



## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

**TUESDAY, 2ND SEPTEMBER, 2008, AT 6.00 P.M.**

**COMMITTEE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BURCOT LANE, BROMSGROVE**

**MEMBERS:** Councillors D. L. Pardoe (Chairman), Dr. G. H. Lord (Vice-Chairman), A. N. Blagg, Mrs. M. Bunker, S. R. Colella and C. B. Taylor

### **AGENDA**

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest and whipping arrangements
3. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 29th July 2008 (Pages 1 - 6)
4. Comprehensive Performance Assessment (Pages 7 - 42)
5. Scrutiny Request - Car Parking for Blue Badge Holders (Pages 43 - 136)
6. Verbal Update on Joint Countywide Scrutiny on Flooding (Councillor D. L. Pardoe)
7. Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker (Pages 137 - 168)
8. Forward Plan of Key Decisions (Pages 169 - 206)
9. Work Programme (Pages 207 - 208)

10. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.

K. DICKS  
Chief Executive

The Council House  
Burcot Lane  
BROMSGROVE  
Worcestershire  
B60 1AA

20th August 2008

# Agenda Item 3

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD

TUESDAY, 29TH JULY 2008, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors D. L. Pardoe (Chairman), A. N. Blagg, Mrs. M. Bunker,  
S. R. Colella and C. B. Taylor

Observers: Mr. J. Edwards (Lead Official)

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mr. T. Beirne, Mrs. D. Warren and Ms. D. McCarthy

#### 18/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Dr. G. H. Lord.

#### 19/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest or whipping arrangements were made.

#### 20/08 MINUTES

The minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 1st July 2008 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record.

#### 21/08 SCRUTINY REQUEST - BLUE BADGE HOLDERS

The Board considered the scrutiny request which had been submitted by a member of the public, Mr. L. Irving, Vice-Chairman of the Older People's Forum in Bromsgrove. The scrutiny request related to abolishing car parking charges for Blue Badge holders.

There was detailed discussion on this item, particularly relating to the scrutiny investigation undertaken by the Car Parking Task Group last year, the funding and use of shopmobility and the need to consult disabled users.

Members were informed that there was a Disabled User Group which the Board could consult and it was stated that there had been detailed discussions with the Group around concessions previously.

The Board had questions around whether discretion was used by car parking attendants in relation to Blue Badge holders and whether policy changes had achieved the objectives set. Members considered the options open to them as stated within the report and believed that further information was required.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor G. N. Denaro (as the Portfolio Holder for Finance and as the Member who led the Car Parking scrutiny investigation in 2007), Councillor Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths (as the Portfolio Holder for Street Scene and Community Safety) and the Transport and Engineering Officer be requested to attend the next meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board to discuss this issue, including past decisions taken relating to Blue Badges and any further information to date which will assist the Board in making a decision on how this matter should be dealt with.

22/08 **BROMSGROVE TOWN CENTRE CONSULTATION**

Members considered a progress report on the Bromsgrove Town Centre redevelopment and the consultation surrounding the Issues and Options. There was a lengthy discussion on this matter and several questions were raised which were answered by the Chief Executive.

It was clarified that the Bromsgrove Town Centre Area Action Plan Issues and Options paper put forward options rather than suggestions so to provide consultees with 'food for thought'.

It was explained that results would be analysed and would form the basis of the preferred option. It was anticipated that further consultation relating to the preferred option would be carried out in early 2009.

The Board was informed that it was a long term strategy and due to planning constraints there were statutory timescales which had to be followed. However, it was expected that some initiatives would be progressed more quickly.

The Chairman urged Members of the Board to complete the questionnaire to ensure their views would be considered. The Board as a whole was also given the opportunity to put forward general comments and views which it wished officers to take into consideration.

Reference was made to likely requests relating to encouraging Hagley residents to visit Bromsgrove town centre.

Members of the Board discussed whether the needs of young people (particularly aged 14-20 years) were being addressed as there was a concern that the consultation document lacked focus on activities and places for young people in and around the town centre. Some options were discussed and it was believed that it was important that other aspects such as housing for young people and families were linked.

There were some concerns relating to the accessibility of the questionnaire for all local residents across the whole of the District. It was also believed that the questionnaire should be readily available throughout the consultation period.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that, as part of the town centre regeneration, careful consideration be given regarding the necessity for facilities for young people to ensure their needs were met;
- (b) that the Chief Executive consult the Senior Projects Manager (Mr. R. Savory) regarding ensuring the questionnaire was easily accessible to all local residents across the District and that the Board be updated on this matter; and
- (c) that the report be noted.

23/08 **OFFICER RESPONSES TO SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Consideration was given to a report on a proposal to allow relevant Heads of Service the opportunity to comment in writing on scrutiny recommendations during the scrutiny process.

It was explained that rather than Heads of Service formally commenting on scrutiny recommendations at a Cabinet Meeting, it was proposed that the relevant Head of Service should be requested to give a brief written comment earlier on in the process and this would be first considered by the relevant Scrutiny Task Group.

It was clarified that if Heads of Service did not support a recommendation, it did not mean the Task Group or Scrutiny Steering Board would have to amend or withdraw a particular recommendation. It was also agreed that Scrutiny Members should be probing and challenging officers and other witnesses during a scrutiny investigation. However, there was still concern that having a form for Heads of Service to complete and submit to the Task Group, Scrutiny Steering Board and Cabinet regarding scrutiny recommendations could restrain scrutiny and it might be seen as a 'gatekeeping' exercise.

**RESOLVED** that rather than the relevant Heads of Service completing a form commenting on scrutiny recommendations (as proposed within the report), the views of the relevant Heads of Service be sought by a Task Group on all scrutiny recommendations before a Scrutiny Report is finalised and submitted to the Scrutiny Steering Board.

24/08 **AMENDMENTS TO CURRENT TASK GROUPS**

The Board considered the report which outlined minor changes to the current two Task Groups.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the membership form for the Anti-Social Behaviour and Alcohol Free Zones Task Group received from Councillor Miss D. H. Campbell, as requested, be noted; and
- (b) that the minor alteration to the Refuse and Recycling Task Group's terms of reference of replacing "level of service and cost" in the first three bullet points with "level, performance and cost of service" be approved.

25/08 **UPDATES ON SCRUTINY TASK GROUPS**

**Anti-Social Behaviour and Alcohol Free Zones Task Group**

Councillor C. B. Taylor, Task Group Chairman, informed the Board of the progress made by the above Task Group during the two meetings held since the last meeting of the Board.

It was reported that at the last meeting (which Members of the Board who were not on the Task Group had been invited to attend), Chief Inspector Love had been in attendance to present his views on the issues faced by West Mercia Police which the Task Group found very useful.

**Refuse and Recycling Task Group – Value for Money**

An update from the Task Group Chairman, Councillor C. R. Scurrill, was read out to the Board which informed Members that the Task Group had agreed a programme of work.

**RESOLVED** that the verbal updates provided be noted.

26/08 **JOINT COUNTYWIDE FLOODING SCRUTINY UPDATE**

The Chairman, who was the Council's representative on the Joint Countywide Flooding Scrutiny Task Group, reminded the Board that as the last Task Group Meeting had been held on the same day as a full Council Meeting, he had been unable to attend. However, he had received an update from officers.

It was reported that a draft scrutiny report had been discussed at the last meeting and comments had been made on the recent Pitt Review recommendations. It had been agreed that recommendations from the Pitt Review would need to be cross referenced. A number of other amendments to the draft report had also been agreed and further information had been requested.

It was explained that the report would include recommendations to a number of organisations, including local authorities and it was anticipated that final recommendations would be agreed at the next meeting due to be held on 6th August 2008. It was hoped that the final report would be ready for the Board to consider at its meeting scheduled to be held on 30th September 2008.

**RESOLVED** that the update provided by the Chairman on the progress of the Joint Countywide Flooding Scrutiny be noted.

27/08 **FORWARD PLAN**

Consideration was given to the Forward Plan which included key and non-key decisions due to be taken over the forthcoming months.

The Board discussed each key decision in turn and questions raised were answered by officers present.

In relation to the Sports Strategy, clarification was sought regarding whether it included all young people or focussed on certain age groups. It was believed that the Strategy covered everyone and was not aimed at any one group.

**RESOLVED** that the Forward Plan be noted.

28/08 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board considered all the items included within its Work Programme.

**RESOLVED** that the Scrutiny Steering Board's Work Programme be noted and be updated accordingly.

The meeting closed at 7.50 p.m.

Chairman

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## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD

2ND SEPTEMBER 2008

### COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Responsible Member	Councillor - Roger Hollingworth, Leader of the Council
Responsible Head of Service	Hugh Bennett -Assistant Chief Executive

#### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides Scrutiny Steering Board (SSB) with the latest version of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) self assessment.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that SSB:
- i. considers the work in progress draft.
  - ii. Notes that the draft will go forward to Full Council for consideration.
  - iii. Notes that the deadline for submission to the Audit Commission is 26 September 2008.

#### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council was assessed as Poor by the Audit Commission last year. This year, we have a much more positive story to tell and have self assessed the Council as Good. The Council has a realistic chance of achieving this. The CPA self assessment forms a crucial part of the CPA. The Audit Commission will use it to consider how they will focus their site visit. Draft copies are also being sent to Cabinet and the Performance Management Board, before going onto Full Council. It is still in draft and some figures, plus the referencing need to be sorted out. Copies have also been provided to the Lead Official, GOWM, the Audit Commission Relationship Manager and ex-Improvement Director, so that they can provide their input.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

## 6. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

6.1 This report applies to all the Council's objectives.

## 7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 CPA has its own risk register and is identified as a corporate risk.

## 8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Achieving the right rating will improve the Council's reputation with the public.

## 9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues N/A
Personnel Implications N/A
Governance/Performance Management N/A
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 N/A
Policy N/A
Environmental N/A
Equalities and Diversity N/A

## 10. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holders	<b>At Leader's Group.</b>
Chief Executive	<b>At CMT.</b>
Corporate Director (Services)	<b>At CMT.</b>
Assistant Chief Executive	<b>At CMT.</b>
Head of Service	<b>At CMT.</b>
Head of Financial Services	<b>At CMT.</b>
Head of Legal & Democratic Services	<b>At CMT.</b>
Head of Organisational Development & HR	<b>At CMT.</b>
Corporate Procurement Team	<b>No</b>

## 11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Draft CPA Self Assessment

## 12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

CPA Self Assessment January 2007.

### CONTACT OFFICERS

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**Bromsgrove**  
District Council

[www.bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk)

# **CPA Self Assessment**

## **Bromsgrove District Council**

**September 2008**



# Contents

**1. Local Authority Context and Summary.**

**Q1 What is the Council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?**

2. Ambitions for the Community

3. Prioritisation

**Q2 What is the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?**

4. Capacity

5. Performance Management

**Q3 What has been achieved?**

6. Achievement and Improvement

**7. Conclusions**

**Appendix 1**

Self Assessment Score by Council

**Appendix 2**

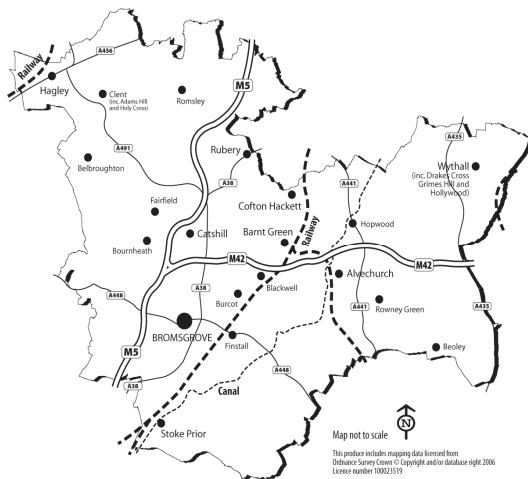
References

# 1. Local Authority Context and Summary

## Geography and Communities

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

**Table 1 – Map of Bromsgrove District**



Data suggests that 16,643 people travel into the District for work, with 26,112 (29%) of the population travelling out, a net commute out of 9,469. Our main communities are detailed in Table 1. The District has no wards in the top 20% most deprived in England; however, the Council's recent Labour Market survey highlighted a significant variation in incomes between people who live and work in the District and those who commute out to work.

## Population

The population of the District is 91,600 and the Office for National Statistics predicts that this will increase by 15.3% over the next 30 years to 105,615 in 2029. The Regional Spatial Strategy Two (RSS2) has identified only 2,000 homes for the District over the next 25 years, with the possibility that the District may have to take some of Redditch Borough Council's housing allocation. The Council is currently challenging the District's RSS2 allocation, as the need for affordable housing far exceeds this allocation. The Council is working with Bromsgrove District Housing Trust on a full housing market survey to help us challenge the allocation.

The black and minority ethnic population (BME) is only 3.3%, which is low for the region and nationally. This BME % comprises 1% Irish, 0.8% Asian, 0.8% mixed, 0.4% black and 0.3% Chinese. There are 37,798 households in the District. Over

25% of households contain only one older person. An estimated 6,964 households in the District have one or more members in an identified special needs group. This is 19.1% of all households in the District, well above the national average; of these 56.7% have a physical disability and 37% are frail elderly. The elderly population is predicted to expand as a proportion of the overall District population, with the over 80s population estimated to increase by 123.3% by 2029.

## **Economy**

The economic picture of the District has generally been very positive. The mean household income is £36,906, which is the highest in the County (the County average is £34,737). There are three major areas of economic regeneration within the District: the Longbridge site, Bromsgrove town centre and Bromsgrove railway station. In April 2005, parts of Phoenix Venture Holdings (PVH), most significantly MG Rover and PowerTrain entered administration, resulting in the closure of the Longbridge car plant. These parts of the Group employed around 5,850 people in the West Midlands and an estimated £410m was spent with firms based in the West Midlands as part of the supply chain. Whilst unemployment levels naturally increased with the closure, the District's unemployment levels have returned to very low levels (1.5%). Bromsgrove town centre needs a major overhaul to encourage local shopping and to be able to compete with neighbouring shopping centres. Bromsgrove station is the third area of concern. The current station facilities are not considered fit for purpose and a feasibility study is currently being carried out on the possible redesign of the station so that it can take bigger trains and more passengers and an increase of at least 300 additional car parking spaces. This would help "future proof" the station against any changes to transport charges that may affect Birmingham city centre. The current "credit crunch" and poor economic outlook may impact on these regeneration initiatives, particularly, the town centre.

## **Sustainable Development**

A healthy natural environment is vital to our existence. The past twenty years have seen a growing realisation that the current model of development is unsustainable. We already have a number of initiatives in place to help improve our sustainability. The Council House is in the process of switching to 100% green electricity and part of our power comes from solar panels on our roof. We use 100% recycled paper and encourage recycling in house and in the wider District. We are signed up to the Worcestershire car sharing scheme. The Local Strategic Partnership's Better Environment Group has a number of projects underway aiming to reduce our carbon footprint, help conserve and enhance our biodiversity, and reduce pollution. The new Local Area Agreement (LAA) has a number of challenging environment targets which the Council is responding to.

## **Affordable Housing**

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

## **Education, Deprivation and Health**

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

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

## **Crime and Fear of Crime**

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

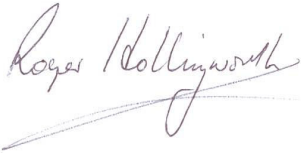
## **Regulatory, Political, Managerial and Financial Context**

The Council has a majority Conservative administration, with twenty-seven Conservatives, six Labour, four Independents, and two Wythall Residents' Association. The Council operates a modernised political structure with the Leader/Cabinet model, supported by three non-Executive Boards: the Audit Board, Scrutiny Steering Board and Performance Management Board. There is also a Planning Committee, Standards Committee and Licensing Committee. The Council operates a Corporate Management Team (CMT) and has an Acting Joint Chief Executive of Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council, Kevin Dicks. This joint role started on 01 August 2008 and will be subject to a review at 6 months. The aim of the joint post, is to facilitate a strategic business model of joint working between the two councils, with the aim of delivering better value for money to our residents.

The Council has a net budget of £11.733m (2008/09) and a Government Grant of £4.858m. The Council employs 358 staff. The 2008/2009 budget round involved the deletion of 35 posts, increased charges and a museum closure, as the Council re-aligned its spending to its priorities, something it was praised for in the recent housing inspection.

## **CPA Self Assessment and Performance**

The Council was judged to be Poor in the Corporate Assessment undertaken in early 2007. We self assessed ourselves as poor for that assessment and requested the assessment to help provide us with a benchmark and route map for improvement over the next 12 months. We have now requested a second assessment, as our rate of progress has been significant, as identified in both the recent Direction of Travel and Housing Inspection and as evidenced by the continued and sustained improvement in performance generally over the last two years. We have self assessed ourselves as Good. Our Vision remains to deliver community leadership and excellent services to our residents.



**Roger Hollingworth**  
Leader of the Council



**Kevin Dicks**  
Acting Joint Chief Executive

# What is the Council, together with its partners trying to achieve?

## 2. Ambitions for the Community

- 2.1 The Council's Vision is: "Working together to build a District where people are proud to live and work, through community leadership and excellent services". The Vision and the Values that underpin it: Leadership, Partnership, Equality and Customer First, have been developed through our change programme "Building Pride". The programme recognises that the Council needs to re-build a sense of pride in living in the District and working for the Council through the delivery of long term outcomes and excellent services.
- 2.2 The Council's objectives and priorities are:-
- (1) **Council Objective One: Regeneration** with A Thriving Market Town and Housing as its priorities.
  - (2) **Council Objective Two: Improvement**, with Customer Service as a priority.
  - (3) **Council Objective Three: Sense of Community and Well Being**, with Sense of Community being a priority.
  - (4) **Council Objective Four: Environment**, with Clean Streets and Recycling being a priority.
- 2.3 The Council developed its Vision, Values, Objectives and Priorities through consultation and regularly communicates these to residents. The Council has used a number of focus groups<sup>1</sup> and three high quality customer panels to help find out about residents' views and satisfaction. This consultation is supported by a range of other mechanisms like the Disabled Users Group (DUG), Equalities and Diversity Forum, 68 PACT residents' meetings a year (attended by the ward councillor and a member of Corporate Management Team), Parish Forums and two pilot Local Neighbourhood Partnerships.
- 2.4 The Council's ambitions for its communities are now fully developed through a comprehensive Sustainable Community Strategy, with SMART high level action plans supporting each Theme. The Strategy was based on a detailed quantitative analysis of the District, undertaken by Mott McDonald, with the targets cross referenced to the County Local Area Agreement. The Strategy was launched in November 2007. The Council's annual business cycle includes an annual update of the Sustainable Community Strategy, so it is currently being updated to reflect our quality of life survey and the new Local Area Agreement targets.
- 2.5 Key strategies flow from the Community Strategy, in particular, the Council Plan and service business plans. The Acting Joint Chief Executive is the current representative for the northern districts on the County LSP Management Group and lead for affordable housing on the Chief Executive's Panel. The Assistant Chief Executive also chairs the County Heads of Policy and Performance Group.
- 2.6 Through the I&DeA Top Team Development Programme, there is now a sense of shared purpose between Cabinet and CMT and ambition for our communities. The Leader of the Council has also established a Leader's Meeting (Leader and Leader of the Opposition) to improve cross party working. This shared ambition is underpinned by a Member/officer protocol<sup>7</sup>, a Member/Member protocol<sup>8</sup>, job descriptions for key Member positions<sup>9</sup>, a Management Competency Framework<sup>10</sup> (which in turn is planned to be cascaded to all staff within the Council) and a Modern Councillor training

programme. Both the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council Plan go to Full Council for approval. Progress on the Council Plan is reported monthly to Members, with progress on the Community Strategy being reported to the LSP Board and reviewed annually by the Performance Management Board and Full Council. Scrutiny also plays an active role in supporting and developing the Council's ambitions. Recent scrutiny task and finish groups have included transport, air quality and waste. Further ones on community safety and older people are planned.

- 2.7 Getting residents to understand the difficult trade offs that politicians need to make remains an area of concern for the Council, as it does nationally. The Council has developed a community bidding approach for the Equalities and Diversity Forum, has delegated £15,000 to each Local Neighbourhood Partnership (LNPs), is running a budget jury and will be running its first Children and Young People's participatory budgeting event in April 2009
- 2.8 The Council is working all the time to improve its intelligence led approach to developing its and its partner's ambitions. The Council has commissioned a ward level analysis for the Community Strategy and more recently has commissioned a Labour Market Survey. The Customer Panel provides a four way split (urban 1 and 2, rural 1 and 2) and this is further supplemented by ward level analysis by the County Council. As part of our developing approach to ICT integration between the front and back office, the Council has cleansed its current data and implemented a corporate gazetteer that will underpin 11 new ICT systems which will support the work of departments.
- 2.9 Through these mechanisms, the Council has a strongly developed understanding of its communities and the scale of the challenge faces. The basic problem that the Council faces is one of affluence e.g. expensive housing, a town centre that does not reflect the wealth of the District and small pockets of relative deprivation. The Council also understands the diversity issues it faces. The Council has worked hard to develop an All Inclusive Equalities Scheme, supported by the Disabled Users Group and Equality and Diversity Forum. These provide Members and senior officers with face to face examples of the issues residents face. The two groups have been involved in the formulation of the Council's priorities and customer standards. Key issues to emerge are the regeneration of the town centre with suitable disabled access, extended hours of the shop mobility service (already actioned), the need for a community transport scheme (a bid will be made during the 2009/2010 budget process) and the redevelopment of the train station, which is currently not DDA compliant.
- 2.10 The Council understands the value the voluntary sector can add to its ambitions. The Council has established a service level agreement (SLA) and funding for the Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (BARN), the local voluntary sector infrastructure organisation. BARN sits on the LSP Board and chairs the Older Persons Theme Group. The Council has a COMPACT with the voluntary sector, is currently working with the sector on the community transport project and was recently actively involved in national volunteer week, with over 20 staff, including senior officers working with the voluntary sector for the day.
- 2.11 The Council understands the value of communicating its ambitions. Our Communications Strategy's<sup>18</sup> first priority is the demonstration of visible leadership. Senior Members and managers have adopted a range of leadership styles over the last twelve months depending on particular circumstance e.g. directive in setting the Council's objectives and priorities, working in partnership through the LSP, cross party working through the opposition party chairmanship of scrutiny boards, listening at PACT meetings, empowerment through the pilot Local Neighbourhood Partnerships

and understanding through a programme of “back to the floor”<sup>19</sup> days for every member of the CMT.

- 2.12 The Council has communicated its Vision, Values, Objectives and Priorities to staff through a range of mechanisms including regular staff forums; a bi-weekly Core Brief, delivered by managers and cascaded via team meetings, team action plans as part of the service business planning process<sup>5</sup>, personal development reviews (PDRs), posters for each of its values and one for the Vision and a programme of attendance by senior management at team meetings. Press releases are made available to staff and the Council’s Internet has also recently been redesigned. The Council has also introduced the principle of management conferences for the first time in Autumn 2006, to start achieving “buy in” from middle management. The recent IIP assessment commented very favourably on management/staff relations, given the difficult times the Council has had and is still going through with Single Status.
- 2.13 Finally, the Council has established a Communications Group for the LSP Board, regularly communicates its ambition for the District through Together Bromsgrove (the residents magazine), press releases and events like the “Town Hall” meeting, “Chat with the Chief”, Parish Forums etc.

### **3. Prioritisation**

- 3.1 The Council now has a strong annual business cycle in place to ensure that residents’ ambitions are translated into local improvements. Budget decisions are driven by the Council Plan, service plans and an annual improvement plan (a detailed Gantt chart). These reflect a three year and one year focus respectively and are underpinned by the 10 year focus of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 3.2 The Council’s Objectives have been defined in broad terms<sup>3</sup> and referenced to national policy and the Worcestershire Local Area Agreement. By providing a broad definition for each Objective, the Council’s leadership were then able to select which aspects of each Objective is a priority, so for example, under Council Objective Three: A Sense of Community and Well Being, the Council has made community events, community engagement, the Every Child Matters agenda and community safety priorities, but has not made the Choosing Health agenda a priority. This does not mean that the Council does not contribute to this national objective, just that it will attract less resourcing than other aspects of the national and regional agenda, which have been aligned into the Council’s strategic framework.
- 3.3 The Council is explicit in what are not priorities. The Council has adopted a simple approach to this issue. Service areas that fall outside the delivery of the five priorities are the areas required to find the savings targets in any given year, subject to consideration of the impact any efficiencies or service cuts have on the wider workings of the Council. This approach has proved effective. The 2008/2009 budget round resulted in 35 posts being deleted, the closure of the local museum, the transfer of one of the sports facilities to a school, charging for green waste, increased car parking charges; removing concessionary parking charges for the over 60s; whilst at the same time going through Single Status with staff. These have all been difficult political decisions, but by striking a balance between competing residents’ demands, what is most important to residents and what money is available, the Council is in a much stronger position financially than it was several years ago.
- 3.4 The Council recognises the connections between its various priorities and ensures a cross cutting approach. The planned redevelopment of the town centre, includes not just developing a thriving market town (corporate priority 1), but also affordable

housing in the town centre and potentially on the existing Council House site (corporate priority 2), improved customer access, through community transport and highways improvements, in particular, appropriately placed drop kerbs (corporate priority 3) and designing out crime, ensuring a full programme of community events and encouraging an evening economy (corporate priority 4). A similar approach has been adopted for Longbridge and the proposed new train station.

