that this would not be considered by the Strategic Planning Steering Group. Councillor Colella had made the proposal and he had felt that it merited having a Task Group and that it would be positive for newly elected Members to be involved in this Task Group. The Board considered this matter again at the meeting held on 13th January 2020 after Cllr Colella provided a topic proposal. It was decided by the Board that it was still not appropriate to action.

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 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.

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.

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- 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.
- Corporate Dashboard – Demonstration (requested at the Overview & Scrutiny Board meeting held on 10th February 2020).

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



Run & grow a successful business

What does this mean to me?

Businesses choose to come to Bromsgrove & grow here, providing services & jobs.

Further development enhances the town & district centres as places that people want to visit.

Improved connectivity makes life easier, whether that's on the roads or online.

Why?

As an entrepreneurial area, supporting business is incredibly important for the District. Through North Worcestershire Economic Development & Regeneration we will continue to support new businesses. We will also work with established companies within the District to help them grow & flourish.

We are committed to making the Town & district centres places that residents & visitors can enjoy & that attract a variety of businesses.

Celebrating the rising stars of North Worcestershire



Priority: Economic development & regeneration

We will:

Consult businesses to understand current needs & growth plans, working with partners to support business growth.

How we will measure it:

- Number of businesses engaged through the consultation
- Number of existing businesses supported to grow & develop

Work & financial independence



What does this mean to me?

There are more opportunities for young people, with the right skills for local businesses.

Money management support will help to reduce debt & increase financial confidence.

People get the benefits they are entitled to, when they need them.

Why?

The economic picture for Bromsgrove District is positive, with consistently low unemployment. However, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (specifically income, employment & education indicators) show there were issues, particularly in parts of Charford & Sidemoor.

We will support our residents to access work opportunities in new industries, focusing on the skills agenda. We will also work with residents to help them manage their money & access the right benefits.



Priority: Skills for the future

We will:

Undertake a skills audit with partners & work together with them to address any gaps.

How we will measure it:

- Number engaged through the skills audit.



**Live independent,
active & healthy lives**

**What does this
mean to me?**

People are supported to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Communities & individuals feel less isolated.

There are more positive things to do through improved access to sport & cultural activities.

Why?

Whilst the health of people in Bromsgrove District is generally good, health priorities include improving mental well-being, increasing physical activity & ageing well. Increasing numbers of people living with reduced mobility, dementia & diabetes are an issue for the District. Through the Bromsgrove Partnership, Bromsgrove District Council will continue to play its part in addressing these issues.

We also want to enhance sport & cultural opportunities in the District, which will have health & social benefits.



**Priority: Improving
health & well-being**

We will:

Support targeted activities for healthy lifestyles.

How we will measure it:

- Number of people accessing targeted activities
- Number of people with diabetes
- Number of people who have had a stroke

Affordable & sustainable homes



What does this mean to me?

More affordable & appropriate homes become available.

Private tenants have homes which are safe & tenancies which are secure & affordable.

Homes can adapt to changes in circumstances & are increasingly energy efficient.

Why?

Bromsgrove has the highest level of home ownership in Worcestershire, & the smallest private rented sector in the county; demand for housing within the district has had a significant impact on property prices.

Access to affordable housing is recognised as an issue, as is ensuring homes are sustainable into the future.



Priority: A balanced housing market

We will:

Develop & implement a District Housing Strategy.

How we will measure it:

- Number of affordable homes (commitments & completions)

Communities which are safe, well-maintained & green



What does this mean to me?

Crime & anti-social behaviour reduces even further & the fear of crime also starts to decrease.

The district is well-maintained & people feel involved in keeping it clean.

It's easier to recycle more & reduce waste going to landfill.

Why?

Bromsgrove District Council has committed to playing its part in addressing the impact of climate change; from work to increase recycling to support to reduce fuel poverty, a **green thread** runs throughout this Council Plan.

It is important to ensure that Bromsgrove remains attractive for everyone, & our Place Teams, in partnership with local communities, provide a strong service across the District.

The District is a low crime area; through the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership we continue to work hard to address the causes of crime & anti-social behaviour & to support victims.



Priority: Reducing crime & disorder

We will:

Target the causes of crime affecting the night-time economy.

How we will measure it:

- Anti-social behaviour reports in the Town & district centres
- Crimes in the Town & district centres