- 3.5 Members, officers and staff understand these priorities. XX % of staff said they understood the Council's priorities in last year's Employee Survey. The Council regularly updates staff on the priorities, at staff forums and through Core Brief. Posters are displayed around the building and staff were consulted at the inception of the 2009/2010 budget process through staff forums. This information was then presented by representatives of the Manager's Forum, to Cabinet and CMT at their July away day. Two focus groups were also held with staff on the 2008/2009 improvement plan.
- 3.6 The recent housing inspection identified a strong alignment between the Council's priorities and MTFP. Service business planning starts each July once the outline priorities and budget parameters are set at the Cabinet/CMT away day (these are then approved by Full Council in September each year). Heads of Service then produce their first draft service business plans with budget bids and identified savings for consideration by Leader's Group in early October. This ensures a strong linkage between strategic direction and spending plans. Bids are scored on their relevance to the priorities, community impact and value for money.
- 3.7 In developing this strategic agenda, the Council has made extensive use of learning from other organisations in the development of its priorities. The development of the Improvement Plan was assisted by Walsall MBC (changes to the Planning Service and the Council's Team of the Month Scheme also originated from Walsall MBC). Improvements to the performance management regime have been adopted from the experiences of Rotherham and Derby City councils. The Council has recently undertaken an emergency planning exercise with the support of other councils; has taken on board learning from other councils that have used Performance Plus (the Council's performance management software), learning from Kerrier District Council about CPA and researched Warwickshire County Council's and Bracknell Forest's approaches to town centre redevelopment. The Council has visited Northamptonshire County Council to learn about its approach to diversity, Wychavon District Council to find out about their sports trust, Watford Borough Council to find out about their change management programme and Kettering District Council to learn about their planning function. The Council has worked with GOWM and BDHT on trying to develop innovative approaches to affordable housing. The Council has received support from Solihull MBC on both performance management and communications. Through the delivery of the Improvement Plan, the Council can clearly point to how this learning has and is being used, but would accept that the sharing of this learning across the Council could be improved.

#### **4. Capacity**

- 4.1 Member/officer relations have been a key issue for the Council. These relations have significantly improved over the last few years. Cabinet and CMT have worked together on two Top Team programmes, the introduction of new political structures has enabled non-executive Members to examine and scrutinise performance and policy through the Performance Management Board and Scrutiny Task Groups. Members and officers also work together at PACT meetings.

- 4.2 The introduction of Member/officer protocols, a new Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team, Member training and a clear steer from the Leader about enabling managers to manage has created the right environment for Portfolio Holders to provide strategic direction and oversee progress, supported by the Performance Management Board (and attended by Portfolio Holders) and managers to manage operational detail. Senior managers are also able to contribute to the strategic debate through the Top Team programme and Members are able to drill down into operational areas, when appropriate.
- 4.3 Relationships between corporate management and departments are good. Heads of Service attend the weekly corporate management team which helps build a one council culture. On occasions when there have been differences of opinion between departments, these are identified, escalated and the relevant Executive Director or Acting Joint Chief Executive involved to ensure a way forward is agreed.
- 4.4 The Top Team programme has created an atmosphere of respect between senior Members and officers that enables a full and frank debate about the Council's strategic direction. This programme has included developing the Council's priorities together and more recently assessing our combined performance against the I&DeA's Effective Top Team model and developing actions to improve further. A culture of openness between managers and staff exists and has been positively developed through a range of mechanisms (ConnectWithKev, "Back to the Floor", attendance at team meetings by senior managers etc.). This was commented on favourably by the recent IIP assessment.
- 4.5 The Council recognises its duty to demonstrate openness and transparency in its decision making processes. The Council operates a Standards Committee with an independent chair, supported by the Monitoring Officer. To support this committee, the Council has invested in a new officer post to ensure each complaint is given a detailed consideration. The Council has also commissioned an independent ethical governance review and have implemented the recommendations of this review. All Members receive training, as part of their induction, on the ethical standards and procedures they must follow and existing Members have also been trained. The Council has also made changes to its Constitution<sup>17</sup> and Scheme of Delegation<sup>18</sup> to reflect a more modernised approach and is developing a robust process to ensure that the Constitution remains a live and relevant document that mirrors the way the Council conducts its affairs. Decision making is timely and supports the achievements of priorities. The Council operates a rolling Forward Plan<sup>8</sup> of all decisions to be sought from the Cabinet over a four month period.
- 4.6 The Council has employed an experienced Member from another council as a facilitator for working with and developing the scrutiny function. The scrutiny task groups have produced a number of excellent reports, including ones on transport, air quality and waste management. These reports are discussed at Cabinet and a significant number of the recommendations have been agreed. The Scrutiny Steering Board (SSB) monitors progress on these recommendations through its scrutiny tracker.
- 4.7 Risk management now forms a key part of the Council's strategic planning framework. The Council operates a corporate risk register, updated quarterly and reported to the Corporate Risk Management Steering Group and Audit Board. Each service business plan is supported by a service risk register, cross referenced to the service's key deliverables.

- 4.8 The Council is self aware about its capacity. The Council requested a CPA in 2007, expecting our rating would be Poor, in order to test our plans for improvement. The Council was considered self aware by this assessment. The 2007 CPA identified the need for additional senior management capacity. As a result, a new Executive Director Services post was created. Prior to this, the Council appointed a new permanent chief executive and has previously undertaken a Council wide restructure to build capacity within the organisation. The Council has drawn down £300,000 from reserves to pump prime improvement and has made extensive use of funding opportunities from the Capacity Building Fund, Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) and Intervention Fund. The Council has appointed a Procurement Officer and procurement practices and savings have improved as a result. The Council recognises that the appointment of its Chief Executive, to be Acting Joint Chief Executive of Bromsgrove and Redditch councils is a risk, but it is designed to increase the capacity of both organisations by developing a strategic approach to value for money. An independent feasibility study was conducted prior to the appointment and the Council operates a risk register for this project and the Acting Joint Chief Executive has specific terms to ensure a focus on the issues that can add most value to both councils, whilst retaining a focus on Bromsgrove through its CPA.
- 4.9 The Council's current VFM profile is mixed<sup>3</sup>. The Council has a VFM Strategy<sup>4</sup> including an approach to scoring each service's VFM and developing agreed actions through the service business planning process<sup>5</sup>. The Council deleted 35 posts, mostly in support services through the 2008/2009 budget cycle, is achieving an £80,000 per annum procurement savings target, has increased its income from sponsorship and charging, transferred its payroll function to Redditch BC and established SLAs with a range of partners e.g. the Artrix, BARN, BDHT etc. Most recently, the Council has developed a strategic approach to value for money through the business model of a joint chief executive for Bromsgrove and Redditch BC. Having visited councils with high scores for value for money, Bromsgrove has stronger processes in place to achieve value for money and now needs time to let these take effect.
- 4.10 The Council has a detailed and fully costed three year MTFP. The MTFP includes clear allocations for priorities requiring significant capital investment like the town centre and affordable housing. The Council has also recently identified the need for future capital allocations to modernise the collection methods at the depot and these will be built into the next update. The Council has appropriate working balances that have been enhanced by a strong performance in treasury management and £20m reserves.
- 4.11 The Council has invested significantly in organisational development, including an Organisational Development Manager and a corporate staff training budget of £200,000, a middle managers training programme, Top Team programme and Member Development programme. The rate of improvement by the Council suggests this is paying dividends.
- 4.12 HR strategies and practices effectively support corporate priorities. The Council has a People Strategy<sup>9</sup>. Through the Strategy, the Council has also introduced a significant range of human resource techniques to improve capacity within its workforce. These include Personal Development Reviews for all staff (a corporately monitored target by Members), a skills audit, a new capability procedure<sup>13</sup>, new Sickness Absence Policy<sup>14</sup>, new disciplinary procedure and anti-bullying and harassment procedures. Through its performance monitoring the Council monitors sickness absence, staff turnover, early retirements and a range of indicators to ensure its workforce is representative of the community<sup>15</sup>. The Council is currently undergoing Single Status; as a result the Council has re-programmed the approach to workforce planning to

2009/10. 100% of staff have received a PDR and sickness absence is now falling and below target.

- 4.13 The Council makes extensive use of ICT. During 2006/07 the Council started three ICT projects. The Internet project which has led to the overhaul and modernisation of the Council's website, the infrastructure project (£1.8m) and the Spatial project (£5.0m). The Spatial project, supported by the new infrastructure will significantly reduce process times and lead to customer information being single sourced avoiding duplication and error. As part of this work, the Council's data has been cleansed, the corporate gazetteer has now been launched and the Council is now in the process of implementing 11 software solutions, primarily in the Planning and Environment Department, that will eventually link into the Council's Customer Service Centre.
- 4.14 The Council has a clear project management methodology that has recently been the subject to an internal audit (a recommendation of the Performance Management Board) and updated. The Council operates a Programme Board, chaired by the Acting Joint Chief Executive, which supplements the work of Corporate Management Team and provides a setting for a more detailed consideration of the various project documents required. RIEP have identified that the Council has a large improvement agenda for its size and to our credit; we have delivered xx% and xx% of the last two year's Improvement Plan. The Council has also introduced a Capital Strategy Working Group to ensure capital spending is on track.
- 4.15 The Council is prepared to use long term partnerships and joint working with other local authorities and organisations to deliver service improvement. The Council successfully transferred its housing stock to Bromsgrove District Housing Trust in 2004. Relations with the Trust are now good with the BDHT Chief Executive sitting on the LSP Board and Chairing the Housing Theme. BDHT is the preferred RSL for the Council and we have a joint priority of affordable housing. In 2005, the Council opened its Customer Service Centre (the Hub) in partnership with the County Council. The Council has a track record of working with the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) to improve services to the homeless and through the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group (and in partnership with BDHT and Supporting People) and has developed a new Floating Support and Preventative Service for clients over 25 (younger people are catered for through the Baseline Service). The Council provides £120,000 per annum to the Artrix, with a SLA that links back to the findings from the Council's Customer Panel. The Council has a Compact with the voluntary sector and an SLA with BARN. Most recently has entered into a partnership with Redditch BC, through the appointment of the Acting Joint Chief Executive of the two councils.
- 4.16 Partners are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The LSP Board has agreed a governance framework, including a performance management framework. The roles and responsibilities of LSP members are defined in the governance framework. LSP Board members, in particular Theme Group Chairs, are supported in their work by a Senior Corporate Policy and Performance officer of the Council and performance information is regularly reported to the Board.

## **5. Performance Management**

- 5.1 The Council operates a clear golden thread, annual business cycle and a strategy to improve performance management. As a result, the Council delivered 77% of its targets for 2007/2008 which bears comparison with an excellent Council. The Council operates a very detailed corporate Improvement Plan, xx% of which was also delivered.

- 5.2 The Council sets realistic, but challenging targets for improving its performance. Challenge is provided through the Performance Management Board, monthly meetings between the portfolio holder and head of service and through a “star chamber” by senior officers of each service business plan, in addition to the routine monitoring at Corporate Management Team each month. The Council has significantly reduced the number of indicators reported (to provide focus) and improved the format of all the performance management documentation.
- 5.3 The Council has used the learning from these improvements to help develop performance management for its key strategic partnerships through the development of a performance management framework for the LSP. This includes: high level action plans (cross referenced to the County LAA) for each theme in the Sustainable Community Strategy, a community improvement plan which expands on the detail of these actions, regular reporting of key performance indicators, challenge at the LSP Board and use of performance clinics, for example on affordable housing. More detailed arrangements for monitoring each partnership sit underneath these, which have been previously referred to e.g. SLAs etc.
- 5.4 The Performance Management Board has an annual work programme of performance reports, including the corporate Improvement Plan Exception Report each month, performance indicators each month and an integrated financial/performance report each quarter. It also receives a range of other reports, for example: the Council Plan, Annual Report and detailed performance reports on our various partners etc. Portfolio Holders and the relevant heads of service are called to each meeting, to answer questions and recommendations are made to Cabinet. Portfolio Holders also receive the same information as PMB at Leader’s Group (informal Cabinet) and each Portfolio Holder receives an integrated monthly report from their head of service and meets monthly to discuss this.
- 5.5 Performance management is fully integrated with the management of resources through the development of the medium term financial plan. The identified priorities of the Council reflect performance management issues e.g. affordable housing, a clean district, customer service etc.
- 5.6 The Council launched its Customer Feedback System in January 2008. The system is available to all staff to take complaints or compliments from our customers. The system is monitored daily by the Customer First officer, complaint figures supplied monthly to CMT, Cabinet and the Performance Management Board and a more detailed report, analysing trends produced quarterly. Through the 68 annual PACT meetings there is also an established process for residents to vote on their top three concerns for a particular area, that are then dealt with by the Police or senior Council officer attached to that PACT. There is a clear and publicised grievance procedure for staff, but also opportunities for staff through “ConnectWithKev” and staff forums to feedback concerns to senior management. These were particularly useful during Single Status and the IIP assessor commented very favourably on the state of senior manager/staff relations given the Council’s context.
- 5.7 Customer focus is understood and is a central driver. Customer First is one of our four values.. The Hub receives over 7,000 calls per month, with a 90% plus resolution at first point of contact<sup>9</sup>. On average, the customer has to wait 35 seconds. All staff have received Customer First Training, both in 2007 and 2008. The Council has published customer standards, which are currently being subject to review through customer research and has recently updated the Customer First Strategy to include a stronger focus on customer access, having benchmarked with Shropshire County Council (excellent and improving). The Acting Joint Chief Executive meets regularly with the

County Council to resolve customer issues. A detailed report is produced each month on the Hub's performance which is reported to the CMT, while the Centre itself has installed a large screen to display real time queue data (including comparative data from other districts) and undertaken mystery shopping exercises, which have been similarly conducted across the whole Council. The Council also operates a Customer Panel and is now tracking customer satisfaction every year.

- 5.8 Because of the Council's "Poor" CPA rating the Council is already subject to a high level of external challenge through inspection, audit and the Government Monitoring Board. The Council can demonstrate a track record of responding to challenges from these mechanisms, including a revised and much more outward focused Improvement Plan, a complete overhaul of the way in which the Council reports its performance indicators, pump priming the Improvement Plan through the use of reserves, a robust strategic housing action plan<sup>10</sup> in response to the nil star inspection and subsequent delivery of a one star with promising prospects and IIP action plan and subsequent re-accreditation, achieving all 10 standards.
- 5.9 In order to encourage an embedded performance culture across the Council, Core Brief regularly reports to staff on our performance figures and the Improvement Plan<sup>11</sup>, the Acting Joint Chief Executive, writes the lead article in the staff magazine "Connect"<sup>12</sup> which updates staff on key developments, the Assistant Chief Executive writes a regular column "Performance Matters". The Council has an established Performance Champions Group, to develop the reporting of performance information, has introduced a staff suggestion scheme "Bright Ideas"<sup>13</sup>, introduced "back to the floor" sessions, organised a programme for senior managers to attend every team meeting at least once a year and developed a single A4 poster which sets out our Vision, Values, Council Objectives and Priorities. Every team produces a team action plan, with team managers meeting with the relevant Executive Director and Assistant Chief Executive to examine their plans and every member of staff receives a PDR and six month review.
- 5.10 Similarly, the Council produces an Annual Report (integrated with financial reporting), published on the Internet and reported in more detail through a wrap around in the local press. The Council also publishes information as part of the Council Tax leaflet<sup>16</sup> on our performance. The Council also reports on its performance through the new Together Bromsgrove residents' magazine. The LSP Board also produces an Annual Report on the Community Strategy and holds an annual "town hall" meeting to update residents on progress on the big issues.
- 5.11 Finally, cross departmental working is well established within the Council. CMT meets every Tuesday and includes the heads of service. LSP Theme Groups are also well established and provide a forum for departments (as well as different organisations) to co-ordinate their activities. The Council is recognised as having a particularly strong CDRP. The Council has also established a number of meetings to bring together departments and Members, for example: Town Centre Strategy Group, the Longbridge Working Party and Affordable Housing Working Group. The Council operates a range of project groups, for example: Spatial Project Steering Group and has recently established a Programme Board. The Council also sits on a number of County/District groups with a focus on performance improvement, including the Hub Partnership and Heads of Policy and Performance Improvement (currently chaired by Bromsgrove District Council).

## 6. Achievement and Improvement

### Overall Performance

- 6.1 Outturn figures for 2007/08 show that 72% of BVPI's improved during the year, building on the 59% increase the year before. In terms of quartile distribution 60% of BVPI's are now above the median (compared to 2006/07 quartile positions – the latest ones available) with only 17% in the bottom quartile, continuing the significant improvement trend. This sustained and ongoing improvement has also been achieved in the key local performance indicators, as the table below shows.

	BVPI's		Local PI's	
PI Improvement	2006/07	2007/08	2006/07	2007/08
Performance improving	59%	72%	59%	76%
Performance steady	13%	10%	9%	12%
Performance declining	28%	18%	32%	12%

PIs meeting target				
	2006/07	2007/08	2006/07	2007/08
Meeting or exceeding target	65%	74%	76%	78%
Missing target but within 10%	19%	16%	6%	10.5%
Missing target by more than 10%	16%	10%	18%	10.5%

BVPI Quartile spread		
Quartile	2006/07	2007/08
Top quartile	20%	31%
2 <sup>nd</sup> quartile	18%	29%
3 <sup>rd</sup> quartile	36%	23%
Bottom quartile	26%	17%

### Council Priority One – A Thriving Town Centre

- 6.2 The Council is taking a strategic approach to regenerating the town centre and is currently working through the statutory planning requirements to develop an area action plan for the town centre. We have appointed a project manager (jointly funded by County Council). Key achievements include:-
- funding of a new toilet block in the town centre, including a high dependency unit for adults and children with disabilities (£174,000); £25,000 contribution from the Council towards the funding of feasibility study for regeneration of Bromsgrove Railway Station, the funding package has been established for a new train station and now awaiting funding approval; a major retailer for market hall site is being sought; an Issues and Options paper has been sent out for consultation and consultation completed; an Area Action Plan is being produced; and investment in community transport, linked to the town centre is about to be agreed.
  - An Events programme for the town centre has been agreed and is being implemented, with some sponsorship of the programme through the development of a Marketing Strategy. The programme includes a "Showcase" sports event in the town centre in August
  - The Customer Service Centre is located in the town centre, including Saturday opening; extended opening of the Shop mobility centre (first

opened in November 2005) in response to recent feedback. The Scheme is very successful, with over 260 registered users and on average 8 to 10 vehicles being on loan at any one time.

- Improved lighting and a spruce up of building town centre multi-story car park (£6,000) after problems with teenage drivers. Achievement of Safer Parking award. Free car parking in Bromsgrove town centre, in two weekends prior to Christmas.

### **Council Priority Two – Housing**

- 6.3 The Council has moved from a nil star, uncertain prospects service to a one star, promising prospects housing service in only 18 months. The delivery of affordable housing units have significantly improved since 2004/05 (26 units), to 75 units in 2005/2006 and a planned completion of 96 units in 2007/2008, although due to unforeseeable environmental concerns on one site, 26 of these completions will now be finalised in 2008/2009. The Council effectively supports the delivery of new affordable homes by contributing its own resources. It discounts or gifts land to support development, and commits £350,000 annually to grant fund BDHT, our primary partner.
- 6.4 The Council has challenged the Regional Spatial Strategy 2 housing figures through a Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The Council has delivered the Government's 2010 target for reducing the number of households living in temporary accommodation and have no families staying in B&B accommodation.
- 6.5 Through the Private Tenancy Scheme over 10 applicants have found suitable housing. The scheme helps financially support home seekers. The Council is second quartile in returning the level of private sector dwellings returned to occupation. There has been a significant Improvement to disabled facilities grant performance.
- 6.6 The Council and BDHT have a joint commitment to phase out the use of hostels as temporary accommodation and replace them with self contained units. Wythall Hostel has been closed<sup>16</sup> and 21 units of self contained accommodation are currently available.
- 6.7 Whilst the housing moratorium has impacted on affordable housing provision it has led to a very high proportion of new developments being on brownfield sites, 92% (2005/06)<sup>27</sup>, compared to a target of 75% (2004) and 40% by 2011. With a limited amount of brownfield sites and the pressure for affordable housing, the use of Area Development Restraints may mean some greenfield sites will need to be released in the near future.

### **Council Priority Three – Customer Service**

- 6.8 The CSC is consistently achieving its targets of 80% of answered calls and average waiting time of 35 seconds (this is considered an acceptable wait by our customers and is down from 48 seconds in March 2007). The resolution of customer contacts at the first point of contact has increased from 83% (March 2007) to 94.3% (March 2008) Phone calls go straight through to an adviser (there is no press 1 for, press 2 for) and this compares with the best in the private sector

- 6.9 We do have periods of higher call volume, particularly, during April with Council Tax. In the first year of opening, the average call waiting time in this month was 88 seconds. For April 2008 it was 34 seconds. The Council has recently invested in a queue management system for the CSC to improve the service to our walk in customers. 71% of our customers would recommend the CSC to a friend. Only 11% of residents were dissatisfied with the service received.
- 6.10 Customer culture across the whole of the Council has been a key area for improvement. All staff have attended 'Customer First' courses and an IT system to manage and analyse complaints, comments and compliments system has recently been introduced across the Council. The corporate performance indicator set now includes performance measures about complaints and their resolution. The Council has updated its website and has a new DDA compliant Members' entrance.
- 6.11 The Council is investing £5.0m in the Spatial Project, which will see the roll out of 11 software packages including a land and property gazetteer. The Council had suffered from years of underinvestment in its ICT infrastructure and software, both of which are now being addressed. These improvements will enable residents to view and submit planning applications on-line, ensure information is up to date, provide customer histories, share information between systems and link to the CSC.
- 6.12 "Chats with the Chief" sessions have been popular, with take up from Parish Councils, Rotary, resident associations etc. The Council has introduced a Council SMS alert messaging service. Only 15% of our residents found contacting the Council difficult and we have subsequently introduced a customer access strategy to address the issues raised by those 15%. 60% of residents found the resident magazine useful and only 7% found the Council Tax leaflet not useful.
- 6.13 Finally, the Council has, in partnership with SCOPE undertaken an accessibility audit of all Council buildings<sup>30</sup> and polling stations in order to ensure that its services can be accessed and that all members of the community are able to participate fully in the democratic process. Other access improvements include: the modification of the Council's waste collection services officering aid and assistance to people with specific assistance requirements; the launch of a telephone translation service; the increased provision and use of hearing induction loops at the Council House and the Hub; the provision of all literature in alternative formats on request and the inclusion of a yellow information sheet explaining the equality services available with every piece of correspondence sent out.

**Council Priority Four – Sense of Community (community events, community engagement, children and young people and crime and disorder)**

Community Events

- 6.14 The Council provides an excellent cultural offer, with an extensive range of community events designed to help maintain a sense of community. Over 17,000 people attend the events each year. Events include the bonfire night, street theatre and bandstand programme. As a result of feedback from our Customer Panel, we now take street theatre out across the whole District and while we introduced a small charge for last year's bonfire night, almost 10,000 people turned up. The bandstand programme includes not only an extensive music programme, but also youth arts, puppets in the park, clowns and magic, story telling and youth bands. The Council also has a very active civic calendar

which helps provide a sense of civic pride and raises money for local charities. The Spadesborne Suite at the Council House is also used for a range of events like tea dances, International Woman's Day, games sessions for people with learning disabilities, weddings and the Equalities and Diversity Forum. The Forum recently successfully bid for Council funding to support Black History Month, Diwali and the Padstone Day Care Centre theatre event for people with learning disabilities. The Council also actively supported the Holocaust Memorial Day with a service held in Sanders Park in January 2008, Vetrans' Day with a special bandstand programme and Democracy Week, with a range of events. Through our Together Bromsgrove magazine, we are also bringing news about the District and a special focus on a particular area in each edition.

- 6.15 The Council has underpinned this active civic calendar with the establishment of a Standards Committee and complaints procedure to ensure the proper conduct of public life in the District.
- 6.16 The Council has a lead role in the Artrix , Bromsgrove's theatre, cinema and live music venue and facilitated both its conception and delivery. The Council funded the building of the Artrix arts centre and currently underwrites the revenue of the Artrix to the value of £120,000 per annum, supported by an SLA. The Centre provides a wide range of entertainment and an excellent facility for New College (used 14 hours a week). The facility opened in April 2005 and in 2006/2007 for example, provided: 389 performances and screenings, 12 exhibitions and over 350 creative workshop sessions. Over 26,000 people attended the Artrix in 2006/07.
- 6.17 Finally, the Council recently supported National Volunteer Week, with up to 20 staff, including the Acting Joint Chief Executive and Executive Director Partnerships and Projects going "back to the floor" with local charities to experience the significant contribution the voluntary sector makes to the District.

### Feeling Safe

- 6.18 The Council operates a highly successful Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership with the Police. The last three years has seen a 32.3% reduction in crime levels across the District (target was 17.5%) and a 47% reduction in car crime. There were only three violent incidents in the town centre over the Christmas period due to high visibility policing, better licensing and improvements to taxi pick up points. The Council's Quality of Life Survey found that only 5% of residents said that crime and anti social behaviour affects their lives a great deal. Only 7% of residents disagreed that their local area is somewhere where people from different backgrounds do not get on well. The Council has made a substantial investment in CCTV in the town centre and around the District with another £450,000 worth of programmed upgrades due over the next three years. The CCTV is clearly effective; in 3 years and 6,000,000 car parking tickets, there have only been 20 reported vehicle crime incidents in the town centre. The Council has made careful use of Alcohol Free Zones in areas e.g. Alvechurch, Rubery etc. and we are currently looking at increasing the powers of our Neighbourhood Wardens and the Police's community support officers, so that they can issue fixed penalty notices. A key aspect of the improvement in crime reduction has been the close working relationship with the Police through the 68 PACT meetings, which address the priorities raised by local residents. For example, Waseley, which has traditionally been an area of higher crime has seen vehicle crime drop by 47%

since 2005/06; domestic burglary by 17% and criminal damage offences have reduced by almost 20%. The Council is very unusual in the level of support it provides to the PACT meetings, compared to the rest of the County and nationally. For example, a nearby excellent rated council does not support PACT, due to a lack of management capacity. We have an excellent working relationship with the Police that reflects this level of support. The Council has also worked in partnership on the “adopt the box” scheme, a joint initiative between the Council and Virgin Media, with residents being provided with an unlimited supply of cable box paint, to cover up graffiti. The Council has also actively worked with its partners to develop a Hate Crime Procedure<sup>31</sup>, which has been rolled out to 22 reporting centres across the District and covers all six equality strands including race .

- 6.19 The Council also offers an extensive range of diversionary activities, including an angling project; free football coaching sessions, delivered by an FA qualified coach; the mainstream funding of the Neighbourhood Warden Scheme who engage with local residents, particularly young people; and the Charford Multi Agency Resource Centre has set up a youth group, with activities like arts, crafts, cooking, sports or just socialising with friends in a safe environment.
- 6.20 Finally, the Council also helps older and vulnerable residents feel safer in their own own homes through its externally accredited Lifeline Service (98.85% of Lifeline calls answered within 30 seconds).

#### Community Engagement

- 6.21 The Council is offering an increasing range of mechanisms for the public to influence the Council’s strategy and services. The Council can track focus group feedback into the selection of its corporate priorities<sup>17</sup>. In direct response to comments from PACT meetings, dedicated mobile area cleaners have been introduced in Charford, Sidemoor and Catshill. The Council has anecdotal i.e. not statistically valid, evidence from PACT meetings and the Parish Council Forum that residents have recognised an improvement in the cleanliness of the District and an improvement in the responsiveness of the Council.
- 6.22 As a result of its two Local Neighbourhood Partnerships, the Council has introduced hanging baskets in Rubery and a new welcome sign, for Veteran’s Day developed a bandstand programme and special event at the Artrix Theatre,; and through Section 106 monies available in Alvechurch young people have agreed how this money is to be spent.
- 6.23 We have previously mentioned that the Council is now using a budget jury to support its budget deliberations, staff have been consulted on the priorities and key deliverables (many of whom live in the District) and consulted the Equalities and Diversity Forum on the Council’s priorities and offered them the opportunity to make community bids for the last two budget rounds. Through the LSP, the Council also supports an annual “town hall” meeting. The Council has a Community Engagement Strategy to help it respond to the two White Papers and will be supporting a participatory budgeting event for children and young people, in partnership with the County Council, in April 2009.

#### Children and Young People

- 6.24 The Council is concerned about the increasing demonization of young people. It has been recognised at County level that district councils have struggled to

engage with the “Every Child Matters” agenda; however, through the LSP, the Council has established a Children and Young People Board<sup>28</sup> and the Council is the District representative on the County thematic group. As mentioned above the Council is seeking to involve children and young people in the democratic process. The involvement of young people in Alvechurch in the decision on how to use section 106 monies is another example of the Council’s developing approach. The Council already provides an extensive range of activities for children and young people including: street theatre, the bonfire night, diversionary activities e.g. the Majors Green Football Scheme, boxing, Sanders Park and St Chads skate parks and play areas. The Council also works with voluntary organisations, for example, re-planting Chestnut Walk, working with the Scouts; and has provided training to nurseries on health and safety issues. The Council also facilitates the Primary Sports Project. This provides high quality physical education in first schools which in turn has led to increased contact and membership of local sports clubs and helps schools meet their healthy schools targets. Other activities include: a swimming gala for primary and second school children; a very successful sports award evening, with sponsorship for each award; the introduction of multi-skills sessions across the District for 5 to 9 year olds to improve their fundamental skills of agility and balance (this also included a multi-skills festival with an excellent turnout); a junior cricket programme, in partnership with Bromsgrove Junior Boars, throughout the Summer, with qualified coaches; a Children and Young People’s Convention to find out what youngsters want in the District; a football tournament at Bromsgrove’s Ryland Centre, which kicked off a series of sporting projects across the District, delivered by the Sports Development Team, in partnership with the County Council and the voluntary sector and the setting up of a Gymnastics Club by the Sports Development Team, in partnership with the Wyre Forest Gymnastics Club and North Worcestershire School Sports Partnership. Through the 2008/2009 budget cycle the Council has invested in a further two sports development officers for a team that already has an excellent reputation.

- 6.25 The Council is also working hard to improve the physical play areas for young people. The Council has recently opened the Lickey and Blackwell playground (£40,000 funding from Council). The Council was also recently successful in winning £200,000 from the Big Lottery Fund to improve play facilities across the District. The money will be spent on £50,000 for multi-use games areas at Callowbrook Park, £40,000 towards teenager adventure play area at Wythall Park, £40,000 towards expanding and improving existing equipment at the Wythall Hollywood Lane play area, £35,000 to improve existing play facilities in Sidemoor and £35,000 to revamp the Infants play area at Mayfarm Close.
- 6.26 As a result of this priority, only 10% of residents felt they did not belong to their local area and 64% felt it was a nice place to live.

### **Council Priority Five - Clean District and Recycling**

#### Clean District

- 6.27 As a result of the employment of additional street cleansing staff and investment in new sweepers, graffiti removal systems, area cleaners and hit squads, the proportion of land suffering from unacceptable levels of detritus is now below the local authority average. 85% of our streets now meet the Government’s standards for cleanliness compared to 65% a year ago. This improvement is also reflected in improving customer perception (insert

Customer Panel data). The Council's Community Safety Team has also worked in partnership with the Probation Service on local area improvements like the clearing of alleys in Rubery; and dedicated mobile area cleaners have also been introduced and received positive customer feedback. In 2007, the Council won a Green Apple Award for its street cleansing service.

- 6.28 100% of abandoned vehicle reports are investigated within 24 hours of notification (top quartile) and almost 100% removed within 24 hours of the Council being able to do so (top quartile). Similarly, the Council removes all animal debris within agreed timescales and deals with almost all fly tips within our response times.

### Recycling

- 6.29 Recycling rates are amongst most improved in country with the levels of recycling being in the top 50 in the country at over 40%. The Council has supported this improved delivery through a clearer collection policy, the introduction of a clearer Christmas calendar as a result of customer feedback) and a green waste collection. We have also set up four new bring banks, especially for Tetra Pak beverage cartons, in partnership with Tetra Pak Ltd. The majority of residual waste that is collected is diverted to Combined Heat and Power plants reducing the amount of waste required for landfill.
- 6.30 The Council actively supports public education on recycling. We run a "Recycle Now" week with drop in sessions; "Waste Stop Shops" so that residents can find out more about recycling; the design and delivery by young people of a green scheme post card to encourage recycling, Recycler, the hip hop Rapping Robot visited 10 schools in the District to encourage the three Rs of recycling and a Recycling Bus tour has visited the District's village to give advice and guidance on the best way to recycle.
- 6.31 Our focus and investment means that 81% of residents now use one of the Council's recycling facilities and 84% are satisfied with the recycling service.

### **Other Achievements**

- 6.32 Not all of our services are covered by the priorities, but Improvement is a Council wide objective and staff have worked very hard over the last few years to turn around the performance of the Council across all of our services. Other achievements that Council has made include:-
- The Council is a partner with Advantage West Midlands on the Bromsgrove Technology Park. Basepoint PLC has a building there. Basepoint is a technology centre with "incubator" units to grow new businesses. The Council, in partnership with NEW college operates a successful business start up programme with 90 start ups over the last three years and a 70% survival rate.
  - The Council also runs a monthly farmers market in Bromsgrove town centre and a Christmas market.
  - Over 30 business start ups in 2007/2008 with a business survival rate of 75%.
  - Satisfaction with parks and open spaces is high and improving. Green Flag Sanders Park.

- Only 10% of residents use the Dolphin Centre on a weekly basis and 63% have used it or stopped. As a result, the Council has refurbished the gym facilities (£850,000) at the Dolphin Centre and the transfer of the Centre to a Charitable Trust. Facilities updated to “state of the art” fitness suite.
- A number of teams in the Culture and Communities Department are QUEST accredited. The Planning and Environment Department Building Control Service is ISO9000 accredited and the Environment Health section achieved the highest average score for enforcement practices in a county wide audit. The Council is one of a very few local authorities nationally to have served Noise Abatement Notices in order to prevent nuisance trains (squealing train wheels) from travelling through the District. The Council’s Environmental Health Commercial Team and Legal Services has undertaken a number of high profile prosecutions of local businesses which have received local and regional press coverage, with two cases featuring in a national journal.
- The Council is contributing to a better environment through its recycling service and parks service, in particular, the recent award of a Green Flag for Sanders Park. The Council has also recently signed up to the Worcestershire Climate Change Declaration and has employed the Energy Savings Trust to undertake a review of its activities<sup>25</sup>. Domestic energy efficiency is up to 22.68% (2005/06) from a 2003 baseline of 5% and on target to achieve 2011 target of 30%<sup>26</sup>.
- The Planning Service has seen a significant improvement in its performance. This performance is high in the top quartile and should place the Council well within the top 50 performing authorities, compared to being one of the worst performing councils in 2005/06 (250<sup>th</sup> (approx) out of 285 councils). This has been achieved by a combination of resourcing, clearer accountabilities and responsibilities, improved processes and the introduction of 3 planning surgeries per week.
- An extensive consultation on the options for the future of the Longbridge site has been undertaken. As one of the two planning authorities the Council was not able to respond to this consultation; however, the LSP responded to the Issues and Options<sup>14</sup> consultation supporting the mixed development option, which aims to create 10,000 jobs.
- Since its BFI inspection in 2005 the Benefits Service has seen a significant improvement in its performance. The average number of days taken for processing new claims and the average number of days taken to process a change of circumstance have dramatically improved, falling from 37.81 days in 2005/06 to 26.33 days in 2007/08 and 11.88 days in 2005/06 to 6 days in 2007/08. The Council is also now delivering most of the DWP performance standards.
- Benefits Overpayments/fraud – more collected and more fined than before. Top quartile performance at 87.48%, compared to 65.96% the previous year.

- 100% successful prosecutions as a result of improved capacity and bringing service in-house.
- Outsourced sales advertising for Together Bromsgrove, making the three editions self funding and saving the Council £20,000.
- Half way through registering all Council's land, which is significantly ahead of other councils and means we are now selling this service to other councils.
- Procurement savings achieved of over £80,000 per annum.
- Introduction of the "Scores on the Doors" food establishment rating service.
- Development of a County wide Air Quality Strategy aimed at reducing emissions, better planning, transport and controlled areas.
- External funding secured for Improvement Manager to help deliver spatial project, programme management etc.
- Merger of Culture and Communities and StreetScene and Waste Management Department and savings delivered.
- New reprographics service, including new printers and reduced costs (figures).
- Significant reduction in local authority error rate, which has meant the payment of more subsidies by Central Government (£200,000). Achieved 100% for last quarter (quarter 4 2007/2008).
- Installation of new land and property gazetteer which will underpin all the spatial systems and significantly improve the service to customers, by providing a single database for updating change of address details.
- 27,000 people pay their Council Tax by Direct Debit which contributes to our very high collection rates (second quartile). There are 37,000 properties.
- IIP Re-accreditation achieved.
- Winning business seminars for private sector companies who want to get contracts with the public sector. Over 100 delegates. Joint initiative with Redditch BC.
- Development of a "Flooding Matters" leaflet with top tips for homes affected by the recent floods.
- Introduction of a new way of calculating housing benefit, through the Local Housing Allowance, introduced in April 2008.
- £1,612,000 savings target agreed for 2008/2009 in order to release money into priority areas.

- Licensing Policy short and simple to use. Praised by British Beer and Pub Association for short length of policy and easy of use.
- Sickness absence has dropped to 9.35 days per FTE for 2007/2008, compared to 10.66 in the previous year. The estimated outturn for 2008/2009 will see sickness levels drop below the local authority average.
- The Council is in the top quartile for paying invoices within 30 days.
- The Council is top quartile for collecting Council Tax.
- 100% of the Environmental Health best practice list achieved.

## **7. Conclusions**

7.1 This self assessment demonstrates that the Council has made a dramatic improvement since its 2007 CPA. The Council has self assessed itself as good and is ambitious to achieve excellence. In writing the self assessment, the Council is aware that:-

- the District is essentially an affluent one and the societal problems it faces are ones of affluence, for example, affordable housing, very high customer expectations and a town centre that does reflect the wealth of the District;
- to achieve excellence, the Council now needs to address these longer term outcomes;
- in order to deliver this agenda the Council needs to further develop its capacity. The joint chief executive with Redditch BC, working with our partners to lever in resources into the District, delivering efficiency savings through a strong value for money culture, alternative ways of meeting service delivery; generating income and improving Member and officer skills are key to meeting this challenging agenda; and
- finally tackling all of the above is dependent on stable and sustainable political leadership from all parties. The Council recognises this and will continue to pay close attention to this agenda to ensure the governance of the Council is sound and enables officers to deliver a District where people are proud to live and work.

## Self Assessment Score by Council

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Self Assessed Score</b>
<b>Ambition</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Prioritisation</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Capacity</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Performance Management</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement and Improvement</b>	<b>3</b>

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## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD

2ND SEPTEMBER 2008

#### SCRUTINY REQUEST – CAR PARKING FOR BLUE BADGE HOLDERS

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Street Scene and Community Safety
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Street Scene and Community

#### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report relates to a request received from a member of the public regarding car parking for Blue Badge holders. (Please see Appendix 1).
- 1.2 Further to discussions at the last meeting of the Board, information has been provided by Mr. S. Martin, Transport and Engineering Manager. (Please see Appendix 2)

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are requested to consider the contents of this report and its appendices to assist them in deciding how they wish to deal with this matter.

#### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 An email from Mr. Leslie Irving (Vice-Chairman of the Older People's Forum) was received on Monday 14th July 2008. It requested the Performance Management Board to consider free parking for Blue Badge holders and the exact wording was as follows:

“To Performance Management Board I would like the subject of free parking for Blue Badge holders to be put on the Performance Management Board agenda for consideration. Attached is my letter to the local paper about my difficulties which also affect may others. Leslie Irving.”

- 3.2 Mr. Irving's letter to the local paper referred to above is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.3 As there is no mechanism in place for members of the public to refer items to the Performance Management Board, Mr. Irving was advised of his options which included contacting his Ward Councillor and/or requesting the Scrutiny Steering Board to consider this matter.

3.4 Mr. Irving then requested that the Scrutiny Steering Board considered this item and an extract from his second email is below:

“...Would you please put my request to the Scrutiny Steering Board for them to consider free parking on their car parks in Bromsgrove. I have not found one council similar to Bromsgrove that charges for Blue Badge Holders for parking and nationally the trend is the same. It would appear that Bromsgrove is the exception rather than the rule.... Leslie Irving.”

3.5 On the 29th July 2008, the Scrutiny Steering Board considered the scrutiny request and several questions were raised, particularly relating to the car parking scrutiny investigation which had been undertaken in 2007, the funding and use of shopmobility and consultation with disabled users.

3.6 With regard to the fairly recent scrutiny exercise, the Board was informed that as part of its work, the Car Parking Scrutiny Task Group had considered issues facing Blue Badge holders and there had been consultation with many representatives such as those from local Disabled User Groups. The scrutiny investigation was completed in March 2007 and there were two recommendations specifically relating to Blue Badge holders. In April 2007, the Cabinet decided not to approve the first recommendation and agreed to take no action with regard to removing car parking charges for the disabled. However, Cabinet did approve the second option put forward by Scrutiny which was to allow Blue Badge holders an additional hour of parking over and above the time for which they had paid. This was implemented in April 2008. Members of the Task Group reconvened for a Review Meeting with the Transport and Engineering Manager earlier this year in March 2008. The Task Group Chairman was Councillor G. N. Denaro who later became a Member of the Cabinet. (Please note: The scrutiny report can be found on the Council's website [www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/scrutiny) on the "Scrutiny Investigations" page.)

3.11 Following a discussion on this matter at the last meeting, the Board decided that it required further information to enable it to agree the best way forward. Therefore, it was agreed that Councillor G. N. Denaro (as Portfolio Holder for Finance and as the Member who led the car parking scrutiny investigation in 2007), Councillor Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths (as the Portfolio Holder for Street Scene and Community Safety) and the Transport Engineering Officer would be invited to attend the next Board Meeting. (However, due to Councillor Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths having a prior Council engagement, the Scrutiny Steering Board Chairman agreed that Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey would be invited to attend in her place as Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey was the relevant Portfolio Holder up until May 2008.)

3.12 To further assist the Board in making a decision, the Transport and Engineering Manager has compiled some relevant background information which is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

3.13 Members need to read the contents of this report and its appendices and after discussing the matter with those who have been invited to the meeting, decide how they wish to deal with this issue.

**4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

**5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

**6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

6.1 This report does not directly link to Council Objectives.

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 There is no risk, either negative or positive, directly associated with this report.

**8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no customer implications directly relating to this report. However, it should be pointed out that this issue has been raised by a local resident and customer of the Council and therefore Members should give careful consideration to this request.

**9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no implications directly relating to this report for the Council's Equalities and Diversity Policies. However, if this issue was considered further, Members would need to consider such implications.

**10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no Value for Money implications directly relating to this report.

**11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Procurement Issues – None
Personnel Implications – None

Governance/Performance Management – None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – None
Policy – None
Environmental – None

**12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

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

**13. WARDS AFFECTED**

All Wards.

**14. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Letter to the local paper from Mr. Leslie Irving

Appendix 2 – Background information on the subject provided by Mr. S. Martin, Transport and Engineering Manager.

Appendix 3 – Copy of Report to Cabinet on 12th May 2004

Appendix 4 – Draft Car Parking Policy

Appendix 5 – Training schedule

Appendix 6 – Copy of Annual Permit Application Form

**15. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

**CONTACT OFFICER**

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6th July 2008

To whom it may concern

The lack of care in the community is the hall mark of B.D.C. It is the only council within Worcestershire that charges Blue Badge holders to park on their car parks. All Wychavon pay and display car parks are free for Blue Badge holders. This covers Droitwich Broadway and Pershore. Even Worcester City Council where car parking is at a premium there is free car parking for two hours on short stay car parks and free all day on Long Stay car parks. Before my wife died she was wheel chair bound. I as her carer needed all the help I could get when parking the car and shopping. One extra burden in having to pay on site to park was a step too far. People in authority who have never been a carer must make it a point to find out the difficulties and stress the carers are under. This will make them better prepared when considering methods of parking fees. I contacted many other counties throughout the U.K. and with very few exceptions they were all free car parking to Blue Badge holders. The exceptions were usually seaside resorts with limited parking.

Leslie Irving (Vice-chairman. Older Peoples Forum )

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## **Scrutiny – Blue Badges**

1. My name is Steve Martin. I am employed by the Council as a Transport and Engineering Officer and have worked for the Council since March 2001. My responsibilities are currently management of the Council's concessionary fares policy, parking, and Shopmobility.
2. During my time in this post the Council has applied for and been accepted for membership of the British Parking Association. The Council has also held the chair of the Midland Parking Managers Group for over twelve months, and has currently held the post of secretary for over two years. The Shopmobility scheme has also been accepted as a member of the National Federation of Shopmobility UK since it opened.

### **Shopmobility**

3. I was the officer responsible for researching the requirements for the Shopmobility in Bromsgrove, which I then passed to a colleague to carry out the construction and management. When this colleague was made redundant, I then became responsible for the construction and operation of the facility.
4. Shopmobility allows the Council to loan equipment at no charge to any member of the public who has an impairment to their mobility. A common misconception is that all users of this service are blue badge holders, are old, and are severely disabled. This is untrue. Users can be of any age, have any type of impairment, and do not have to be blue badge holders. An example is the young boy with a broken leg who needs help getting around.
5. When I was briefed on the report which was required for Shopmobility, it was made clear to me that the preferred method of funding the Shopmobility was to introduce a charge for blue badge holders across all the pay and display car parks. I understand that this decision was taken on the basis that blue badge holders are assessed on their mobility and not their ability to pay. (A copy of the original Cabinet report is attached for information as appendix A.)
6. This was considered at the steering group meetings prior to the final report being drawn up. Although there was concern at the proposed introduction of charges in this manner, no alternative was put forward for funding the scheme. I recall that the feeling was that it would be better to have a Shopmobility and charges for blue badge holders than no Shopmobility and free parking for blue badge holders.
7. The Shopmobility was opened in November 2005. There was no budget for a member of staff to operate the scheme so the five staff of the parking section carried out this function. At this point charging for blue badge holders had not been introduced, and this was not carried out until May 2006. The original proposal was that the removal of the concession for blue badge holders would generate at least an additional £40k which would cover the running costs of the Shopmobility.

8. The impact on the customers of the scheme has been fantastic. Many customers have made it clear that this scheme has changed their life. The customers of Shopmobility tend to be the most severely disabled blue badge holders.
9. The knowledge gained by staff has also been very worthwhile. There is a common misconception that blue badge holders are somehow undeserving of this concession, particularly if at first sight they appear to be able to walk unaided. A number of customers of the Shopmobility have heart or lung problems which can slow them down, particularly after walking for short periods.
10. The charge for blue badge holders initially caused an outcry. But a budget request was made to improve notification of the change and an additional £20k was made available.
11. The £20k allowed us to provide spaces marked out to minimum standards, provide a sign at eye level indicating that blue badge holders were required to pay for each space for the disabled, and increase the number of spaces to the minimum requirement for all thirteen car parks.
12. The budget for operating Shopmobility is £16k per year. This means that parking budgets continue to make up the shortfall and have done so since it was opened.
13. Charging blue badge holders brings in an unknown amount of income. However as 6% of spaces are set aside for blue badge holders, it is reasonable to use this figure in estimations.
14. The cost of operating the Shopmobility is covered by income from charging blue badge holders.
15. In addition, there are a number of benefits to withdrawing the concession for blue badge holders.
16. The Local Government Agency believes that around 50% of blue badge use is "improper". This figure seems a bit on the high side to officers. The last large scale investigation officers can recall into blue badge abuse showed that around 35% of use was improper, and officers believe that this is a more accurate figure. Because Bromsgrove charges, abuse of this type is now mostly restricted to on-street use.
17. The removal of the concession also allows the Council to introduce different parking management systems. For example, pay on foot would allow the Council to meet the requirements of a number of traders and visitors to the town by employing a system which does not punish people for overstaying, and does not allow people to park without payment. The first step for Local Authorities in introducing this type of system is normally to remove the concession allowing free parking for blue badge holders.
18. It is often overlooked that Redditch does not have any Local Authority run car parks, but that the car parks which serve the town predominantly charge blue badge holders.

Therefore there are two Local Authority areas where blue badge holders are required to pay and not one as is normally quoted. The one exception is the car park serving the Shopmobility in Redditch where parking is free for blue badge holders.

19. It is important that this is considered because the campaign to reintroduce a concession for blue badge holders has stated that Bromsgrove is the only District where this charge applies. It isn't.
20. It is also widely reported that all blue badge holders are against paying for parking. Despite a number of complaints when the concession was first withdrawn from blue badge holders, a number of drivers commented that they were perfectly happy to pay for parking as long as the facilities were improved. The section did improve the facilities with the £20k that it was given, and we enforce against offenders who park in spaces for the disabled without apparent entitlement on a regular basis.
21. No-one reports a happy motorist or parker. The news stories about parking should be viewed in the context of the number of drivers who park without problems or issue.
22. Options for funding Shopmobility are limited. The options are;
  - Do nothing
  - Outsource the Shopmobility, possibly to a charity
  - Close the facility
23. The possibility of introducing a registration fee is not viable simply because of the scale of operation. This would mean that drivers would have to pay £135 per year for the service. Charging per visit would also be prohibitively expensive for customers.
24. Options for adjusting or removing the charges for blue badge holders are also limited. The options are;
  - Increase the parking fee for other drivers to compensate for the lost revenue
  - Introduce pay on foot and allow free parking only for users of the Shopmobility (ie those who have the biggest impairment to their mobility) as currently happens in Redditch
25. Any options for changing the current system should be carried out in full consultation of all car park users and not just separate groups. A recent limited survey of car park users found that three quarters of drivers would be happy to pay more to allow free parking for the disabled. In comparison, two thirds were against paying more to subsidise the elderly.
26. I believe it would benefit Members if they were able to visit the Shopmobility and gain first hand experience of the operation before making any recommendations.

#### **Enforcement**

27. The question asked is whether Civil Enforcement Officers use their discretion. The short answer is no they do not. Guidance from the Department for Transport (DfT) is clear that

discretion should be applied when considering appeals, but not at the point of issuing parking fines.

28. However, the training and ongoing management of the enforcement operation tries to install a level of common sense. For example, if a vehicle is parked with its wheels outside of a bay, but the area it is parked on would either not be causing an obstruction or it is not evident to other customers that a breach of the regulations is taking place, then I would not necessarily expect a parking fine to be issued. Similarly, if a vehicle is making a delivery to a premises which is accessed through the car park, and there is no other alternative for that vehicle to access these premises, and the driver is clearly active in unloading the vehicle, then again I would not necessarily expect an excess charge to be issued.
29. In the incident outlined in the question, the offender had parked displaying a blue badge but had not purchased a ticket. The responsibility for checking whether a concession applies to blue badge holders lies with the blue badge holder and not the Council. The Council has discharged its duty in ensuring that the regulations are clearly signposted. The wording used in the information given to blue badge holders is explicitly clear *"The Scheme does not apply in off-street car parks. However, some may provide spaces for disabled people. You should check the signs to see what concessions are available, and whether Blue Badge holders have to pay."*
30. It is difficult to imagine what level of "discretion" would be applied if an officer came across a vehicle displaying a blue badge but no ticket. Common sense would suggest that after applying the five minutes observation time, an officer should check whether anyone was still at the machines paying before issuing.
31. Another widely reported incident in the press was a blue badge holder who had received an excess charge after displaying an out of date blue badge. This was reported in the press as a vulnerable member of society who had a waiver for his out of date blue badge. The driver had been spoken to by the issuing officer who apparently had refused to accept his version of events and had booked him immediately anyway.
32. The truth of the matter is that the blue badge holder had refused to show the officer the waiver in question, repeatedly shouted at the officer, and stormed off shouting "well book me then." The officer in question applied common sense and rang the Customer Service Centre to see if we had issued any waivers. The answer came back that no, we hadn't. The officer was concerned that the blue badge holder had point blank refused to show him the waiver, and that there was no evidence to support his claims. He suspected that the blue badge was being use improperly and issued the excess charge.
33. It later transpires that the waiver only applied in Birmingham, and that the driver knew he was required to park in a standard bay when parking in Bromsgrove. Furthermore, it appears that he was a regular customer of the parking section and that this may not have been the first event of this type.

34. The occasions when officers have avoided the inappropriate issue of an excess charge notice are unlikely to come to the attention of the public and Members. An example is the 30 minute bays for the disabled on the School Drive car park. There have been a number of occasions where officers have noticed a car without a blue badge in these bays. On further investigation the driver has been present in the Customer Service Centre renewing their blue badge (which is still valid) and the officer has applied common sense and avoided issuing an excess charge. Good news stories about parking are not reported and situations like this are not widely known.
35. I believe it would benefit Members if they were able to patrol with an enforcement officer and gain first hand experience of the enforcement operation before making any recommendations.
36. The draft enforcement and appeals policy which the section currently adheres to is attached as appendix B. Also included is the training manual used to train Civil Enforcement Officers as appendix C.

#### **Consultation**

37. Disabled users are regularly consulted on their views at various meetings regarding parking by various officers within the Council There is a Disability Awareness Group which is regularly consulted on such matters.

#### **Permits**

38. Blue badge holders are able to buy permits as any other customer of the parking service is able to. A copy of the application form is included as appendix D to this briefing note.

#### **County Council Policy Notes**

39. It has been reported to me that the County Council have issued two draft parking policies, one of which states that parking for blue badge holders should be free across the County. I queried this with my colleagues from County as it is not for them to dictate to the District whether or not they charge blue badge holders. It transpires that the wrong document was sent out and the policy does not contain any such statement.
40. The decision on whether to charge blue badge holders is the right of the operator. No other body or agency has any right to impose conditions on operators who they can charge and when.

#### **The Appeals Process**

41. The appeals process is covered in great detail in appendix B. The current process is that the Transport and Engineering officer deals with all appeals within the guidelines detailed, and that subsequent appeals are dealt with by Kevin Hirons as General Manager Street Scene and Community , and then Mike Bell as Head of Service using the same guidelines.
42. In the preceding years the following numbers of appeals have been considered and accepted;

	No of Appeals Recd	No. of Appeals Accepted	Percentage
2007 / 2008	955	400	42%
2006 / 2007	943	403	43%
2005 / 2006	865	421	49%
2004 / 2005	1076	538	50%

43. It has also been suggested that an elected Member or panel of elected Members should consider appeals. This is not commonly carried out in the industry and would require training to be organised for Members, additional support from other areas of the Council, and also for a fixed meeting of at least 4 hours every week to be convened. There is currently no budget to support such work.

44. The following table details the reasons given for each appeal received in the year 2007/2008 and whether the appeal was accepted or rejected;

**Reason Given For Appeal**

**Total Rejected Accepted Reason for cancellation**

Reason Given For Appeal	Total	Rejected	Accepted	Reason for cancellation
Special Circumstances	155	55	100	Extreme cases accepted (ie appellant had medical condition etc)
Unaware It Was Pay And Display	116	115	1	Not generally considered a valid reason for appeal
No Reason	95	93	2	Appellant failed to specify a reason, but had a permit / badge / ticket etc
Unable To Return In Time	77	74	3	Not generally a valid reason for appeal except in medical emergencies
Ticket Fell Off Dashboard	74	2	72	Valid ticket produced, first offence
Pay and Display Equipment Faulty	63	54	9	Details checked and verified / discounted
Buying Ticket At Time	61	51	10	Valid ticket produced within reasonable amount of time, first offence
Ticket Was Displayed	58	10	48	Valid ticket produced which was displayed, first offence
Forgot To Display Blue Badge	52	7	45	Valid blue badge produced, first offence
Blue Badge Fell Off Dashboard	36	9	27	Produced a valid blue badge, first offence
Parking Attendant Error	33	3	30	Details checked and verified / discounted
Forgot To Display Ticket	26	6	20	Produced a valid ticket, first offence
Medical Emergency	16	14	2	Details checked and verified / discounted, first offence
Forgot To Renew Blue Badge	16	14	2	Exceptional circumstances only accepted, first offence
Forgot To Renew Permit	15	15	0	Exceptional circumstances only accepted, first offence
Valid Ticket	15	0	15	Details checked and verified / discounted, first offence
Not Causing An Obstruction	14	14	0	Generally not a valid reason for appeal
Blue Badge Was Displayed	6	3	3	Details checked and verified / discounted, first offence
Forgot To Display Permit	9	0	9	Valid permit produced, first offence
Unaware a fine was Issued	4	4	0	Photographic evidence proves a fine was issued.
Signage Was Inadequate/Incorrect	3	3	0	Not generally a valid reason for appeal
Council Administration Error	3	2	1	Details checked and verified / discounted
Vehicle Broken Down	3	3	0	Independent documentary evidence requested
Unaware Prices Had Increased	2	2	0	Discretion applied after price increases, first offence

Permit Was Displayed	2	2	0	Valid permit produced and appeal supported by photographic evidence
VDA	1	0	1	Driver left before ECN was correctly issued

45. Should the Council decide to adopt Civil Parking Enforcement it would be necessary to employ a member of staff to consider appeals. In Bromsgrove's case this would entail a transfer of duties from an existing post to meet this requirement. This officer would then deal with informal appeals and representations and would prepare cases for the consideration of the Traffic Penalty Tribunal which is an independent agency set up to consider parking appeals. This would allow the Council to consider appeals and provide an independent advisory service.
46. Although the current process could be open to question, the simple fact is that the figures given prove that there is a reasonable appeal process which allows drivers to debate excess charges. Although it can be difficult to remain objective when considering appeals, the parking section is duty bound to operate with integrity and honesty. It is worth noting that a number of appeals are received each year which are plainly dishonest. Indeed, some in the industry are of the opinion that it is seen as fair game to get away with parking fees and fines. The pay and display system, and the appeals process which is set up to deal with disagreements, encourages this attitude. Systems are available that reduce this problem such as pay on foot or pay on exit.
47. An example of such abuse of the system is described as follows: The appellant stated that they had recently arrived back in the country from a holiday and had no English change. The purpose of their visit was to take their son to see the doctor as he was ill, and this was the reason the driver had parked without payment. Obviously I was very concerned that this was a serious issue for the driver and felt inclined to cancel the excess charge.
48. On reading the attendants notes, it was apparent that the driver had racially abused the attendant, had made to run him over when leaving the car park, and had then picked his partner up from the local job centre. It was unclear if a child was present during the incident.
49. Whilst this is not a routine case and does not regularly happen, it has ensured that every case is considered wholly on its own merits and after consideration of all the available evidence from all parties concerned.

### Summary

50. The basis for charging blue badge holders has always been that a blue badge is issued on the basis of reduced mobility, and is in no way connected to the ability of the badge holder to pay.
51. The options for reversing the removal of the concession is limited by the revenue that blue badge holders contribute, and cannot be done without increasing prices for other drivers. This will probably put more drivers off visiting the town due to cost and reduce footfall.

52. The Shopmobility facility, which is funded by these charges, is a success story. Shopmobility is used by those drivers and residents who are likely to feel the effects of their mobility problems most keenly. I believe that the Council should be applauded for showing initiative in getting this scheme in place.

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE CABINET**

**12 MAY 2004**

**PROPOSED SHOPMOBILITY FACILITY**

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor C B Lanham
Responsible Head of Service	John J Moody, Head of Community Safety & Engineering

**1. SUMMARY**

This report considers the possible methods of operation and funding of a proposed shopmobility facility in Bromsgrove town.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the method of operation adopted for any shopmobility facility is as that laid out in section 6.2 by officers under the proposed methods of operation.
2. That the construction of any shopmobility facility is delayed until the building of a more accessible crossing over Market Street and the Spadesbourne Brook has been completed.
3. That officers investigate the possibility of a future partnership approach with other interested parties.
4. That the method of funding adopted for the operation of the shopmobility facility is as laid out in section 8.1, and the application of this method of funding is delayed until the shopmobility facility becomes operational.

**3. BACKGROUND**

A shopmobility facility would provide wheelchairs, powered wheelchairs, powered scooters, walking sticks, and zimmer frames for the mobility impaired. Anyone wishing to use the equipment would be required to register first, and to demonstrate that they are able to use the equipment safely. It is generally perceived that only the elderly or disabled make use of shopmobility – this is not necessarily the case as shopmobility units regularly loan equipment to short-term mobility impaired people, for example, people who have broken legs. The primary people using the proposed facility can be identified as the mobility-impaired. This can consist of the following subgroups; the elderly, the disabled, and the temporary mobility-impaired.

Provision of such a facility would have two main benefits. It would allow the mobility impaired access shops and services in Bromsgrove, and would also have a positive impact on the local economy. Research has shown that each shopmobility user spends on average between £30 and £50 per visit. Because of the lack of any historical data, it is not possible for any prediction to be made regarding usage, or possible levels of income to be generated. The Council is not currently in any competition to provide this service.

Officers have visited four shopmobility facilities in areas surrounding Bromsgrove District, and have drawn up detailed information regarding the operation and structure of each different facility. The following page details this information.

**MERRY HILL SHOPMOBILITY**

Hours of opening: 1000 – 2000 Monday to Wednesday  
1000 – 2100 Thursday and Friday  
0900 – 1900 Saturday  
1100 – 1700 Sunday

Funded by: Commercial (Centre Management Company)

Number of members: 2500+

Number of managers:	1	Number of Scooters:	16
Number of staff:	23	Number of Wheelchairs:	109
Number of volunteers:	0	Number of Powered Wheelchairs:	2

Notes: The operation is part of the information centre and travel shop.  
Tri-walkers are also provided for customers.

**REDDITCH SHOPMOBILITY**

Hours of opening: 0900 - 1700 Monday to Saturday

Funded by: Commercial (Kingfisher Centre Management Company), and also Local Authority (Redditch Borough Council)

Number of members: 3500+

Number of managers:	1	Number of Scooters:	40
Number of staff:	5	Number of Wheelchairs:	60
Number of volunteers:	0	Number of Powered Wheelchairs:	18

Notes: Walking sticks are also provided for customers.

**STRATFORD SHOPMOBILITY**

Hours of opening: 1000 – 1400 Monday  
1000 – 1600 Tuesday to Friday  
1000 – 1400 Saturday

Funded by: Local Authority (Stratford-on-Avon District Council) and charitable trust.

Number of members: 1254

Number of managers:	1	Number of Scooters:	8
Number of staff:	1	Number of Wheelchairs:	12
Number of volunteers:	0	Number of Powered Wheelchairs:	2

Notes: Tri-walkers, zimmer frames, and walking sticks are also provided for customers.

**SOLIHULL SHOPMOBILITY**

Hours of opening: 0930 – 1630 Monday to Saturday

Funded by: Charitable trust.

Number of members: 3000+

Number of managers:	1	Number of Scooters:	40
Number of staff:	3	Number of Wheelchairs:	32
Number of volunteers:	30	Number of Powered Wheelchairs:	9

Notes: There are two separate facilities, one in the town centre and one in the Touchwood centre.

There are three separate organisations that have been contacted asking for their views on such a proposal; these are Age Concern, Bromsgrove and District Action Group for Older People, and Bromsgrove and District Access Group. All three have responded positively, but there have been no direct offers of operational support in terms of staffing.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 Capital budget provision of £75 000 already exists for the construction of the facility, and there is a revenue budget provision for the start up of the service of £15 000. Financial options for the long term sustainability are considered in section 6 below.

#### **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1 In the event that the Council were to operate the facility, then it would be necessary to take reasonable steps to ensure that those people wishing to use the facility were able to do so safely, and had demonstrated this ability satisfactorily before using the equipment.

#### **6. Staffing Options**

- 6.1 There are four potential methods of staffing the facility, which are;
- 6.2 The Council funds the staff costs. This would provide certainty of cover and ensures a certain standard of service, but comes at a yearly cost to the Council.
- 6.3 The Council funds part of the staffing cover required, and the remainder of the staffing operation is funded and / or provided by a partnership organisation. This would ensure certainty of cover for part of the hours of operation, and reduces the costs to the Council. Other operators have expressed concerns about relying solely on volunteers, and this offers a compromise solution.
- 6.4 The operation is staffed solely by volunteers from a charitable organisation. This means that the responsibility for providing the operation lies with the charity, and also any cost implications. However, this may prove difficult and complicated to set up in the initial stages of operation.
- 6.5 The operation is staffed by shopmobility equipment providers who would be contracted to provide a minimum number of scooters for use by customers, but also use the facility as a retail outlet. Other shopmobility operators have expressed disquiet at this choice of operation as the retailer may try to pressure customers into buying equipment.
- 6.6 The option of running a commercial operation does not apply, as the Town Centre is not run by a commercial company.

#### **7. Proposed Method Of Operation**

- 7.1 Your officers believe that of the four models set out, the Stratford model is the most favourable method of operation for the following reasons;
- It would guarantee the operation of the facility for the first year, and avoid any potential for embarrassing periods of closure.
  - It could act as a pump-prime for any charitable investment or involvement, and perhaps lead to different method of funding as detailed above.
  - It would allow the Council to gauge usage figures, the amount donated by users, and whether the operation could be adequately funded by other means.

Disadvantages to the Council would be;

- The call on revenue costs would fall on the Council (although this could be off-set, this is dealt with in the funding section of this report).

Hours of operation would be 0900 -1700 Monday to Saturday, with one member of staff working five days per week, and one part time member of staff working one day per week and then covering any time off, such as staff holidays or absence.

An adequate mix of mobility aids has already been recommended as follows; 8 scooters, 2 power wheelchairs, and 12 manual wheelchairs. Scooters come in various sizes to support various weights of user, and the range supplied should include 6 average weight scooters, and 2 heavy weight scooters.

People wishing to use all forms of mobility aid are required to register first by filling in a simple questionnaire and providing proof of identity. People wishing to use scooters have to receive training prior to use, and also have to undergo a safety assessment as well. Forms for use by applicants are attached to the end of this report.

In order to guarantee that people wishing to use the facility can park nearby, separate parking provision solely for the use of shopmobility members must be made.

## 8. Funding

- 8.1 The cost of staffing the operation for one year would be around the £35 000 figure. The cost to the Council of permitting disabled badge holders to park for free is around £40 000 per year. This can be calculated by multiplying the current average revenue per space of £631 by the number of spaces for the disabled (53) plus the number who use other spaces for free (10), therefore this gives a figure of  $£631 \times (53 + 10) = £39 753$ . This proves that the cost of staffing the facility could in theory be offset directly by charging disabled persons to park. Many other Local Authorities do not offer free parking for disabled persons, such as Bournemouth, and Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council. The principle here is accessibility, and not the ability to pay.

The equipment can reasonably expected to last for five years, but there are maintenance costs involved which should be met by any donations made. The replacement of equipment should be prepared for in good time however, and the setting up of a registered charity (in conjunction with the consultation already proposed) that can apply for funding from diverse areas such as the national lottery should be seen as a matter of urgency.

Several companies have been contacted with a view to determining prices for providing the mobility equipment. Prices quoted for supply are generally far lower than those given out for members of the public. None of the companies were prepared to enter into a sponsorship arrangement where the equipment could be sponsored, although one company was prepared to operate the facility on our behalf.

## Background Papers

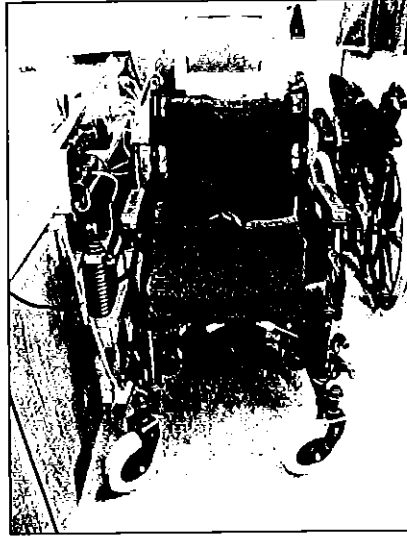
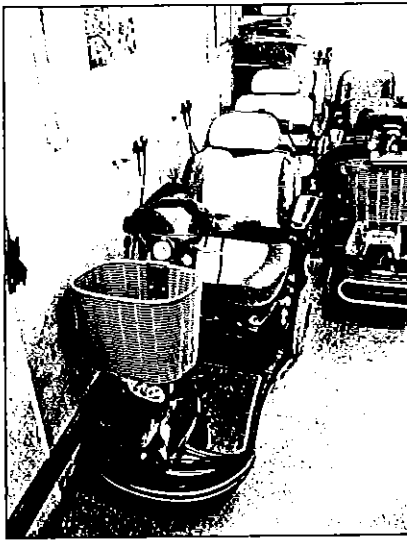
### Contact officer

Name: Steve Martin  
E Mail: steve.martin@bromsgrove.gov.uk  
Tel: (01527) 881457

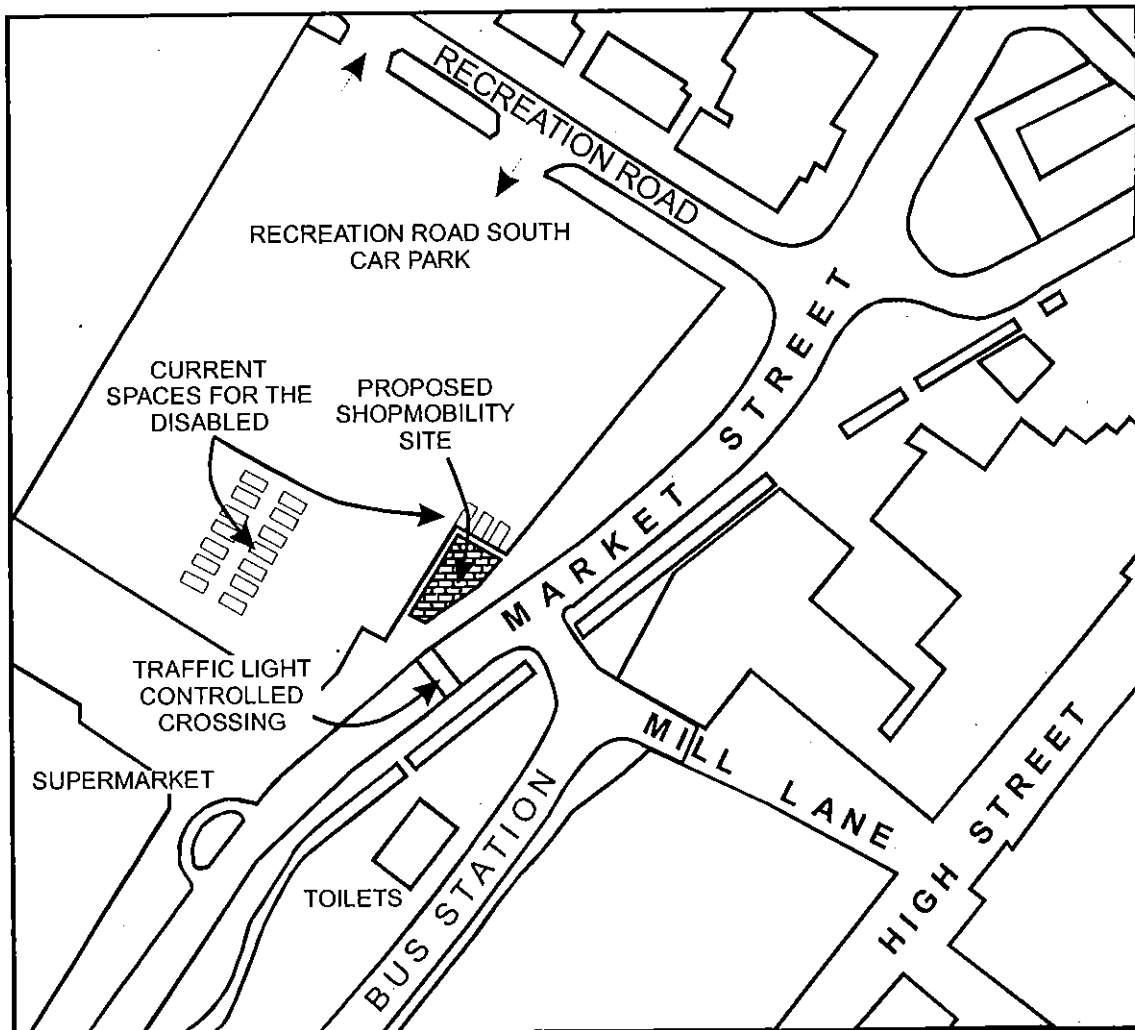
Powered Scooter

Powered Wheelchair

Folding Wheelchair



Proposed Location Of Facility





Bromsgrove District Council

Parking Enforcement

# Customer Charter and Procedures



**Bromsgrove**  
District Council  
[www.bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk)



## Contents

1. Introduction
2. Customer Charter
3. Civil Enforcement Officers (formerly Parking Attendants)
4. Appeals
5. Grounds For Making Representations
6. Payment of Parking Fines
7. Staff Conduct
8. Exemptions and Waivers
9. Enforcement
10. Suspected & Abandoned Vehicles
11. Clamping & Removal of Vehicles

# 1 Introduction

## **Message from the Chair of the Bromsgrove Parking Steering Group**

*“Parking is important. It provides us with access to local services and businesses, leisure activities and shopping. It is also a popular topic for discussion, and many people will have strong views on the subject.*

*The parking provided by the Council in the District is of a high standard. We have CCTV on all our pay and display car parks. Our standards of parking for drivers with a disability are possibly the best in the local area. The car parks are regularly swept and cleaned, are illuminated to a high standard, and are patrolled frequently by uniformed staff.*

*These standards come at a cost. The charges we make for using these car parks support the maintenance, upkeep, and cleanliness of the car parks. The charges also support other Council initiatives such as CCTV and Shopmobility scheme. These two services in particular have made a huge impact on the District, and without charging for parking the Council would have struggled to introduce or maintain either.*

*Most of our customers play fair and pay for their parking, or use the car parks in line with the terms and conditions of use. Those who do not are often subject to enforcement activity.*

*This document sets out the standards we require our officers to adopt. Our officers will always work by the standards of honesty, integrity, and transparency. This document provides our customers access to those standards, and is also used by the section for training purposes.*

*I am pleased to introduce the customer charter and procedures.”*

**Councillor Sherrey - Chair of the Bromsgrove Parking Steering Group**

The purpose of this document is to provide parking customers and staff clear and transparent information regarding the operation of the parking service. It will be used as a training document for all staff. It is also aimed at being a useful tool for customers of the service who wish to research the way that the parking service operates.

This document also sets out the standard of service that Bromsgrove Council expects to deliver to our customers.

It is intended that this document will be regularly maintained, and also that it will be jargon free.

## 2 Customer Charter

We strive to;

- Provide an efficient and courteous service
- Provide safe and user friendly parking areas complying with current parking regulations
- Make your safety and security a key factor
- Provide 24 hour CCTV coverage on all our car parks
- Provide uniformed staff patrolling during open hours
- Provide designated spaces for disabled drivers set out to current regulations
- Ensure that our parking areas are well lit, cleaned, and maintained
- Clearly display information about charges and where to pay
- Repair any equipment as soon as possible, keeping disruption to a minimum
- Remove graffiti within 5 working days of reporting
- Seek and listen to your views and ideas on how we may improve the service
- To monitor and compare ourselves to others

### 3 The Role of the Civil Enforcement Officer

The Civil Enforcement Officers employed by Bromsgrove District Council will cover the off-street car parking operated by the Council throughout the District. These officers will receive training which will enable them to respond to customer needs sensitively and also to carry out enforcement fairly and consistently.

Civil Enforcement Officers will often be the first or only point of contact for many customers of the service. Much of the time spent by Civil Enforcement Officers will be engaged in queries from members of the public, but most of their time will be spent in enforcement activity. They will also report back items for action not normally covered by Enforcement Officers, such as fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles, graffiti, and damage to street furniture.

The Enforcement Officers will also carry out the following routine duties;

- Checking signage, bins, lines and general cleanliness
- Ensuring pay and display machines are operational
- Ensuring pay and display machines are set to the correct time
- Ensuring that drivers have paid for, or are entitled to, their parking
- Ensuring that vehicles are parked within a designated parking bay and are not causing an obstruction.
- Ensuring that there are no obstructions or hazards to health and safety on any of the parking areas.

#### **Excess Charge Notices – Issuing Criteria**

Before an Excess Charge Notice is issued, the following must be considered by the Enforcement Officer;

- Checking that all signs, markings, and plates in the immediate area are visible.
- Checking that pay and display machines in the vicinity are operational
- Checking that the vehicle has not broken down
- Checking that the vehicle is not displaying a permit.
- Checking that the vehicle is not displaying anything (ie a blue badge) that would give dispensation in that instance
- Checking that the driver is not in the process of purchasing a ticket.

#### **Issue and Serving of Notices**


An excess charge notice may be issued at the time that the Civil Enforcement Officer believes that the motorist is committing an excess charge offence. The notice will either be affixed to the vehicle in an envelope or handed directly to the driver.

The excess charge notice will contain the following information;

- Registration number of the vehicle;
- Location of the vehicle;
- Date and time of the alleged contravention;
- The Civil Enforcement Officer issuing the excess charge notice
- Details of alleged contravention;

- Details of penalty payable;
- Instructions on how and where to pay;
- Instructions on how and when an appeal against the issue of the penalty may be made.

An example of the type of excess charge notice is included below:

Copy to Driver		<b>BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>		Excess Charge Number:
		<b><u>EXCESS CHARGE NOTICE</u></b>		ECN
<b>ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 DISTRICT COUNCIL OF BROMSGROVE (OFF-STREET PARKING PLACES) (VARIATION) ORDER 2008</b>				
To the driver of the vehicle, the registration number of which is: _____				
the above vehicle was observed in the _____ parking place				
at (time) _____ on (date) _____ 20 ____ by Civil Enforcement Officer No. ____ The vehicle (tick as applicable);				
<input type="checkbox"/> Did not have a valid ticket or permit displayed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Was not parked wholly in a designated bay.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Had a ticket which had expired at _____.	<input type="checkbox"/> Had a permit which had expired on _____.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded the maximum time allowed of _____.	<input type="checkbox"/> Was using a space for a purpose other than indicated.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Was parked in a space for the disabled without displaying a valid blue badge.	<input type="checkbox"/> Was being used for the sale of foodstuffs or other goods to persons in or near the car park.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded the maximum weight permitted.	Issued at (time): _____	VDA?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>IF YOU DO NOT PAY A REDUCED CHARGE OF £35 WITHIN 14 DAYS OF THE DATE OF ISSUE OF THIS NOTICE, THE CHARGE DUE WILL BE £70. FAILURE TO PAY MAY LEAD TO PROSECUTION. DO NOT PAY THE ATTENDANT. SEE THE REVERSE FOR DETAILS OF HOW TO PAY.</b>				
<b>IT IS AN OFFENCE UNDER SECTION 35A(1) OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 FOR THE DRIVER WHO HAS LEFT THE VEHICLE IN THIS PARKING PLACE TO FAIL TO PAY THE EXCESS CHARGE.</b>				

Wherever possible a pre-addressed envelope will be supplied with the excess charge notice. In cases where the excess charge notice is handed to the driver, this may not always be possible.

Any excess charge offence may require the civil enforcement officer to take photographic evidence (either in the form of stills or video footage) of the offence. This will allow the Council to;

- Provide evidence to support the issue of the excess charge notice in cases of dispute
- Provide evidence that the civil enforcement officer has acted correctly and within the current guidelines

Photographic evidence will solely be used for the considering of appeals and the recovery of any debts incurred.

## 4 Appeals

We aim to ensure that each letter of appeal is carefully and fully considered, and that the decision reached in relation to the appeal is clearly communicated. The reasons behind our decision will also be made clear.

All appeals must be received in writing which may be by email, letter, or on an official appeal form. This is as much for the benefit of the appellant as the Council, and is a clear record of the reasons for appeal.

Drivers are encouraged to appeal before the 14 working day limit for reduced payment has been breached. If an appeal is received after this time the full amount of the excess charge notice will be due.

We will endeavour to respond fully to any appeal within 10 working days.

The Council will contact the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) in order to ascertain who the registered keeper at the time of the excess charge notice was. If the driver fails to respond to the excess charge notice, then a letter will be sent to the registered keeper of the vehicle. This letter is known as a Notice to Owner (or NTO). The registered keeper will then have the opportunity to dispute the excess charge notice or make payment in full.

After 21 days the debt is formally recorded with the Council's accounting system. An invoice will be raised and sent to the debtor.

If no appeal is received, the debt is passed to our legal team for prosecution, and the cost of the excess charge notice may increase with administration fees being added to the cost, and additional charges may also apply if court appointed bailiffs are used.

Drivers may appeal on whatever grounds they wish, and all appeals will be considered on their own merits. However, officers dealing with appeals are required to observe the guidelines laid out in section 5.

A list of possible reasons that appeals may be accepted and also mitigating circumstances are included in section 5.

All appeals will be considered by the Notice Processing Office and the motorist informed of their decision within 10 working days on receipt of the appeal. Appeals must be received by the Notice Processing Office, and if possible should be on the appropriate form which is available online at [www.bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk).

In addition, a paper copy of the appeal form can be collected from;

Bromsgrove District Customer Service Centre  
School Drive  
Bromsgrove

If you do not have access to the internet and cannot visit the Service Centre, a simple statement in letter form will be adequate.

Completed appeal forms and letters of appeal can be returned to;

The Parking Office  
Bromsgrove District Council  
The Council House  
Burcot Lane  
BROMSGROVE  
B60 1AA

Email appeals can be sent to [appeals@bromsgrove.gov.uk](mailto:appeals@bromsgrove.gov.uk) – these will then be automatically forwarded to the relevant officers. Copies of any evidence pertaining to the appeal should be attached to the email. For example, if you wish to appeal on the basis that you own a blue badge, scan both sides of the blue badge and attach it to your email.

Regrettably the motorist does **not** currently have the right on an appeal being refused by the Notice Processing Office to take their appeal to the National Parking Adjudication Service. This is because the Council operates under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Drivers who are dissatisfied with the decision taken can refer the matter to the parking section again where the case will be reviewed by a senior officer. However, drivers should be aware that officers use the same criteria for considering appeals and these are included in section 5.

### **Registered Keepers Liability**

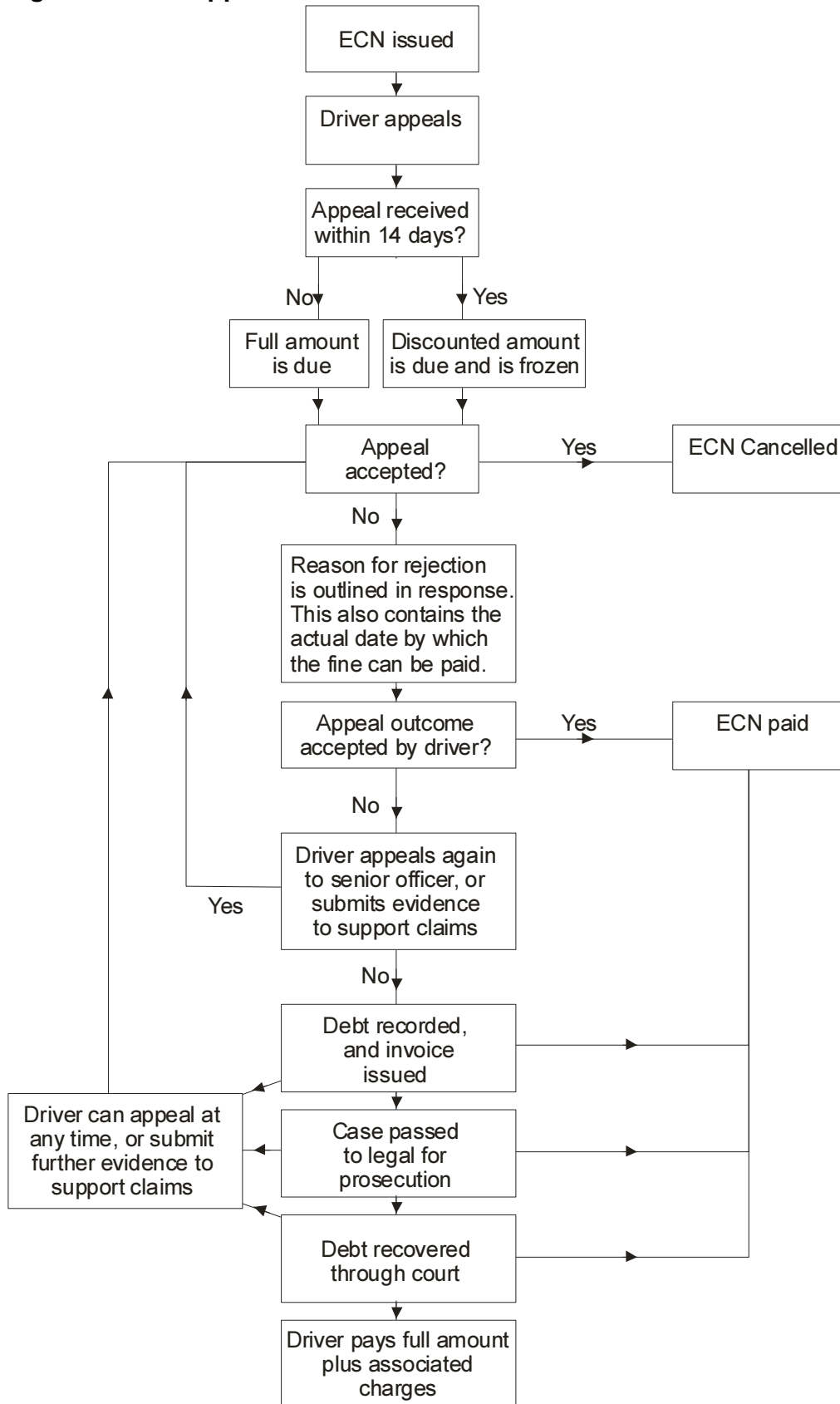
A number of appeals may be received on the grounds that the registered keeper was not in possession of the vehicle at the time of the offence. Although this may be the case, the registered keeper still has a responsibility to ensure that the vehicle is parked correctly and responsibly.

The registered keeper will still be liable for all excess charge notices issued.

All changes in keeper details must be forwarded to the DVLA by completing the relevant sections on the vehicle registration document. Where an excess charge notice is issued and a registered keeper is claiming to no longer own the vehicle and did not own the vehicle at the time of the alleged contravention, clear written evidence will need to be provided showing the precise date the vehicle was sold and the person to whom it was sold.

Hire vehicles are different in that although the hire company are the registered keepers of the vehicle, the paperwork signed by the hirer clearly transfers responsibility of such penalties to the driver.

**Figure 3 – The Appeals Process**



## 5 Grounds for Making Representations

There are no statutory grounds for appealing against excess charge notices. The following list details how the Council will approach appeals.

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S1 The contravention did not occur:</b>	
<b>S1.2 where the motorist claims that a parking pay &amp; display machine was faulty</b>	
<p>If service records confirm a fault or that the machine had been taken out of service at the time of the contravention.</p> <p>If there is reasonable doubt because evidence not available to confirm that a machine was working at the time (test ticket) and there was not another ticket machine nearby which was operating correctly</p>	<p>If there was another ticket machine nearby that was working correctly at the time.</p> <p>If there is no record of the machine being faulty or taken out of service.</p> <p>If there is reasonable doubt because evidence confirms that other visitors had been able to purchase tickets during the relevant period</p>

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S1.3 where motorist claims that the restriction is not clearly signed or marked</b>	
<p>If signs and/or markings are missing or unclear.</p> <p>If signs and markings are inconsistent with each other and/or Traffic Regulation Order or Car Parking Order.</p>	<p>If site visit records or photographs establish that signs and/or markings are correct and consistent with each other and the Traffic Regulation Order or Car Parking Order legislation.</p>

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S1.4 where motorist was carrying out building works</b>	
	In all other circumstances

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S1.5 where motorist claims that excess charge notice was not served (i.e. excess charge notice not found attached to the vehicle or handed to driver)</b>	
If the Civil Enforcement Officer's pocket book and/or computer notes confirm that the vehicle drove away before an excess charge notice could be served, i.e. excess charge notice not handed to the driver or fixed to the vehicle.	If the Civil Enforcement Officer's notes or photographs confirm that an excess charge notice was correctly served, i.e. handed to the motorist or fixed to their vehicle

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S1.6 where the motorist claims that their vehicle was not parked in the location at the time and on the date alleged on the excess charge notice which was issued</b>	
If the photographic, video, or any other evidence does <b>not</b> prove beyond any reasonable doubt that the vehicle was parked at the date, time and place of the contravention.	If the photographic, video, or any other evidence proves beyond any reasonable doubt that the vehicle was parked at the date, time and place of the contravention.

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S1.7 where motorist claims that a valid authorisation to park, had been issued</b>	
If records show that the motorist holds a valid authorisation to park.	If the motorist cannot provide a copy of the valid authorisation to park or if there is no record of any issue of the authorisation.  If the motorist did not park in accordance with the authorisation.

MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS	MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS
<b>S1.8 where the motorist claims that a pay &amp; display ticket was purchased and displayed</b>	
<p>If the motorist produces a Pay &amp; Display parking ticket that was valid at the time the excess charge notice was issued <i>and</i> the vehicle registration number matches that entered on the ticket <i>and</i> it is the first contravention of this kind.</p>	<p>If the motorist is unable to produce a valid pay &amp; display ticket, Or The motorist has made a similar representation before and had a previous excess charge notice cancelled, after giving them the benefit of the doubt Or The Civil Enforcement Officer noted that the motorist obtained their ticket from another motorist in the car park Or Where digits have been entered on the face of the ticket and do not match those of the motorist's vehicle registration, subject to some latitude being allowed for errors.</p>

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S2 The penalty exceeded the relevant amount</b>	
If the excess charge notice and/or notice to owner letter showed the incorrect amount of penalty charge, i.e. the wrong penalty charge band	If the excess charge notice or notice to owner showed the correct amount of penalty charge

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S3 The Parking / Traffic Order was invalid</b>	
If the Traffic Regulation Order or Car Parking Order which prescribes the restrictions that the vehicle was parked in contravention of was either not constructed correctly, i.e. is ultra vires, or was not made correctly, i.e. not consulted on properly.	The Traffic Regulation Order or Car Parking Order which prescribes the restrictions that the vehicle was parked in contravention of was constructed and made correctly.  If the motorist merely considers the restrictions to be unfair.

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S4 The motorist was not the owner/keeper of the vehicle at the time of the contravention:</b>	
<b>S4.1 where the current registered keeper claims that the vehicle was disposed of before the contravention occurred</b>	
<p>If the current registered keeper is able to provide proof that the vehicle was disposed of before the contravention, i.e. a bill of sale, registration documents, insurance documents or a letter from the DVLA; and/or</p> <p>If the current registered keeper is able to provide the full name and address of the person to whom they disposed of the vehicle.</p>	<p>If the current registered keeper is unable to prove that they disposed of the vehicle before the contravention or provide the full name and address of the person to whom they disposed of the vehicle.</p> <p>If the person named by the current registered keeper as the person to whom they disposed of the vehicle, either does not exist, cannot be traced or is for some other reason not considered to be bona fide the person named by the current registered keeper.</p>

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S4.2 where the current registered keeper claims that the vehicle was purchased after the contravention occurred</b>	
<p>If the current registered keeper is able to provide proof that the vehicle was purchased after the contravention, i.e. an invoice, registration documents, insurance documents or a letter from the DVLA; and/or</p> <p>If the current registered keeper is able to provide the full name and address of the person from whom they purchased the vehicle.</p>	<p>If the current registered keeper is unable to prove that they purchased the vehicle after the contravention or provide the name and address of the person from whom they bought the vehicle.</p> <p>If the person named by the current registered keeper as the person to whom they disposed of the vehicle, either does not exist, cannot be traced or is for some other reason not considered to be bona fide.</p>

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S4.3 where the current registered keeper claims that a contracted third party was responsible for the vehicle at the time of the contravention</b>	
Only when a hire agreement exists (see S6, below).	In all other circumstances because the registered keeper is always liable, including where the vehicle was left in the care of a garage.

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S4.4 where the motorist claims that they never owned the vehicle</b>	
If the DVLA confirm that the motorist was not the registered keeper at the time of the contravention.	<p>If the DVLA confirms that the motorist was the registered keeper of the vehicle at the time of the contravention.</p> <p>If the previous registered keeper provides proof that the motorist bought the vehicle before the contravention, or the subsequent registered keeper provides proof that the motorist sold the vehicle after the contravention.</p> <p>If the motorist is proven to have hired the vehicle for the day on which the contravention occurred and signed an agreement to take responsibility for excess charge notices incurred, subject to the time of hire (see policy S6, below).</p>

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S5 the vehicle had been taken without owner's consent S5.1 where the current registered keeper claims that the vehicle had been stolen</b>	
If the registered keeper provides a valid police crime report reference number.	If the current registered keeper is unable to provide any proof of theft.  If the police crime report reference number provided by the current registered keeper does not exist or it does not match the theft or date of the theft alleged.

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S5.2 where the current registered keeper claims that the vehicle was driven by a third party (i.e. a friend, relative or estranged partner)</b>	
In no circumstance	In all circumstances because the registered keeper is always liable, save for when a hire agreement exists (see policy S6, which follows).

<b>MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>S6 the owner is a hire company and have supplied the name of the hirer</b>	
<p>If the hire company are able to provide proof that the vehicle was hired at the time of the contravention, i.e. a signed agreement.</p> <p>If the hire company are able to provide the full name and address of the person to whom they hired the vehicle.</p>	<p>If the hire company are unable to prove that they hired out the vehicle on the date of the contravention or provide the name and address of the person to whom they hired the vehicle.</p> <p>If the person named by the hire company, without proof, either does not exist, cannot be traced or denies responsibility for the contravention.</p> <p>If the vehicle was being used as a courtesy car without an agreement signed to accept responsibility for excess charge notices issued.</p>

MAY ACCEPT REPRESENTATIONS	MAY REJECT REPRESENTATIONS
<b>S7 Any other information that the motorist / vehicle owner want the Council to take into consideration</b>	
	The decision whether or not an excess charge notice should be cancelled will only be taken following very careful consideration taking into account all of the evidence available.

## 6 Payment of Parking Fines

We will accept payment in a number of ways to make paying an excess charge notice easy. We will take action to recover any unpaid excess charge notices as they are regarded as a debt to the Council.

### Payment Facilities

It is the wish of the Council that all motorists are given a number of methods through which to pay the excess charge notice. The following payment methods will be allowed and administered by the Notice Processing Office:

- Cheque;
- Credit Cards;
- Debit Cards; and
- Cash.

Payments can be made by post (cheques only) by sending the payment to;

Bromsgrove District Council  
PO Box 7760  
BROMSGROVE  
B60 1BR

Cheques should be made payable to “Bromsgrove District Council”.

Payment by cash, cheque, or credit or debit card can be made in person at:

Bromsgrove District Customer Service Centre  
School Drive  
Bromsgrove

It is intended that in the future payment by credit or debit card can be made by phoning 01527 881474 and listening to and following the messages. This facility will be available at most times throughout the day everyday.

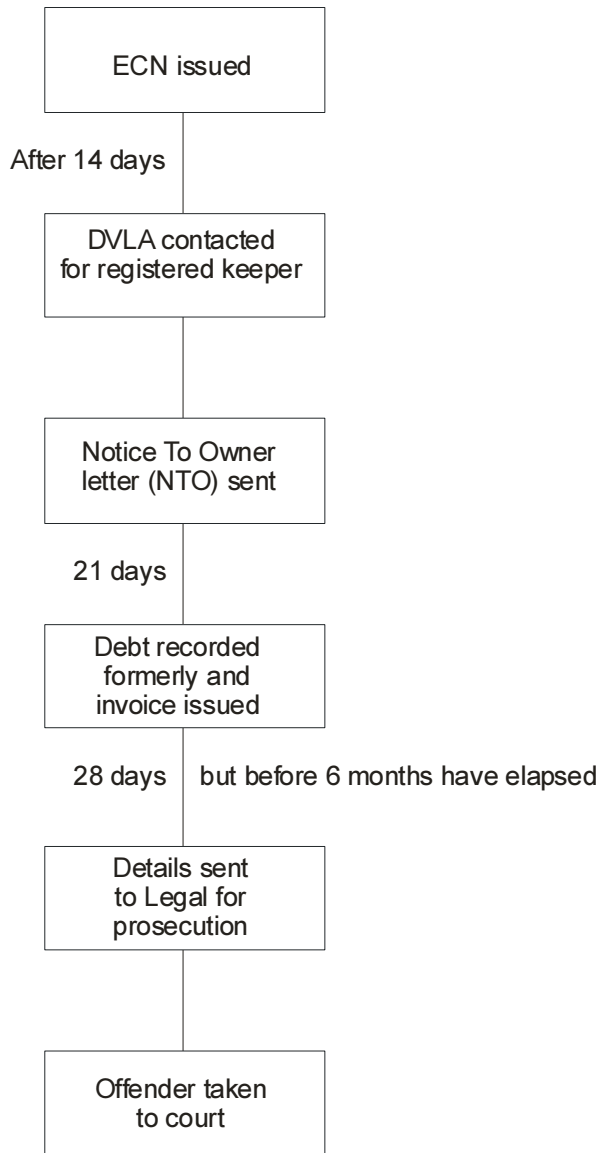
Payment by credit or debit card can be made by logging on to [www.bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk) and selecting the pay for it section. This facility is available at most times throughout the day everyday.

### The Issue of Excess Charge Notices

Once an excess charge notice has been issued, the registered keeper is offered a reduction for early payment of the charge. Once the prompt payment discount period, which is currently fourteen days, has passed, the debt owed doubles.

If the debt remains unpaid until after the case has been referred to County Court, the Council may add any additional costs incurred to the debt. Drivers should also be aware that the Court may appoint bailiffs to recover the debt.

The procedure detailed on the following page will be applied to excess charge notices.



## 7 Staff Conduct

Our staff will be highly trained to do their job well.

Bromsgrove District Council Civil Enforcement Officers will be easy to recognise in their green uniform.

All Bromsgrove District Council Civil Enforcement staff will treat customers with respect and expect to be treated in the same way.

### **Customer Care**

Bromsgrove District Council places a great emphasis upon customer care and operates principles aimed at maximising public relations. These principles will be embodied in operational procedures.

For example:

- A high standard for replying to correspondence has been set and will be maintained in line with customer care promises,
- Warning notices may be issued for certain contraventions; for example, a motorist holding a recently expired permit,
- All staff will work towards achieving a nationally recognised standard of competency and
- The use of corporate complaints procedures for the enforcements service embodying all the Council's standards.

### **Quality**

As part of the high standard that Bromsgrove District Council wishes to adopt, training will play a key role.

Along with the rigorous selection process in filling all Civil Enforcement Officers vacancies, an ongoing training and development programme will assist in the quality of service provided. Training of staff will also instil job satisfaction into our staff and encourage them to undertake their daily duties to the best of their abilities knowing they are fully supported by the Council.

Bromsgrove District Council will carry out training to high standards for Civil Enforcement Officers.

All new Civil Enforcement Officers will be required to work towards a nationally recognised assessment and certification.

### **Civil Enforcement Officer Uniforms**

Civil Enforcement Officer uniforms will be worn in accordance with national guidance. The design will incorporate the words "Civil Enforcement Officer" and "Parking Section" and will be easily distinguishable from police officers, etc. They will also have the name of the Council clearly displayed. The Attendants will carry a personal photo identity card. Personal radios and mobile phones will also be carried for the purpose of maintaining contact with the CCTV control room in order to request assistance and to alert the Police to incidents or issues requiring their attention.

### **Complaints against Civil Enforcement Officers**

In striving towards continual improvement in the service provided by Bromsgrove District Council's Parking Section, the Council complaints procedure will be adopted enabling members of the public, both motorist and non-motorists, to register a complaint against any Civil Enforcement Officer or member of staff connected to the Parking Section.

Complaints can be made in person at The Bromsgrove District Customer Service Centre. Alternatively, you can ring and request a form on 01527 881288, or download a form from [www.bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk) .

The Council aims to investigate the complaints and respond within 10 working days of receiving the official complaints form.

## 8 Exemptions and Waivers

The following vehicles are exempt from parking restrictions on Bromsgrove District Council parking areas;

- Police vehicles, Fire Brigade vehicles and Ambulances whilst attending emergency situations;
- Local authority vehicles being used to carry out their duties (such as: refuse collection, street cleansing, highway maintenance).
- Recovery vehicles attempting to recover vehicles which have broken down, providing they are acting in accordance with the instructions issued by Civil Enforcement Officers.

## 9 Enforcement

We will observe vehicles for the periods stated for different contraventions before issuing an excess charge notice.

We will endeavour to take photographic or video evidence to show the excess charge notice was correctly issued.

We will consider mitigating circumstances for all representations.

### **Observation Period Prior to Issue of Excess Charge Notice**

What is important about these procedures is that they represent a foundation upon which fairness and discretion can be applied. The importance of flexibility in these matters has been recognised by the courts and, as a consequence, decisions made by Bromsgrove District Council staff must not be fettered by being unduly formulaic.

The procedures address the following:

- Observation times for enforcement staff
- The statutory grounds upon which representations may be made
- Mitigating circumstances
- The acceptance or rejection of representations

It is important to recognise that each case will be considered on its own merits, matters of proportionality, objectivity, fairness and reasonableness should be paramount. These procedures will be subject to ongoing review.

Civil Enforcement Officers may allow a period to undertake and record observations for genuine attempts to park before they may issue an excess charge notice. The table on the next page shows the duration of some of the observation periods and the standard contravention code which applies to the excess charge notice. These codes are nationally used.

Code	Observation Time	Contravention
63	0 min	Parked with engine running where prohibited
80	0 min	Parked for longer than the maximum period permitted
81	0 min	Parked in a restricted area in a car park
82	10 min	Parked after the expiry of time paid for in a pay & display* car park
83	5 min	Parked in a pay & display** car park without clearly displaying a valid pay & display ticket
84	0 min	Parked with additional payment made to extend the stay beyond time first purchased
86	0 min	Parked beyond the bay markings
87	0 min	Parked in a disabled person's parking space without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge
91	0 min	Parked in an area not designated for that class of vehicle
92	0 min	Parked causing an obstruction
94	0 min	Parked in a pay & display car park without clearly displaying two valid pay and display tickets when required.
95	0 min	Parked in a parking place for a purpose other than the designated purpose for the parking place

An 'instant' excess charge notice may always be issued in circumstances where the Civil Enforcement Officer concerned has evidence, other than a period of observation, which supports the action of issuing the excess charge notice without observing the vehicle for the minimum periods indicated.

\* The ten minutes relates to the period which has elapsed from the time of expiry.

\*\* Visitors are not permitted time to obtain change away from the immediate area of the Pay & Display machine or car park. Civil Enforcement Officers should observe queues at ticket machines and/or pedestrians who may be seeking change or returning to the vehicle in question, before issuing an excess charge notice.

\*\*There is no free parking. The five minutes time period is solely for the observation of vehicles believed to be committing parking offences. All drivers entering the car park are required to park in a bay and purchase a ticket.

To ensure this observation period is followed by all Civil Enforcement Officers, the vehicle details can be noted when first seen. The officer does not need to stay with the vehicle during this observation period. All excess charge notices issued will contain the details of this observation period for the motorist to see.

## 10 Suspected Abandoned & Vandalised Vehicles

Instances will arise where a vehicle remains parked in a restricted area for a period of time accumulating a number of excess charge notices. There may be a number of reasons for this; one of which may be that the vehicle has been abandoned. If a Civil Enforcement Officer suspects the vehicle may have been abandoned, this should be reported.

It is often difficult to judge if a vehicle is in fact abandoned; especially with older vehicles. A Civil Enforcement Officer coming across a vehicle that has several excess charge notices and finds the vehicle is untaxed or the tax has expired, or that the vehicle is generally of poor condition, then there is a good chance the vehicle has been abandoned and should be reported accordingly.

Once a vehicle has been reported by the parking attendant as potentially being abandoned, no further excess charge notices will be issued. The excess charge notices already issued though will be enforced against the registered keeper in the usual manner.

### **Vandalised Vehicles**

All excess charge notices issued will be cancelled when a vehicle has been vandalised to such a degree that it prevents its safe removal. Written evidence will be required before such excess charge notices are cancelled.

Written evidence could include police crime reference details or motoring organisation/garages who have recovered the vehicle. The details contained within the Officer's pocket book will also be considered in assessing extent of any damage to the vehicle in question.

Excess charge notices will not be cancelled without the provision of such supporting evidence.

## 12 Clamping & Removal of Vehicles

### **Clamping**

Bromsgrove District Council does not intend to introduce the use of clamping.

### **Removal**

Bromsgrove District Council does remove vehicles if that vehicle has incurred a number of excess charge notices *and* it is believed that these excess charges remain unpaid *and* the vehicle is committing another excess charge offence. The Council intends to attempt to contact drivers prior to removing vehicles wherever possible. However, this may not always be possible.

The Council will be sensitive to public needs, and responsive to the requirements of those whose vehicles have been removed. The Council will release removed vehicle only when the excess charge notices and associated charges have been paid. It does not intend to remove vehicles as a matter of routine.

### **Document Control**

This is version 1.0, written 18/01/2008.

Bromsgrove District Council  
Civil Enforcement Officer Training and Development Manual

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I am a Civil Enforcement Officer.

I am an Ambassador for the Council, my colleagues, and the team. This is reflected in my standards of dress and behaviour.

I endeavour to ensure that our service is available to our customers at all times.

I will endeavour to ensure that our customers are able to use the service free from any preventable risks or hazards.

I will ensure fairness and equality for all customers by taking enforcement action, in line with my training and guidelines, against offending drivers.

I will support my colleagues during times of confrontation.

I act with politeness, respect, and authority.

*(Please do not sign until training is complete)*

Signed..... Civil Enforcement Officer

Signed..... Transport and Engineering Officer



## **Off-Street Parking in Bromsgrove District**

There are thirteen car parks operated by Bromsgrove District Council accounting for approximately 1470 spaces. Eleven of these are pay and display car parks whilst those in Alvechurch and Catshill are free.

The pay and display car parks are located in the town of Bromsgrove. Ten of these are within the town centre itself, whilst the Station car park is located at the end of New Road.

The Council does not currently enforce on-street restrictions. This is carried out by the police.

Each car park has a number of spaces marked out to the same standard. These normally measure 2.4 by 4.8 metres. Contrary to many drivers' beliefs, the size of these bays is constant across all the car parks.

Each car park has generally the same type of information in it. For example, at each entrance there is a notice board with information for the motorist. Additionally, there will be at least one tariff board adjacent to a pay and display machine. Spaces for drivers with a blue badge are designated with a hatched area around the bay highlighted in yellow with a blue background and an appropriate symbol on the ground. There are also signs at eye level indicating that the space is solely for blue badge holders.

Some car parks contain parent and child spaces. There is currently no provision for enforcing against drivers abusing these spaces, although this is likely to be amended in due course.

The Station car park incorporates spaces which are prohibited except for drivers waiting for 20 minutes or less. These are located directly next to the platform for drivers picking up or dropping off, and around the top of the road for visitors to local businesses.

School Drive car park also incorporates spaces where drivers are able to drop off at the Dolphin Centre, or wait for up to 30 minutes if using the Customer Service Centre.

In addition, there are three spaces on Churchfields Multi Storey car park which are solely for the use of Shopmobility customers when open.

The system currently used for paying for parking is pay and display. Drivers are required to enter the last three digits of their registration numbers, input their

money, and then press the green ticket issue button. A ticket is then produced which is displayed face up on the dashboard.

Some drivers aged 60 or over may be in possession of concessionary parking permits. These permits allow drivers to park on any car park. Additionally, there are other permits available which allow parking on specific car parks, or only on long stay car parks.

Emergency vehicles attending an emergency are exempt from purchasing tickets, as are local authority vehicles carrying out their duties. All other drivers who have entered the car park are expected to buy a ticket or display a permit.

The cost of maintaining these car parks is huge. The parking section carries out monthly health and safety inspections which then in turn generate orders for work for either Council staff or contractors to carry out. Each car park is well illuminated to beyond a minimum specification and each pay and display car park is covered by CCTV.

The revenue generated by parking also supports initiatives such as CCTV in the District. Prior to the introduction of CCTV, there were up to six criminal acts per week on one car park alone. After CCTV was provided, this number has dropped to less than six criminal acts per year.

The concession allowing free parking for blue badge holders was removed in May 2006. This was done so that the additional revenue created would allow the building and operation of a Shopmobility facility in the town.

The Council generates around £1.3 million from car parking per year, and the majority of this revenue is spent on maintenance and supporting the CCTV and Shopmobility facilities.

The primary responsibility for the parking section is to ensure that customers are able to pay for their parking, and to take enforcement action against drivers committing excess charge offences.

Bromsgrove District Council  
Civil Enforcement Officer Training and Development Manual

The following map shows the locations of the main town centre car parks along with the machine numbers.



## **Standards - Uniform**

Civil Enforcement Officers are required to wear a uniform as part of their duties. This will consist of;

Trousers  
Shirts  
Sweater  
Fleece jacket  
Raincoat  
Over trousers  
Clip on tie or cravat  
Epaulettes  
Boots or shoes  
Hat

The uniform must be clean and ironed with shoes clean and polished. Additional items of uniform, such as gloves, scarves, and bags for storing items will also be available although if requested. There is currently no mandatory requirement to wear the hats provided, although you may not wear any other sort.

Epaulettes and ties must be worn at all times unless otherwise indicated by your line manager. In addition to the above uniform, you will be supplied with an ID badge which will carry your CEO number but not your name. You are required to carry this badge at all times when on duty and present it if challenged.

You will also be issued with and asked to sign for other items of equipment such as watches, torches, cameras, bags, pouches, keys, batteries and memory cards. You are required to keep these in good order, although reasonable wear and tear is to be expected.

## **Standards – Code of Conduct**

You should always be courteous and helpful when dealing with members of the public. Deal with complaints as quickly as possible in accordance with set procedures and in a courteous and sympathetic way.

You must by law take reasonable care of the health and safety of yourself and other people, including your colleagues, who may be affected by anything you do at work.

You will receive basic health and safety training as part of your induction.

Your consumption of alcohol, if any, must not at any time impair the level or quality of your work or cause a hazard to the health and safety of yourself, members of the public or colleagues. You should not consume alcohol in public whilst wearing your uniform.

Full details of the staff code of conduct are available on the Council intranet.

## **Standards – Sickness and Other Absence**

If you are reporting sick you must do so personally by telephone with your line manager. You will be given Steve's personal mobile number to ring if you need to call in sick, and you can ring him at any time if he is not off sick or on annual leave. This is a private number – do not give it to anyone else.

If Steve is off, please ring Kevin, and if Kevin is unavailable please ring Mike.

	<b>Mobile</b>	<b>Private</b>
<b>Steve Martin</b>	<b>07850918996</b>	<b>XXXXXXXXX</b>
<b>Kevin Hiron</b>	<b>07771611921</b>	
<b>Mike Bell</b>	<b>07770223427</b>	

Record these numbers in your mobile phone(s) now.

You should always call in person and speak directly to the relevant person, and should **not** leave a message or attempt to communicate any absence by text or email.

A condensed version of the sickness absence reporting policy is provided with this folder, and the full policy is available on the intranet.

If you are going to be late for a shift, or are absent from work when on duty for any reason, you are required to ring your line manager as soon as possible and let them know. It is extremely important that you do not compromise yourself by being absent from work when you are supposed to be on duty.

Rotas are drawn up well in advance of the actual hours being worked. If you wish to change a shift, please consult with your colleagues to see if shifts can be swapped before consulting your line manager. The shift times entered on the rota should be adhered to at all times, although there may be a few minutes flexibility to allow for finishing off certain tasks or activities.

## **Standards – Other Items**

### **Mileage and Overtime Claims**

These should be submitted to your line manager at the end of every calendar month. Both types of claim form are available from your line manager.

In general terms, Civil Enforcement Officers should carry out their duties on foot. Visits to remote car parks such as Bromsgrove Station, Catshill, and Alvechurch will require the use of a vehicle as walking to these car parks may take some time and wear out shoe leather. Bromsgrove Station should be visited everyday, but Catshill and Alvechurch car parks should only ever be visited if explicitly requested by your line manager.

Overtime claims showing each Civil Enforcement Officer's hours should be submitted to your line manager. Officers are entitled to time and a half after 1900, whilst Sunday and Bank holiday working attracts double time.

Bank holidays and weekends are considered normal working days in every other respect. Floating days and Bank Holidays are added to your annual leave entitlement at the start of the year.

### **Access to Council Email and Council Internet**

Officers may access their email accounts and the Council intranet provided use is limited to 10 minutes at either the start of or end of a daily shift. Additional sparing use can be made outside of your published shift patterns.

There is to be no use of the internet-enabled computer by parking attendants while Shopmobility is open for business unless that officer is specifically covering Shopmobility.

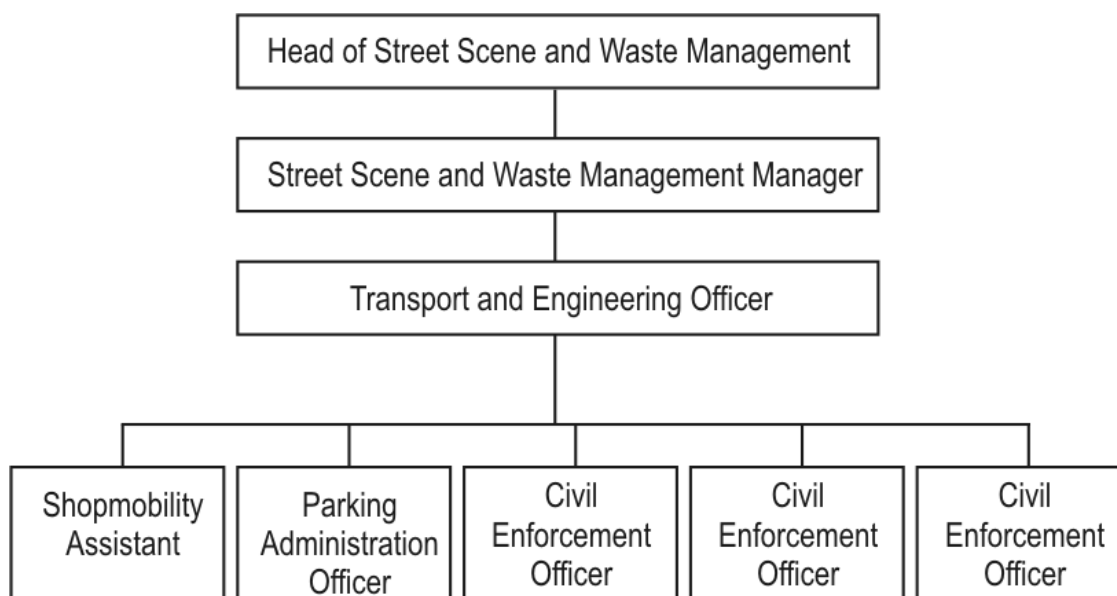
This is a local enhancement to the corporate policy. A copy of the full policy is available on the Council intranet.

### **Shopmobility**

Officers from the parking section are guests of the Shopmobility office. Please take care to keep the place neat and tidy by clearing up after yourself, cleaning mugs, emptying bins etc.

## Line Management

The line management structure follows;



If you have any queries regarding any aspect of the parking section, or the way the Council operates, please refer them to your line manager. If your line manager is unavailable through absence and the issue is important, please refer to the next line manager.

As well as being employed to manage the section and service, your line management is also there to offer support and guidance. If you are ever unsure of what action to take, or need guidance on a particular matter, then please ring your line manager.

## Probationary Period

Your first six months of employment are on a probationary basis. This gives the Council an opportunity to assess your suitability for the post, and conversely gives you the opportunity to establish whether the post is suitable for you. All Civil Enforcement Officers are required to fill in weekly summary sheets as part of their duties. Your performance will be monitored at all times, and during your probationary period you will be given regular feedback, support, and further training at regular meetings.

## Training and Retraining

Training is an ongoing process. You will be required to take a short test following your induction, and then at regular intervals. You will also be given brief refresher training every six months.

## Parking

You will be issued a parking permit for use in the course of your duties. As you will see from the terms and conditions issued with the permit, this is solely for use when at work. If you are using the car parks in your own time, you are required to purchase a ticket.

Additionally, you should always park properly when using Council car parks.

We set the standard for our customers to follow.

I have received training in the standards section of the Civil Enforcement Officers handbook.

*(Please do not sign until training is complete)*

Signed..... Civil Enforcement Officer

Signed..... Transport and Engineering Officer

Dated.....

## **Pay and Display Machinery**

The Council sells over 1.4 million tickets per year. The busiest car park will sell over 10000 tickets per week at peak times, whilst the quietest long stay car park will sell less than 200 tickets per week.

There are 29 Metric pay and display machines on the pay and display car parks, these machines are known as Metric Accents. The machine below has two inserts which give details on how to use the machines, the tariff charged, what to do if the machine isn't working etc.



Drivers wishing to use the machine have to carry out the following procedure;

1. Enter the last three digits of their registration number.
2. Enter coins to the required value.
3. Check the coins have registered on the display.
4. Press the ticket issue button.
5. Take the ticket and display it on the dashboard of the car.

The reason the facility to enter the registration details of the car was introduced was to combat ticket swapping, which was rife.

If the driver is unable to use the machine, they are instructed to use another. Drivers who lose money, or are unable to buy a ticket at all, are instructed to contact the Council on 01527 881457. It is important that drivers use this procedure and no other – failure to do so may result in their request for a refund or appeal against an excess charge notice being rejected.

When trying to fix these machines, please treat them with respect. You should not have to force anything if trying to fix it, and try and avoid getting the interior wet.

## Checking Machines

Every time an officer enters a car park, they are required to produce a test ticket from all machines and check that the coin mechanism is not blocked. In addition, the first officer on duty is required to check that the number of tickets in that machine is enough for the whole day, and that the time on the machine is correct.

Again, one of the primary functions of the role is to ensure that machines are available for our customers. Therefore we need to ensure that they are working for the maximum amount of time. If a machine runs out of tickets, it stops functioning. If a machine becomes blocked with change, it stops functioning. The purpose of these checks is to find faults as quickly as possible, and then to address them as quickly as possible.

The procedure for checking the machine is;

1. Check the coin slot is free from any obstruction.
2. Open the machine, and type "A581" on the internal keypad.
3. Pocket the test ticket which is produced and hand it in later.
4. Type in three digits on the external keypad.
5. Drop a coin or token in the coin slot and make sure it registers.
6. Reject the coin or token and pick it up.
7. If the coin validator is jammed, follow the procedure listed later in this document.
8. Recheck with the coin or token.

The first officer on duty should also check these;

9. Check the number of tickets is adequate for the whole day.
10. Check the time is correct.
11. If the time is incorrect, type in "A101" and adjust the time as required.
12. Close the machine.

The three LEDs next to the display on the machine show its current state. Observe the machine with its door shut. A flashing green light indicates that everything is okay. A flashing green and yellow light indicates that there is a problem somewhere that requires investigation, but it is not terminal. A flashing red light and a message "not in use" indicate that the machine has a major fault and needs immediate attention.

To find out the current state of the machine, type in A540 on the internal keypad. This will list the current problems or faults on the display.

When leaving a machine it should display a flashing green light.

## Downloading

The machines record a great deal of information regarding which tickets are sold at what times and days (although they do not record the registration number of the vehicle) and this information is stored on a chip. This chip has a relatively small capacity, and therefore the information on the chip has to be removed by the use of a Psion hand held device on a regular basis. This is currently done on a Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

The process for downloading is as follows;

1. Open the pay and display machine.
2. Switch on the Psion handheld.
3. Plug the handheld in to the socket.
4. Type in "A020" on the interior keypad.
5. Type "B" and then enter to disable the protocol.
6. Type "5" followed by "1" and then "1" on the Psion handheld.
7. Wait until the information has been downloaded.
8. Switch off the Psion.
9. Type in "A020" on the interior keypad.
10. Type "B" and then enter to enable the protocol.
11. Shut the machine.

On returning the unit to Shopmobility, the information needs to be transferred to the computer.

The process to follow is;

1. Switch on the PC and ensure that the Metric stats icon with the green triangle is running in the system tray.
2. Plug in the Psion.
3. Switch on the Psion.
4. Type in "5", "1" and "2".
5. If you get a message warning that the information has already been sent, press "Y".
6. Wait until the information has been sent.
7. Switch off the handheld and replace it in the cradle.
8. Switch off the PC.

If you have any problems downloading please contact your line manager immediately. If the information from the machines is not downloaded, the memory fills up until it is full. At this point the machines fail!

It is also important that the protocol is reset after downloading. The protocol referred disables the power saving functions for the machine. Failing to restart it causes more power to be used.

The Psion needs to be docked at all times on the recharging cradle in Shopmobility.

## Changing Tickets

Every time a magazine of tickets is loaded into the machine, it is necessary to reprogramme the machine with the correct number of tickets. A magazine of single issue tickets contains 5000, whilst a magazine of double issue tickets contains 3000.

The pay and display machines on School Drive and Dolphin Centre car parks are the only ones currently using double issue tickets.

The procedure for changing tickets is;

1. Open the printer by pulling the latch nut towards you.
2. Ensure that all the old tickets are used or removed from the mechanism.
3. Take a box of tickets and hold up the first strip of tickets.
4. Hold the box so that the blank strip is facing away from you.
5. Insert the tickets into the mechanism until they stop.
6. Turn the dial on the side of the mechanism until the tickets engage.
7. Align the tickets with the cutting mechanism and place the box in the machine.
8. Type "A302" on the internal keypad and set the number of tickets to 5000 (single issue) or 3000 (double issue).
9. Take the test ticket and keep with the others for handing in at the end of your shift.
10. Close the door and ensure the machine is working (i.e. either observe a customer buying a ticket or check as per your procedures).

## **Cleaning the Printer**

Cleaning is normally required every six months or so, but busier machines may require cleaning prior to this. When checking machines, look for faded tickets or inconsistent burn (patchy printing). These are indications that cleaning is required.

1. Switch the machine off.
2. Open the printer.
3. Remove the ticket stock from the printer.
4. Using a small brush carefully clean all dust from the printer mechanism.
5. Using a suitable cleaning fluid, carefully clean the thermal head and the ticket drive roller. This is done by gently rubbing a small quantity of the liquid over both areas, and then gently rubbing the cleaned area with a dry part of the cloth.
6. Re-install the tickets.
7. Close the printer.
8. Issue a test ticket.

## **Common Faults - No ticket is produced**

Are tickets loaded?

If not, load a fresh magazine.

Are the tickets loaded correctly?

If not, ensure the hole is to the left, and the blank thermal side facing up.

Are the tickets jammed?

If so;

1. Open the printer
2. Remove the ticket stock
3. Check for and carefully remove any debris
4. Check and if necessary clean the thermal print head and roller.
5. Reload the ticket stock ensuring the first ticket is undamaged.
6. Close the printer.
7. Obtain a test ticket.

Do you get a “synch fail” message after typing “A540” on the internal keypad?

If so;

1. Ensure that the machine is switched on and the ticket stock is loaded.
2. Press and hold the switch to the right of the ribbon cable on the PCB – this will turn on a green LED.
3. Release the switch.
4. A string of blank tickets will be cut, followed by a string of printed tickets. The printer will continue issuing up to 100 individual test tickets if not stopped. After approximately 10 tickets have been produced, terminate the process by repressing the switch.
5. Switch the machine off and then on.
6. Reconfirm the burn time and adjust if necessary (type “A311” on the internal keypad).

In all other cases, report the fault to Metric as detailed in the fault reporting section.

## **Common Faults – Ticket Print Not Legible**

Clean the printer as previously described in this manual, and then change the burn time by typing “A311” on the internal keypad.

If this does not work, report the fault to Metric as detailed in the fault reporting section.

## **Common Faults – “Not in Use” Displayed**

Type in “A540” on the internal keypad for an indication of the fault.

If the fault says “Coin box full” ring Steve Martin immediately.

If the fault does not appear to be any of the other faults listed in this manual, report the fault to Metric.

## **Common Faults - No Money is accepted**

Are all the connections to the money system secure?

Is there debris in the coin slot?

If yes;

1. Switch the machine off.
2. Slide the money system forwards.
3. Remove the validator.
4. Push the solenoid plunger to the rear until latched.
5. Using a suitable tool carefully endeavour to release the blockage by pushing the tool into the coin entry.
6. If this fails to release the obstruction, release the solenoid plunger. Using a suitable tool, carefully try and dislodge the obstruction from the rear gate.
7. Replace the validator.
8. Switch the machine on.
9. Insert a coin or token to ensure that the coin path is clear.

Is there money lodged in the upper part of the system?

1. Switch the machine off.
2. Slide the money system forward.
3. Open the validator.
4. Carefully remove the jammed coins.
5. Close the validator.
6. Slide the money system back into place.
7. Switch the machine back on.

Is there money lodged in the lower part of the system?

1. Switch the machine off.
2. Slide the money system forwards.
3. Remove the validator by carefully unplugging the three connectors.

4. Disengage the money system from the side rails by lifting the front of the unit upwards and forwards. Please note that the unit is now free to drop, so keep hold of it.
5. Release the validator securing catch, positioned above the internal keypad, and whilst holding the catch open push the validator towards the top. When the validator is angled at approximately 45 degrees lift it upwards clear of the housing.
6. Open the validator by turning the screw so that the slot is horizontal. Ensure the screw is loose before attempting to open the door.
7. Invert the validator whilst holding the door open and carefully tap the unit on the palm of your hand. This should release coins trapped in the lower part of the unit.
8. Reassembly is the reverse of the process listed above.

In all other cases, report the fault to Metric as detailed in the fault reporting section.

## **Fault Reporting**

In the event that a machine is broken down and cannot be fixed by a member of the team, Metric will be called to fix the machine. In this instance a small self adhesive not must be pressed over the coin slot so that customers cannot use the machine. We do not use, or permit to be used by a third party, any other method of indicating that the machine is out of order.

The procedure for fault reporting is;

1. Try to fix the machine, but find that you cannot.
2. Affix a "this machine is out of order sign" across the coin slot of the machine.
3. Whilst you are still stood at the machine, ring Metric on 01793 647873 and report the machine as faulty giving as much detail as possible.
4. Record the help desk number in your notebook along with the machine number, time, and nature of the fault.
5. Record the fault on the white board in Shopmobility along with the time and date of the fault.

It is important that all officers follow this procedure exactly as laid out here. There have been occasions where officers have forgotten to report machines as faulty for over four days. As one of the primary functions of the role is to ensure that machines are available for our customers, we need to report them as quickly as is possible.

## Function Codes

- A020 Disable and enable protocol
- A100 Set the date
- A101 Set the time
- A102 Set date to advance clock by one hour
- A103 Set date to retard clock by one hour
- A300 Set tickets low level alert
- A302 Set number of tickets loaded in machine
- A311 Set burn time for printer
- A540 Display machine status
- A543 Print status event history
- A581 Print test ticket

I have received training in the Pay and Display Machinery section of the Civil Enforcement Officers handbook.

*(Please do not sign until training is complete)*

Signed..... Civil Enforcement Officer

Signed..... Transport and Engineering Officer

Dated.....

## **Health and Safety Reporting**

As part of your normal day to day duties, you are required to ensure that our customers are able to use the car parks free from any preventable hazards. This may range from a piece of timber lying on the ground which requires to removal to a damaged height barrier hanging down and flapping in the breeze.

Officers should not touch anything that they have not had Council training to deal with such as hypodermic needles, broken glass, etc etc.

The following list details the items which officers should be checking during a Health and Safety survey, and gives an indication of the type of problems which indicate a hazard. This list is not exhaustive! If you see something which you believe constitutes a hazard and which you feel you cannot deal with, ring your line manager straight away.

Health and Safety surveys should be conducted during quiet periods when there is little or no traffic about. This allows officers to view more of the car park and any potential hazards. The item of concern should be noted with a number on the plan, and the item detailed in the space below the plan. This survey is the used to prepare works orders to clear the problems.

The survey should be completed by a trained member of staff every month. The Council is obliged to do this for insurance purposes. If something still needs to be listed even if it has been previously mentioned, then record it again.

## **Surface**

The surface of the car park should be free from obvious trip hazards. Trip hazards are defined as being 25mm or more in size. Trip hazards can occur naturally in tarmac surfaces, but are far more likely to form around joins with other surfaces or materials. For example, manhole covers or drains often have areas of surface failure around them.

General wear and tear of the surface of less than 25mm which is significant should also be recorded on the survey.

A build up of foliage, moss, deposits, or mud should also be reported as this can cause a slip hazard.

Additionally, the top surfaces of the multi storage car parks should be checked during cold conditions (i.e. October through March inclusive) to see if ice has

formed. If it has, use surveyor tape to cordon the top two levels off and prevent use.

Curb stones should also be checked to see that they are correctly laid and are firmly fixed to the surface.

## **Signs**

All signs in the car park should be checked.

Check that the signs are securely fixed and will not move or give.

Check that signs are free from damage.

Check that the signs are clean and free from graffiti. If the sign is within reach, graffiti should be removed on the same day.

Check that signs are not liable to cause a cutting hazard. The signs for blue badge holders are encompassed in a steel tube to prevent this. However, some smaller signs (such as at the entrance or exit) should be placed above 2.3 metres to prevent injury.

Check that signs are the correct way round. For example, a sign saying "Have you paid and displayed?" should face into the car park.

## **Barriers**

Check that the barrier is secured into its locked position.

Check that any chain or cable is also secured and not able to move about freely.

Check the padlock functions adequately.

Check that the height barrier has a clear sign depicting the height displayed.

Check that the barrier is free from rust that would cause or start to cause any failure through corrosion.

## **Pay and Display Machines**

Check the machine is free from graffiti or obvious damage. Graffiti should be removed as soon as it is found.

Check that the machine is securely fastened to the ground. Rocking back and forth is an indication that the machine is properly set.

Check the vault door and surrounding casement for any obvious signs of drilling or cutting.

Check that the area around the coin slot is free from any build up of adhesive. Again, this should be removed as soon as it is discovered.

## **Lamp Post Protectors and Lamp Posts**

Check both items to see if they are securely fixed.  
Check both items for obvious signs of impact damage.  
Check both items are free from rust that would cause or start to cause any failure through corrosion.

### **Foliage**

Check that foliage does not overhang the area of the car park. This can cause scratches to vehicles.  
Check that foliage is not growing where the surface and curb or wall meet. This can eventually cause damage to the surface.

### **Surface Lining**

Lining should be visible. If it is faded so that it is not immediately apparent, report it.

### **Lifts**

At the start of each shift, ensure that the lifts are both working.

The procedure for lowering the lifts in the event that someone has become trapped:

### **Graffiti**

Graffiti which can be reached should be removed using the graffiti stored in Shopmobility. This should be done as soon as possible on the day of discovery. If the graffiti is too stubborn or cannot be safely reached, report it straight away to your line manager.

We have made a commitment to removing graffiti within five working days of discovery, so it is important that it is removed as soon as possible.

Bromsgrove District Council  
Civil Enforcement Officer Training and Development Manual

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I have received training in the Pay Health and Safety Reporting section of the Civil Enforcement Officers handbook.

*(Please do not sign until training is complete)*

Signed..... Civil Enforcement Officer

Signed..... Transport and Engineering Officer

Dated.....

## **Enforcement**

Why do we have enforcement?

In the first instance consider the drivers who fail to buy tickets. The parking section brought in £1 050 000 from pay and display ticket sales alone in 2007/2008. According to our latest research, this figure is based on 85% compliance, i.e. 85% of people using the car parks paid for their parking.

Without any form of enforcement, the 85% figure would be far lower. According to colleagues who worked here when pay and display was first introduced, a compliance rating of 15% was given. A similar rate of compliance now would result in an income of £185 000.

In the second instance consider the drivers who fail to return in a reasonable amount of time after the ticket has expired. There is no information to back this up this, but a similar problem to the above would occur if drivers were aware they could “get away with it.”

In the instance of parking outside of a designated bay, the car parks are laid out in a specific manner so that traffic can move freely. Therefore, parking anywhere other than in a designated bay will cause an obstruction, and enforcement will discourage drivers from committing an offence.

For drivers parking and slightly obstructing an adjacent bay, this is one of the biggest causes of complaint from our customers. In some circumstances, it will also depress revenue.

Where drivers who are not blue badge holders use spaces for the disabled, this is unacceptable. Blue badges are issued to persons with limited mobility, and this entitles them to park in spaces for the disabled. Anyone who does not have a blue badge is simply not entitled to park in these spaces. This offence is the one that we as officers receive the most complaints about. We have a duty to enforce effectively against this problem.

A commercial vehicle which exceeds 1.5 tonnes unladen weight is also committing an offence. The car parks are designed for the use of cars! Use by vehicles heavier than cars causes damage. The three manhole covers in front of the Asda store on Recreation Road South were damaged by Asda delivery vehicles repeatedly using this car park (this explains why the height barriers are there). This damage cost thousands of pounds to repair.

Drivers who ignore time limits are also enforced against. The bays allowing up to twenty minutes parking at the top of the Station car park are specifically provided

for drivers wishing to visit the local shops and businesses. They are not there for drivers wishing to park all day. Similarly, the spaces outside the Customer Service Centre on School Drive are provided for drivers wishing to park for up to 30 minutes without payment. After the thirty minutes are up, they are required to leave these bays.

Without enforcement of the preceding two cases there would be abuse of these bays.

If the offender is present when the excess charge is issued, it is Council policy to give them the opportunity to comply with the car parking order. For example, if you come across someone parked outside a parking bay, you should ask them to park correctly and then purchase a ticket. In the event that they do not comply, you should issue an excess charge notice. The only times that you are may not approach an offender is if they are abusing the spaces in School Drive which are for customers visiting the Dolphin Centre or the Customer Service Centre.

Similarly, if someone is parked up in a bay and they are not displaying a ticket, then they should be asked to purchase a ticket. If they fail to comply then you should issue an excess charge. There are no circumstances where anyone who is parked without payment, and who does not comply with requests to pay or leave, should not be given an excess charge.

If in doubt, or you feel to issue an excess charge would be dangerous, withdraw a safe distance from the offender and telephone your line manager **immediately**.

Our standards of enforcement are detailed in the following pages. We also work to our charter and procedures, a copy of which is provided in this folder.

## Use of Cameras

Cameras are provided to record the offence being committed. Photographs are taken of every offence. Not only does this provide evidence at a later date, it also shows why an excess charge has been issued. These photographs can only be used by the parking section for enforcement.

The following sequence of photographs shows the pictures taken of a car driver who has failed to buy a ticket. This sequence is ideal showing one of the vehicle in place, two of either side of the dashboard, and one of the excess charge notice stuck to the vehicle.

The following sequence shows a driver who has left their vehicle overhanging the twenty minute bays at Bromsgrove Station. The first shot proves the offence was committed, the second allows us to confirm the time of arrival from the ticket purchased, and the third shows the excess charge notice in place with the registration number of the vehicle clearly shown.

The first photograph shows how not to do it. The shadow of the person taking the photo obscures the view. The following two photos show the correct method for taking these types of photo.

### **Use of Notebooks**

Notebooks are used to record when, where, and what.

Ideally the first entry of the shift should be the date and time, and if you are using your car, the mileage.

When you enter a car park and observe a vehicle with no ticket, you should note the time, the registration number, and the fact that no ticket is displayed.

If you speak to a driver, you should also make notes of your conversation. In particular, you should do this when confrontation has occurred, and your notes should be as detailed as possible.

You should also record faults with pay and display machines, and any call reference numbers that are given to you.

An example of a real notebook entry is given below;

*05/02/2008 07:45 5000*

*XXXXXX at 08:32 Aston Road*

*Asked not to park on footpath – driver complied.*

*Machine 24 reject button u/s at 13:20 – machine righted itself after restarting.*

*13:23 Spoke to driver of XXXXXX on Hanover Street. Requested to move vehicle and to park in a bay and buy a ticket. Passenger returned and vehicle left car park.*

*13:25 Spoke to driver of XXXXXX parked outside Bromsgrove Parking and Bedding Warehouse – asked driver to move which he did.*


Notebooks are used in assessing appeals, to gather intelligence, and to provide evidence in times of dispute. They are invaluable.

Bromsgrove District Council  
Civil Enforcement Officer Training and Development Manual

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### Excess Charge Notices

Excess charge notice booklets are controlled stationary. You are required to sign for them, and to look after them. Do not lose any of your excess charge notices!

Copy to Driver	 <b>BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b> <b>EXCESS CHARGE NOTICE</b>	Excess Charge Number: <b>ECN</b>
<b>ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 DISTRICT COUNCIL OF BROMSGROVE (OFF-STREET PARKING PLACES) (VARIATION) ORDER 2008</b>		
To the driver of the vehicle, the registration number of which is: _____		
the above vehicle was observed in the _____ parking place		
at (time) _____ on (date) _____ 20 ____ by Civil Enforcement Officer No. ____ The vehicle (tick as applicable);		
<input type="checkbox"/> Did not have a valid ticket or permit displayed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Was not parked wholly in a designated bay.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Had a ticket which had expired at _____.	<input type="checkbox"/> Had a permit which had expired on _____.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded the maximum time allowed of _____.	<input type="checkbox"/> Was using a space for a purpose other than indicated.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Was parked in a space for the disabled without displaying a valid blue badge.	<input type="checkbox"/> Was being used for the sale of foodstuffs or other goods to persons in or near the car park.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded the maximum weight permitted.	Issued at (time): _____ VDA? <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>IF YOU DO NOT PAY A REDUCED CHARGE OF £35 WITHIN 14 DAYS OF THE DATE OF ISSUE OF THIS NOTICE, THE CHARGE DUE WILL BE £70. FAILURE TO PAY MAY LEAD TO PROSECUTION. DO NOT PAY THE ATTENDANT. SEE THE REVERSE FOR DETAILS OF HOW TO PAY.</b>		
<b>IT IS AN OFFENCE UNDER SECTION 35A(1) OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 FOR THE DRIVER WHO HAS LEFT THE VEHICLE IN THIS PARKING PLACE TO FAIL TO PAY THE EXCESS CHARGE.</b>		

If you make a mistake when issuing an excess charge notice, then put two lines across the excess charge and write “cancel – PA error” on the excess charge. The excess charge should be handed in with your other excess charges. The number of excess charges cancelled by PA error is monitored by your line manager and the audit section. PA errors should be recorded on your weekly summary sheet.

Once you have started issuing an excess charge, you should complete it.

You should not encourage drivers to go and purchase a ticket to attempt to avoid payment of the excess charge.

If the excess charge has been issued and affixed to the vehicle, you are not permitted to remove or cancel it. In this instance, the driver should be encouraged to appeal.

Drivers who happen to be employed by the Council should not be treated any differently from other members of the public when using the car parks, and staff displaying a staff badge in lieu on any means of payment or permit should be issued an excess charge notice. All members of staff have been notified that it is a disciplinary matter if they use their ID cards in this way.

Civil Enforcement Officers should always have one spare booklet of excess charge notices in reserve. Completed excess charge notices should be placed in the relevant box in Shopmobility along with your test tickets. The last shift of the week should also include your summary sheet. A summary sheet details what you have achieved in the preceding week, and allows you to record the number of PA errors committed. You will also record any non-enforcement activity (such as training, meetings, etc) on this sheet.

### **Did Not Have a Valid Ticket or Permit Displayed**

Check the dashboard for a ticket / permit

Check the corners of the dashboard and any areas that may be obscured by supports or tax discs.

Check the dashboard from the opposite side of the car to ensure that any blind spots have not been missed.

Check the foot wells and seats to ensure a ticket has not been displaced.

Check the entire windscreen from both sides to ensure that no permit is displayed.

Check the side windows to ensure that the driver has not put the ticket in the wrong place.

If a permit is displayed, ensure that the number plate matches the one on the permit.

If a ticket is displayed, ensure that the number plate matches the one on the ticket.

Record the initial time of observation of the vehicle in your notebook.

Allow five minutes to elapse.

Issue an excess charge.

Take a photograph which clearly shows the registration number of the vehicle.

Take a photograph showing one side of the dashboard.

Take another showing the other side of the dashboard.

Issue the excess charge, place it in the excess charge holder, and affix it to the windscreen underneath a wiper (this prevents it being blown off).

Take a picture that shows the excess charge affixed to the vehicle along with the number plate.

#### **Notes;**

- When making notes when the driver is present, it is necessary to withdraw to a safe distance before making notes in your notebook.
- The offender may be seated in the vehicle and claim that someone has gone for change. If the person returns and the vehicle then leaves the car park issue an ECN and mark it VDA.
- The observation period is there to avoid any misunderstanding. Consistency of enforcement is essential.

**Had a Ticket Which Had Expired at .....**

**Had a Permit Which Had Expired on .....**

Check the rest of the dashboard to ensure that a valid ticket / permit is definitely not being displayed.

This also includes permits where the registration number does not match the vehicle it is being displayed upon.

Ensure that ten minutes have elapsed since the ticket expired. Expired permits do not have any additional time allowed.

Take a photograph of the vehicle from the front (or rear) clearly showing the number plate.

Take a photograph of the expired ticket / permit.

Take a photograph of the dashboard from each side of the vehicle ensuring that you cover every possible area.

When issuing the excess charge, record the serial number of the expired ticket / permit on the bottom copy of the ECN.

Issue the excess charge, place it in the excess charge holder, and affix it to the windscreen underneath a wiper (this prevents it being blown off).

Take a photograph showing that the excess charge is in place.

**Notes;**

- The ten minutes observation time is there to try and avoid problems when issuing to expired ticket holders. Consistency of enforcement is essential.

### **Was Not Parked Wholly Within a Designated Bay**

No observation time is to be given – issue immediately.

Issue the excess charge, place it in the excess charge holder, and affix it to the windscreen underneath a wiper (this prevents it being blown off).

Take a photograph which shows the number plate, that the vehicle is not parked in a prescribed position, and that an excess charge has been issued.

If it is possible to combine all three in one photograph, then please do so.

Notes;

- Vehicles hanging over another bay are also covered by this offence.
- Normally you should not issue unless there is clear tarmac between the white line and the inside of the wheel. However, if you receive complaints or the vehicle overhangs you may still issue.

### **Vehicles Parked in a Space for the Disabled with No Blue Badge Displayed**

Check the dashboard for a valid badge.

Check the dashboard from the opposite side of the car to ensure that any blind spots have not been missed.

Check the foot wells and seats to ensure that a badge has not been displaced.

Check the sun visors.

Take a photograph of the vehicle from the front (or rear) showing the number plate.

Take a photograph of the dashboard from each side of the vehicle ensuring that you cover every possible area.

Issue the excess charge, place it in the excess charge holder, and affix it to the windscreen underneath a wiper (this prevents it being blown off).

Take a photograph of the excess charge notice in place with the number plate in picture, and also evidence that the car is parked in a space for the disabled.

Notes;

- No drivers other than blue badge holders may use these bays – do not allow anybody else to do so. Contractors should be encouraged to park elsewhere.
- Tax discs which display the word “disabled” are not used by us in enforcement and should be ignored.

### **Being Used for the Sale of Goods or Services**

Issue the excess charge, place it in the excess charge holder, and affix it to the windscreen underneath a wiper (this prevents it being blown off).  
Take a photograph which shows the number plate, that the vehicle is being used for the sale of goods or services, and that an excess charge has been issued.  
If it is possible to combine all three in one photograph, then please do so.

Notes;

- It is normally rare to issue these. The driver is normally present and will therefore be asked to leave.

**Exceeded the Maximum Time Allowed of .....**

Note the first time of observation. This may be direct observation, or the time of purchase of a ticket, or a notification from another member of staff.

Note the second time of observation. If this exceeds the maximum time permitted, issue an excess charge.

Issue the excess charge, place it in the excess charge holder, and affix it to the windscreen underneath a wiper (this prevents it being blown off).

Take a photograph which shows the number plate, the location of the vehicle, and that an excess charge has been issued.

Notes;

- There are three car parks which have a five hour limit, these are Recreation Road South, Parkside, and New Road.
- Windsor Street car park has a two hour limit.
- There are spaces on School Drive which are limited to 30 minutes or less parking.
- There are spaces on the Station car park which are limited to 20 minutes or less waiting.
- These spaces are provided for specific purposes. Consistency of enforcement is essential.

### **Was Using a Space for a Purpose Other Than Indicated**

Observe the driver using the space for a purpose other than indicated.  
Issue the excess charge, place it in the excess charge holder, and affix it to the windscreen underneath a wiper (this prevents it being blown off).  
Take a photograph which shows the number plate, the location of the vehicle, and that an excess charge has been issued.

Notes;

- In this circumstance, officers do not have to approach the offender and attempt to resolve the situation.

### **Exceeded the Maximum Weight Permitted**

Observe the vehicle.

If the vehicle is not being used for loading and unloading, or there are alternative arrangements for unloading which the driver has ignored, issue an excess charge.

Issue the excess charge, place it in the excess charge holder, and affix it to the windscreen underneath a wiper (this prevents it being blown off).

Take a photograph which shows the number plate, the location of the vehicle, and that an excess charge has been issued.

Notes;

- In this circumstance it is likely that the driver may have settled down for the night.

### **Persistent Evaders and Offenders**

Drivers who consistently behave in such a way so that they avoid payment are known as persistent evaders. An example of this may be a driver who parks and drops someone off to collect some shopping without buying a ticket. If the person is known to you as a persistent evader, you may act accordingly. For example, you may not apply any observation time. You may be aware that the driver is already aware of the terms and conditions of use of the car parks.

Persistent offenders are drivers who have committed three or more excess charge offences. Again, if the person is known to you as a persistent offender, you may act accordingly.

It is important that you record why you have acted differently in your notebook.

You may also be given additional intelligence regarding vehicles or persons driving vehicles. Please note this down and follow any instructions that you are given. For example, it may necessary to remove a particular car. This will involve you calling the contractor to come and remove the vehicle.

Bromsgrove District Council does not currently clamp vehicles.

## **Confrontation**

An unfortunate aspect of the role is the level of abuse directed to officers discharging their duties. When writing out excess charge notices, remain aware of the likely direction of threat and position yourself so that you keep your eyes in that direction. Stand in an area which is protected and where you are not vulnerable. Remember that vehicles can and are used as weapons. Do not stand in front of a vehicle that is moving or is likely to start moving, particularly if the driver has just been issued with an excess charge notice.

When approaching offenders, keep a suitable barrier between yourself and the driver – i.e. approach from the passenger side. Do not allow yourself to drift out of code yellow! Be aware of potential threats and their likely direction. The way that we behave and act as officers has a direct impact on our vulnerability.

Officers should be aware that their safety is of paramount importance to the Council, and should not place themselves in danger. In the event of physical violence or verbal abuse being offered, officers should immediately attempt to notify CCTV and instruct them to call the police. Such circumstances are rare, but attendants need to be prepared for them. In the event that you are in immediate need of back up, press the orange button on your radio.

Officers should also be aware that their own behaviour has a direct impact on the behaviour of the person that they are talking to. In general terms, if you become angry and shout, then the person you are talking to will respond in the same manner.

There are warning signs that an individual will almost certainly display when they are unhappy, and on recognising these attempts can then be made to diffuse the problem.

The warning signs are;

**Foot or finger tapping**

**Prolonged eye contact**

**Large movements**

**Standing tall with head back**

One step on from warning signs are danger signs - these are indicators that a person is beginning to lose control. If you miss them there is a chance that you will be injured, so it is extremely important that you do not miss them.

The danger signs are;

**Fist clenching**

**Lips tightening over teeth**

**Hands raised above the waist**

**Lowering of the body**

To avoid this situation, use de-escalation skills to calm the person down. Use soft relaxed tones, actively listen to what is being said, and listen to everything that they have to say, show empathy with their problem. You can also use assertiveness to indicate the offensive or unacceptable nature of their behaviour, and then give them the options which are available to them.

Always remember where your escape routes are, and take measures to protect them.

**If the choice is between being hit, hitting your attacker, or withdrawing, then you should withdraw.**

### **Lost Money**

There is currently no system for the refund of money lost in pay and display machines. The current system is to attempt to attend and see what has caused the problem. This is because a number of requests for refunds are caused by operator error.

For example, some drivers may forget to press the ticket issue button. This means that the money is held in the money system and is released after a couple of minutes, normally when the driver has left the machine. The next driver therefore profits from the previous drivers mistake, and the Council doesn't physically have the money to give back.

### **Appeals**

Drivers who have been issued with an excess charge have the right to appeal. Appeals are covered in great detail in our charter and procedures, a copy of which is provided in this folder. Discussions with drivers regarding appeals should not extend past the advice that a driver has the right to appeal. Business cards with your line manager's details are available for you to hand out.

### **Radios**

Radios are your panic buttons. You must carry a radio with you at all times when on duty. Remember anyone standing next to a radio can hear you speak, so remain professional when using them.

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# Annual and Quarterly Parking Permit Application Form

If you have any enquiries relating to this application, please call the Bromsgrove District Customer Service Centre on 01527 881288.



**bromsgrove council**

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

Please complete this form in block capital letters;

Title	<input type="text"/>	First Name	<input type="text"/>		
Surname	<input type="text"/>				
Address	<input type="text"/>				
Address	<input type="text"/>			Post Code	<input type="text"/>
Telephone No.	<input type="text"/>				
Vehicle registration details		<input type="text"/>			
Make and model of the vehicle		<input type="text"/>			
Type of permit required?	Valid in all long stay car parks only	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annual (£300)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quarterly (£75)
	Valid in Stourbridge Road Only	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annual (£200)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quarterly (£50)
	Valid in Churchfields Only	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annual (£200)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quarterly (£50)

**The following must be enclosed with this application:**

Any payment required. Cheques should be made payable to 'Bromsgrove District Council' and should be crossed 'Account Payee Only'. If you wish to receive a pro forma invoice please state so when applying.

Please note that long stay annual and quarterly permits are only valid on long stay car parks, which are defined as those where an all day ticket can be purchased.

**How To Apply**

To apply by post, send this form and any associated documents to:

Bromsgrove District Council  
The Council House  
Burcot Lane  
BROMSGROVE  
Worcestershire  
B60 1AA

To apply in person, please bring this form and any associated documents to:

Bromsgrove District Service Centre  
School Drive  
BROMSGROVE  
Worcestershire

**Declaration**

I declare that all information I have entered onto this form is correct. I certify that I have read and understood the terms and conditions of use.

Signed

Dated

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

**2ND SEPTEMBER 2008**

**RECOMMENDATION TRACKER**

This report lists all scrutiny recommendations approved by Cabinet with information on: who will be progressing the approved recommendations; when the recommendations are expected to be implemented by; and any officer comments which might be useful to the Scrutiny Steering Board. The recommendations are grouped by Task Group.

All general recommendations made by the Scrutiny Steering Board are also listed when applicable.

General Recommendations made by the Scrutiny Steering Board on: 22nd May 2008

<b>*Rec. No.</b>	<b>Detail of Recommendation</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Implementation to take place by</b>	<b>Tick if completed</b>	<b>Officer Comments</b>
N/A	The Cabinet request that the Performance Management Board considers a report on concessionary parking for over 60s once six months worth of data has been compiled (as requested by a member of the public, Mr. Bateman).	Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services	2nd July 2008 – Cabinet & 15th July 2008 – PMB	✓	The Cabinet agreed to the request at its meeting held on 2nd July 2008 and it was referred to PMB. It was considered by PMB on 15th July 2008 and it was agreed that PMB would consider the concessionary parking for over 60s once six months of data is available. A report is expected to be considered by PMB in October. Mr. Bateman, who raised this issue, has been kept up to date.

\*Note: "Rec. No." is the Recommendation Number as given within a Scrutiny Report compiled by a Task Group

Approved Recommendations from Refuse and Recycling Scrutiny Investigation: 2nd April 2008 (Date agreed by Cabinet)

*Rec. No.	Detail of Recommendation	Officer Responsible	Implementation to take place by	Tick if completed	Officer Comments
1	<p>NVQ Training in Waste Management from WAMITAB (Waste Management Industry Training Advisory Board) via NEW College is given to all refuse and recycling staff over a 2 year period commencing September 2008 with the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ standards for 'performance criteria' and 'knowledge requirements' specific to this Council are built into the awards;</li> <li>▪ the preferred primary assessment method is observation (rather than witness testimonies or personal statements); and</li> <li>▪ that performance criteria is observed consistently over a certain time period rather than as a one-off</li> </ul>	<p>Head of Street Scene and Community</p> <p>Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p>	<p>Started During September 2008</p>		<p>All negotiations taken place with New College to satisfy the Councils requirements. Presentation to staff and selection of first group to undertake the training will follow.</p>
2	<p>It is made a requirement of all new employees to either hold the NVQ in Waste Management or achieve it within an agreed timeframe.</p>	<p>Head of Street Scene and Community</p> <p>Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p>			<p>First stage of the process is to get all our existing staff trained. Then this can be rolled out to new starters.</p>

3	<p>The following NVQ training is given to the three Refuse and Recycling Team Leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Team Leading in Refuse and Recycling via NEW College</li> <li>▪ BITS (Business Improvement Techniques) via RDI (Resource Development International)</li> </ul>	<p>Head of Street Scene and Community</p> <p>Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p>			<p>Have agreed to get NVQ training organised for the refuse and recycling crews first then organise training for the supervisors. Additional training/Support being organised with Helen Parkinson.</p>
4	<p>Request that Street Scene and Waste Management Officers monitor the progress Worcestershire County Council is making in relation to building their own sorting plant by 2009, as this will enable a commingled recycling service to be launched (making it easier to recycle and likely to encourage more recycling) and therefore significantly improve this Council's recycling rates.</p>	<p>Head of Street Scene and Community</p>	<p>On Going</p>		<p>Officers are attending regular meetings with the County Council. Both officers and Members meet as part of a County wide forum to discuss all waste related issues.</p>
5	<p>Street Scene and Waste Management Officers be requested to continue to encourage Worcestershire County Council officers to investigate recycling more materials through the Waste Management Forum.</p>	<p>Head of Street Scene and Community</p>	<p>On Going</p>		<p>Both officers and Members meet as part of a County wide forum to discuss all waste related issues.</p>

6	Request that Street Scene and Waste Management Officers continue to regularly and systematically benchmark against the top 10-15 local authorities in the recycling league table which are achieving higher recycling rates, with a view to adapting any parts of their services to Bromsgrove which may prove successful in helping to increase our recycling figures.	Head of Street Scene and Community	On Going		Officers regularly monitor activities through PSNET and APSE and technical press.
7	Street Scene and Waste Management Officers be requested to continually investigate ways in which the Council can expand the recycling service to reach the remaining 6% of the District.	Head of Street Scene and Community	On Going		This will only be feasible once the new Materials Reclamation Facility is available at the end of 2009. Plant being built by WCC
8	In order to educate as many children as possible to take responsibility for the future of their own environment and encourage more recycling throughout the District, Street Scene and Waste Management officers be requested to continue to encourage all schools to join the Eco-School programme, particularly primary schools.	Head of Street Scene and Community	On Going		Regular visits to schools by Officers to promote environmental issues.

9	Request that Street Scene and Waste Management officers keep up to date with developments of the Defra pilot incentive scheme and when the results are known, the option of introducing such a scheme be investigated further.	Head of Street Scene and Community	On going		All government department activities monitored direct through websites and technical press.
10	Request the Head of Street Scene and Waste Management to make certain there is thorough consultation with local residents in relation to the green bin charging arrangements due to be put in place. Effective communication will help ensure smooth implementation of the charging system which should avoid a reduction in customer service standards.	Head of Street Scene and Community	On going		Consultation underway and first article has been released in 'Together Bromsgrove' with planned media releases due to go out in subsequent issues local newspapers and the waste collection calendar.
11	Increase communication with local residents wherever possible to encourage reducing, reusing and recycling. For example, ensuring local residents are aware that they can request more recycling boxes free of charge.	Head of Street Scene and Community	On going		Information on web site and the waste collection calendar also via CSC. Various consultation days planned around the district at various Parish Council offices.

13	<p>Similar to Daventry District Council, training/information sessions be arranged to inform Members of the following to ensure they have a sound knowledge of the Street Scene and Waste Management Services to pass on to local residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the history of the service;</li> <li>▪ where the Council is at present; and</li> <li>▪ plans to progress the service in future.</li> </ul> <p>Members of Parish Councils should also be invited to attend these sessions.</p>	<p>Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services</p> <p>Head of Street Scene and Community</p> <p>Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p>			<p>A training/information session has been arranged to be held on 14 October 2008 and invitations to all Members will be sent out in due course.</p> <p>The Head of Street Scene and Community gave a presentation on Street Scene and Waste Management to Parish Council representatives in April 2008 at a Parish Council Forum meeting. However, representatives from Parish Councils will also be invited to attend the training session in October 2008.</p>
14	<p>Updates relating to the refuse and recycling service be included in Members' Bulletins.</p>	<p>Head of Street Scene and Community</p>			
15	<p>The Head of Street Scene and Waste Management be requested to further investigate the effectiveness of various vehicle tracking and communication systems with a view to trialling a model in the future.</p>	<p>Head of Street Scene and Community</p>	<p>Trial of tracking and communication system to take place later this year</p>		<p>Meetings are being held with various companies offering tracking and communication systems to identify the most appropriate system to use. Once this is established a trial will be undertaken.</p>



					layout and accessibility of the town centre.
2	<p>The County Council, along with bus operators and Bromsgrove District Council should embark on a major review of routes and frequencies to provide: (a) better links to outlying areas; (b) better links to major amenities such as Hospitals; and (c) evening and Sunday services.</p> <p>(As requested, the Cabinet agreed to refer this matter to the County Council, the LSP Transport Theme Group and the Town Centre Steering Group.)</p>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive</p> <p>Executive Director – Partnership and Projects</p>	February 2009 (Originally December 2008)		<p>The County Council has been contacted and we have been informed that the Bromsgrove Area Review is a wider review than just bus routes. The review is a lengthy, comprehensive piece of technical work which fully embodies the methodology of the adopted Integrated Transport Strategy. Module 1 of the review will take until approximately February 2009. There are six modules to complete the Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy.</p>
3	<p>This Council should participate to the fullest extent in a new partnership (with relevant agencies such as Network Rail and the County Council) aimed at supporting and advising upon the bus interchange facility to the proposed new rail station, e.g., advising on routes and frequency based on local research.</p> <p>(As requested, the Cabinet agreed to refer this matter to the County Council and the LSP Transport Theme Group.)</p>	Assistant Chief Executive	Ongoing	✓ Ongoing	<p>The council is actively participating in this project but is a minor funding partner, compared to Network Rail. The funding is complicated (there may well be up to 8 funders). The County Council are completing an accessibility study for the train station and outline plans have been produced by Network Rail. It is difficult to give firm dates, until the funding of the station is resolved.</p>

4	<p>Modern accessible bus fleets through proactive involvement by Bromsgrove District Council and Worcestershire County Council to develop a new 'vehicle rolling stock' (buses) strategy and bid for funds.</p> <p>(The Cabinet agreed to refer this matter to the County Council and that any involvement on the part of this Council in becoming a proactive partner in future bids for rolling stock, would to be put on hold until such time as the draft Local Transport Bill becomes law.)</p>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive  Worcestershire County Council</p>	<p>Dependent on County Council</p>	<p>✓ Ongoing</p>	<p>The District Council has referred the scrutiny report to the County Council.</p> <p><i>August Update:</i> The Assistant Chief Executive met recently with the Council Council on this matter. County made the reasonable point that the District needs to have the right infrastructure first. Converting each bus stop will cost between £6,000 and £10,000. An infrastructure strategy is due to be agreed by September at County.</p>
5	<p>Preparatory discussions be commenced with Redditch Borough Council to assess the feasibility of a joint bid (via the County Council) for a co-operated Ring-and-Ride scheme, and also that the Council should investigate with the County the potential to introduce a Community Bus Service to further "infill" gaps in current services.</p> <p>(The Cabinet agreed to refer this matter to the LSP Transport Theme Group for investigation and that the Group would be requested to provide the Cabinet with a report in September detailing progress.)</p>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive</p>	<p>Business Case to CMT in May 2008 - Progress Report to Cabinet in September 2008 - Go live in May 2009 (subject to any planning issues)</p>	<p>✓ Ongoing</p>	<p>A project group has been established and a first draft business case was presented to CMT during May. A budget bid will be made in September, based on the consultation exercise currently underway and discussions with potential providers and if funding is approved in early 2009, we hope the service can go live in May 2009 (subject to any detailed planning issues).</p> <p><i>August Update:</i> On target for September</p>

					budget bid. Customer Panel feedback strongly supports this initiative.
6	<p>The County Council is to introduce a "Worcestershire Standard" bus shelter/stop, which was commended by the Task Group, and they recommend a period of consultation to establish whether (and where) more pick-up points could be located. It is also requested that, given the implications for winter bus travellers, urgent action be taken at a number of sites mentioned in the report to repair damaged/vandalised bus shelters.</p> <p>(The Cabinet agreed to refer these matters to the County Council.)</p>	Assistant Chief Executive	Dependent on WCC	✓ Ongoing	<p>As part of the Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy a Sub-Strategy on interchanges and bus stops will be produced by June 2008. The Bromsgrove train station and town centre interchanges will both be Gold Standard. Dates for overhauling the rest of the interchanges and bus stops will be contained in the new Strategy.</p> <p><i>August Update:</i> A meeting with the County Council was held on 18 June to discuss progress of the new Strategy. This meeting resulted in a subsequent meeting and agreement in principle to undertake an accessibility study on the town centre. The bus stop audit was completed and reported on in July (at County).</p>

7	<p>In addition to the need for more (modern) bus shelters, a number of people responding to the surveys indicated that consideration could also be given to (a) an increased number of pick-up points (to bridge the walking gap especially for those with mobility difficulties); and (b) the flexibility to “flag down” drivers in areas where it is safe to do so.</p> <p>(The Cabinet agreed to refer these matters to the County Council.)</p>	Assistant Chief Executive	Module 1 Completed by December 2008	Awaiting progress by WCC – please see officer comments	<p>As part of the Bromsgrove District Area Review the current number and concentration of bus stops will be considered. The County Council expects bus stops to be no more than 400 metres apart in an urban area. This rule cannot be applied in a rural setting, but consideration will be given to this issue in the review. Also, the community transport review should also help in this respect.</p> <p><i>August Update:</i> Awaiting progress by County Council. The County Council does not support this recommendation as it would prevent reliable route times</p>
8	<p>Improve bus time tables and make them more widely available by using a variety of “engagement” methods available (e.g. Together Bromsgrove, website, etc.), to consult with the public further to support the County’s preparation of a new marketing and information strategy.</p> <p>(The Cabinet agreed that this Council look at establishing</p>	Assistant Chief Executive	May 2008	✓ Ongoing	<p>A meeting was held with County Council and Network Rail in May to discuss community engagement for proposed new train station. A communications plan has been produced, which will also pick up the wider issue of marketing.</p> <p>Another meeting with the</p>

	<p>website links to consult with the public further to support the County's new marketing and information strategy.)</p>				<p>County Council in June took place to discuss the progress of the Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy.</p> <p><i>August Update:</i> Bus timetables are on the County Council website. This is one of the most used parts of the website. We have agreed to put something on bus times in the next Together Bromsgrove.</p>
9	<p>The Council becomes a pilot authority to work with our County Council partners to develop and implement a local best practice marketing and implementation strategy which can become a model for the County (Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI)).</p> <p>(The Cabinet agreed that this Council offer itself as a pilot authority with the County Council for the introduction of RTPI at major amenities and that both the Cabinet and Scrutiny Steering Board be kept up to date on developments.)</p>	Assistant Chief Executive	Dependant on WCC - Ongoing		<p>No further action at this stage, but the Assistant Chief Executive will have met with the County Council on 18 June to discuss a number of transport issues.</p> <p><i>June/July Update:</i> Assistant Chief Executive needs to chase up progress on this matter.</p> <p><i>August Update:</i> Assistant Chief Executive has spoken to the County Council. They want to focus on improving the infrastructure and getting the right routes running on time, before moving to Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI).</p>

10	<p>As part of the review, a route map be produced similar to the London Underground system map. The map would be based on a North/South and East/West configuration to enable it to capture the main destinations, i.e. Birmingham/ Bromsgrove/ Worcester (being North/South) and Redditch/ Bromsgrove/ Stourbridge (being East/West). This would enable all principal villages and estates along these routes to be listed together with the appropriate bus service number.</p> <p>(The Cabinet agreed that the feasibility of producing a London Underground style bus route map be looked at with the County Council. It was also felt a bus timetable might need to accompany any route map and the practicalities of the proposal as a whole would first need to be investigated in view of the possible work/costs involved.)</p>	Assistant Chief Executive	Dependant on WCC - Ongoing		<p>See response above to recommendations 9.</p> <p><i>August Update:</i> A Transport Marketing Strategy will be produced for September 2008. This will include new route maps and County have asked if we want to be a pilot. BDC has agreed.</p>
11	<p>(a) Commends the County's Strategy for bus driver training to this Council;</p> <p>(b) Asks that a copy of this report be forwarded to all bus operators drawing their attention to the broad issue of reminding drivers of their duty of care and courtesy to</p>	<p>Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services</p> <p>Assistant Chief</p>	<p>Letter to bus operators by mid April 2008</p> <p>WCC contacting</p>	✓	<p>In relation to 11(b), a letter has been sent to all bus operators informing them where they can view a copy of the full Public Transport (Buses) Scrutiny Report.</p> <p>11(c) will be discussed</p>

	<p>passengers; and</p> <p>(c) Recommends that a newsletter in this regard be sent from the County Council to all operators and drivers.</p> <p>(The Cabinet agreed to refer this matter to the County Council.)</p>	Executive	bus operators	✓	<p>with County Council at meeting on 18 June 2008.</p> <p><i>August Update on 11(c):</i> County are talking to bus operators about these issues, but cannot compel them to be trained. On services directly contracted by the County, bus drivers are required to have training on customer service to NVQ Level 4.</p>
12	Proactive involvement by Bromsgrove District Council in the Worcestershire County Council Transport Strategy to ensure the good relationship between the Councils is continued.	Assistant Chief Executive	Ongoing	✓	Councillors Mrs. Dyer and Mrs. Sherrey are Members of the Group which are looking at Worcestershire County Council's Transport Strategy and they will continue to have proactive involvement as suggested by the Task Group. Relations with county are much improved and we are now beginning to see some of the benefits of partnership working on the town centre, train station and Longbridge.
13	(a) It is essential that the town centre bus station is completely rebuilt (preferably on the existing site) and should involve public consultation at the design and layout stage, which should include 'County	Executive Director – Partnership and Projects	15th April 2008	✓ Ongoing	<p>See response to recommendation 1 on the second page of this report.</p> <p>Capital funds have been allocated to refurbish the toilet facilities.</p>

	<p>Standard' bus shelters and signage;</p> <p>(b) The site of the present bus station is the preferred site according to the public survey, and lends itself to be developed incorporating an Information Centre and perhaps a Police Drop-In Centre; and</p> <p>(c) The existing toilet block be re-located, possibly on ground opposite the Drill Hall).</p> <p>(The Cabinet resolved:</p> <p>(i) that the issue of establishing a new bus station had already been dealt with under Recommendation 1;</p> <p>(ii) that it be agreed that the re-location of the existing toilet block as detailed at Recommendation 13 (c) be rejected as this was already being progressed;</p> <p>(iii) that the Portfolio Holder discuss with the Executive Director - Projects and Partnerships the possibility of establishing a Shopmobility unit close to the re-located toilet block and that the Portfolio Holder report back to the Cabinet in this regard; and</p> <p>(iv) that the Portfolio Holder and the Chairman of the Task Group report back to the</p>				<p>Consideration was given to moving the toilet facilities closer to the Shopmobility by the Town Centre Steering Group, but following consultation with representatives of the Disabled User Group it was decided to leave the toilets in their current location and carry out major refurbishments including a personal care suite.</p>
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	<p>Scrutiny Steering Board on progress on the above.</p> <p>The additional issue of establishing a Shopmobility unit close to the re-located toilet block was raised. It was agreed that this would be discussed outside of the meeting and the position with this reported back to the Cabinet.)</p>				
14	<p>The Task Group Chairman, Councillor B. Lewis F.CMI, be invited to sit on the Joint County and District Town Centre Steering Group to assist the Council in ensuring any approved recommendations contained within this Scrutiny Report are implemented.</p> <p>(Cabinet agreed that the membership of the Joint County and District Town Centre Steering Group remain the same.)</p>	Assistant Chief Executive	Ongoing	✓	As agreed by Cabinet, the Joint County and District Town Centre Steering Group will seek input from Councillor Lewis on any transport related issues. Please also note that implementation of approved recommendations will be monitored via this tracker report.

*Rec. No.	Detail of Recommendation	Officer Responsible	Implementation to take place by	Tick if completed	Officer Comments
1	<p>This Council considers applying to Worcestershire County Council for certain roads to be made low emission zone roads therefore limiting access to certain types of vehicles which reduce air quality. Specifically, the following roads/areas should be low emission due to high NO<sub>2</sub> levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Approximately a 2 mile radius around Bromsgrove town centre</li> <li>▪ A38 Bypass in Rubery</li> <li>▪ All roads in Rubery with a weight restriction</li> <li>▪ A456 in Hagley</li> <li>▪ A491 in Hagley</li> </ul>	<p>Worcestershire County Council's Highways</p> <p>Executive Director – Partnership and Projects</p>	<p>Letter sent April 2008 and follow up email sent in June 2008</p>	<p>✓ Ongoing</p>	<p>A letter was sent to Worcestershire County Council's Highways Unit in April 2008 asking them to explore designation of roads as low emission zones.</p> <p>Currently the County Council have not responded and a follow up email has been sent to ask about progress on this matter.</p> <p>A response is still awaited from the County Council on this matter. Officers of BDC will follow up with a phone call.</p>
2	<p>The Council remain committed to improving Bromsgrove Railway Station including the Park and Ride facility as this will encourage the public to use public transport and therefore reduce the numbers of cars on the roads which are having a negative impact on air quality.</p>	<p>Executive Director – Partnership and Projects</p> <p>Assistant Chief Executive</p>	<p>By 21st March 2008</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects sent a letter to Railway Station Working Group on 12th March 2008 to ensure they are aware of the approved scrutiny recommendations, highlighting the issue of adequate car parking and</p>

					traffic management in the Aston Fields area with regard to access and egress from the car park.
4	<p>(a) Request that Worcestershire County Council's Highways alter the traffic signals on the A38 North into Bromsgrove so to reduce exit blocking and improve traffic flow near the AQMA; and</p> <p>(b) Request that both Worcestershire County Council's Highways and this Council's Environmental Health Team monitor the area before and after the alterations in order to obtain evidence to prove whether or not the alteration have been successful.</p> <p>(The Cabinet also wished the appropriate authority to consider making the operation of the traffic signals part time (e.g. during the night, the traffic was much lighter and this would reduce the amount of stationary traffic and therefore improve air quality.)</p>	<p>Worcestershire County Council's Highways</p> <p>Head of Planning and Environment Services</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council's Highways</p> <p>Highways Agency</p>	Letter sent 7th March 2008 and follow up email sent in June 2008.	✓ Awaiting response from WCC	<p>Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects sent a letter to Worcestershire County Council (WCC) on 7th March 2008 requesting the traffic lights be altered as requested and to ask that WCC indicate when they will undertake this work so that Environmental Health (EH) can monitor before the alteration and after.</p> <p>Currently the County Council have not responded to the initial letter sent in March 2008 and a follow up email has been sent to ask about progress on this matter.</p> <p>The matter will now be followed up with a phone call.</p>
5	Request that Environmental Health monitor the AQMA before and after the Highways Agency have added and amended yellow box markings on the roundabout at M42 Junction 1 at gridlock (which is hoped will improve the flow of traffic) to	<p>Executive Director – Partnership and Projects</p> <p>Head of Planning and</p>	June 2008	✓	<p>The yellow boxes have been repainted and monitoring of the air quality is continuous by EH.</p> <p>Executive Director –</p>

	<p>investigate whether or not there has been a reduction in air pollution.</p> <p>(Cabinet also resolved that the Police be requested to monitor the misuse of the yellow boxes as it was felt some motorists were not complying with the markings.)</p>	<p>Environment Services</p> <p>West Mercia Police</p>			<p>Partnerships and Projects sent a letter to West Mercia Police on 7th March 2008 asking for monitoring of the yellow boxes and addressing their misuse and a follow up letter was sent early June. A response from Police Chief Inspector Love was received mid June and the local policing team will be monitoring the situation for the next 3 months on an informal basis.</p>
6	<p>Request that the Highways Agency monitor the area of the M42 Westbound to M5 to find out if this scheme has been successful in reducing the number of incidents (which has often led to traffic congestion and therefore impacted on the AQMA) and communicate their findings to the Environmental Health Team.</p>	<p>Highways Agency</p> <p>Head of Planning and Environment Services</p>	<p>Letter sent 7th March 2008 and follow up letter sent in June 2008.</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Awaiting response from WCC</p>	<p>Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects sent a letter to Highways Agency on 7th March 2008 requesting this information and ask them to contact EH team.</p> <p>Currently the Highways Agency has not responded to the initial letter sent in March 2008 and a follow up letter has been sent as a reminder and to ask about progress on this matter.</p> <p>A phone call will be made to the Highway's Agency.</p>

7	<p>The Town Centre Redevelopment Steering Group (LSP Theme Group) be requested to consider air pollution caused by traffic congestion when looking at redeveloping the town. This would include the Group looking at the possibilities of having vehicle access to The Strand from Birmingham Road (by Davenal House) and investigate, in partnership with Worcestershire County Council Highway's, whether or not it might help decrease traffic congestion and therefore lower the air pollution at this location which has high NO2 levels.</p>	<p>Executive Director – Partnership and Projects</p>	<p>Discussed at meeting with Highways Unit on 2nd June 2008</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>The road management arrangements around The Strand, Stourbridge Road and Birmingham Road junction are a significant consideration for the Town Centre Steering Group. The County Council and District Council have commissioned Halcrow, Transport Engineers, to submit proposals for improvements to the road junction. The issue of air quality will form part of the criteria for determining the most appropriate road junction arrangements.</p> <p><i>August Update:</i> Plans are now being drawn up for changes to the road junction at Birmingham Road and Stourbridge Road. The plans propose changes to the filtering arrangements and fundamental changes to the traffic management around the Strand and Queens Head public house.</p>
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8	<p>(a) Request that Worcestershire County Council review the timing of the traffic signals located at the top end of the High Street by The Strand with a view to reducing the build up of standing traffic;</p> <p>(b) If County Council agree to amend the timing of the traffic signals in (a), request that they monitor the traffic congestion before and after making the alteration to measure whether the action has had a positive impact; and</p> <p>(c) Request Environmental Health monitor air quality around Davenal House, Birmingham Road before and after the (a) is implemented to measure whether it has helped improve air quality (which is known to be poor at this location).</p>	<p>Head of Planning and Environment Services</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council's Highways</p>	<p>Discussed at meeting with Highways Unit on 2nd June 2008</p>		<p>This will be linked to recommendation 7.</p>
9	<p>(a) The Head of Planning and Environmental Health Services be requested to consider the best ways to discourage development within an AQMA; and</p> <p>(b) An air quality guidance note for developers be drafted by the Planning and Environmental Health Officers to try and control and mitigate the impact property development has on air quality.</p>	<p>Head of Planning and Environment Services</p>	<p>On going</p>	<p>On going</p>	<p>The Planning and Environment Department apply government guidance with developers, but EH in coordination with Development Control are examining ways of strengthening application of Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 23.</p>



12	<p>(a) The Environmental Health Team be requested to work in partnership with Worcestershire PCT (and local GP surgeries) and ensure they are kept up to date in regards to which areas are known poor air quality areas to help investigate further the correlations between poor air quality areas and respiratory illnesses such as asthma; and</p> <p>(b) Request that Worcestershire PCT work closely with GPs to ensure the criteria used for diagnosing and recording data relating to asthma is standardised wherever possible to enable the analysis of data to be more meaningful.</p>	<p>Head of Planning and Environment Services Worcestershire PCT</p>	<p>Considered by LSP Theme Groups by 30th June 2008</p> <p>Letter sent 7th March 2008 and follow up letter sent in June 2008</p>	<p>✓ Awaiting response from PCT</p>	<p>There is an Air Quality Steering Group that includes the PCT. However, this only meets once a year so the issue will be raised at both the LSP Better Environment Group and the Health and Well Being Group.</p> <p>Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects sent a letter on 7th March 2008 to the Public Health Officer at PCT regarding outcomes of Air Quality Scrutiny Group.</p> <p>Currently the PCT has not responded to the initial letter sent in March 2008 and a follow up letter has been sent as a reminder and to ask about progress on this matter.</p> <p>This letter and e-mail will be followed by a phone call.</p>
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13	<p>(a) The Environmental Health Team be requested to actively discourage bonfires (with the exception of social events on and around 5th November) through promotion, similar to Birmingham City Council; and</p> <p>(b) Ensure that members of the public are aware how to report bonfires if they are a nuisance.</p>	Head of Planning and Environment Services	Ongoing	✓	<p>A press release regarding bonfires has been compiled and reference has been made to the BDC and WCC website regarding discouragement to bonfires. Information on how to report nuisance bonfires is also included. An article will also be published in the Together Bromsgrove magazine with the same information due to be published later in the year.</p>
14	<p>The Head of Street Scene and Waste Management be requested to further investigate and assess options available (such as using bio fuel in refuse and recycling vehicles) which could assist the Council in contributing to improving air quality.</p>	Head of Street Scene and Community	Ongoing	Updates to be provided	<p>The current cost of bio fuel is more expensive than the traditional fuel that we purchase. There are also environmental concerns about the current availability of such fuels and whether they have a beneficial affect on the environment.</p> <p>We are continuing to monitor the situation and understand that a government report has been commissioned into the environmental benefits of such fuels. At present, it is not considered appropriate for the Council</p>

				<p>to enter into a long term commitment to use bio fuels but a regular update will be provided.</p> <p><i>June/July Update:</i> Cost for bio fuel is still higher than standard diesel and we are being advised by our supplier that the quality of the fuel cannot be guaranteed. The environmental impact of such fuel is still under scrutiny and we are awaiting further reports about its long term viability. We are continually monitoring the situation and will consider the use of such fuels only when there is a better understanding of its long term environmental impact.</p> <p>The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders Limited (SMMT) latest newsletter says that a debate in Westminster Hall in June concluded that the potential effect of supporting bio fuels was not properly thought out before the Government introduced its Renewable</p>
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					<p>Transport Fuels Obligation (RTFO). The debate followed publication of the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee's Report: 'Are bio fuels sustainable?' Jim Fitzpatrick MP, Transport Minister defended the RTFO but suggested the Government's 'policy of caution'. He also said the conclusions of the Gallagher report into bio fuels will be available at the end of the month.</p>
15	<p>It is requested that the newly established Energy Efficiency Project Group progress the Council's Staff Travel Plan as a matter of urgency and work together with the LSP Better Environment Theme Group.</p>	<p>Executive Director – Partnership and Projects</p>	<p>A draft Travel Plan will go to CMT. The Energy Efficiency Group will work on the draft so a plan can be presented to Cabinet in December 2008 (Originally October 2008).</p>		<p>The demand for a meaningful Travel Plan has also been supported by CMT.</p> <p>The travel plan proposal went to CMT in late May and it has been agreed that with the assistance of the County Council the existing travel plan that was prepared in 2005 will be refreshed and submitted to Cabinet in December 2008.</p>

16	<p>(a) To help the Council lead by example to other agencies, training be offered to all Members and staff (including those based at the Depot) on air quality (and other green issues) to improve their awareness of the impact their behaviour at home and at work can have on air quality;</p> <p>(b) As part of that training, it is suggested that the film "An Inconvenient Truth" relating to the work of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize winner Al Gore be shown at the Council House; and</p> <p>(c) The Head of Street Scene and Waste Management ensure specific training is provided to refuse and recycling crews relating to where refuse vehicles should be parked (to avoid causing traffic congestion) with engines turned off during breaks.</p>	<p>Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services</p> <p>Head of Planning and Environment Services</p> <p>Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p> <p>Head of Street Scene and Community</p>	<p>Training scheduled to be held on three dates during September for both Councillors and all staff.</p> <p>Weekly briefing for crews to include instruction outlined in recommendation 16 (c) will be developed and will commence from July 2008</p>	✓	<p>A showing of the film 'An Inconvenient Truth' by Al Gore has been scheduled to be held on 3rd, 10th and 17th September 2008 at 3.30pm in the Spadesbourne Suite for both Councillors and staff. The purpose is to raise awareness on the issues of sustainability. The film is a polemic and there will have other information available to present alternative views at each of the sessions. The sessions will be facilitated by one of the Executive Directors.</p> <p>Refuse and recycling crews are instructed as part of their induction training to avoid causing unnecessary obstruction when operating service vehicles. This instruction will be reiterated on a regular basis as a reminder and Street Scene and Waste Management will develop a weekly briefing for crews which will include this instruction along with other service specific issues.</p>
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17	<p>The Licensing Section be requested to remind taxi drivers not to leave their engines running whilst waiting for the next fare at a taxi rank. As an incentive to change their behaviour, it should be pointed out that (a) it will save fuel; and (b) it is an offence to leave a vehicle running when not in the vehicle and any person doing so is at risk of receiving a fixed penalty notice. This information could be included in a newsletter for example.</p>	<p>Head of Planning and Environment Services</p>	<p>End of February 2008</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>A Newsletter incorporating this information has been sent to all taxi drivers and taxi operators in February 2008.</p>
18	<p>(a) To ensure car parking spaces are reserved for those who join the car sharing scheme (which could act as an incentive);</p> <p>(b) Through various forms of publicity, the Communication Team ensure that staff are frequently reminded and encouraged to join the Car Sharing Scheme and encouraged to use other alternatives to travel to work such as walking, cycling or public transport; and</p> <p>(c) The numbers of staff from Bromsgrove District Council joining the car sharing scheme be monitored.</p>	<p>Executive Director – Partnership and Projects</p> <p>Assistant Chief Executive</p>	<p>A draft Travel Plan will go to CMT. The Energy Efficiency Group will work on the draft so a plan can be presented to Cabinet in December 2008 (Originally October 2008).</p>		<p>Car sharing is one of the actions contained in the travel plan. (See recommendation no. 15 above).</p> <p>The draft travel plan was circulated at the Energy Efficiency Group on 27th March and went to CMT in late May. It has been agreed that with the assistance of the County Council the existing travel plan that was prepared in 2005 will be refreshed and submitted to Cabinet in December 2008.</p>

19	Further investigations be carried out by the Human Resources Section into the possibility of having: (a) a pool of Council owned environmentally friendly cars for essential and casual car users; or (b) a loan/lease scheme to assist and encourage staff to convert their own car to alternative fuel.	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development	2010		The review of car allowances is being addressed through Single Status, and it is proposed that a new set of criteria is developed for determining which posts attract the allowance going forward. It has been agreed in principle that this review will take place over the next 12 months, and that any individual members of staff who are found to no longer undertake sufficient business miles to receive the allowance should be protected for 2 years, in accordance with the same principle for JE protection. This is to minimise the potential effect upon individual members of staff who may be financial losers through both JE and the review of car allowances. The possibility of having environmentally friendly pool cars and loan/leasing scheme will be included in this process.
20	The Council consider revising the current car allowance pay scales and not pay more to those who are potentially the worst polluters.	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development	2010		See officer comments under recommendation number 19 above.

	(The Cabinet resolved that investigations be undertaken into the revision of the current car allowance pay scales to include the possibility of paying a flat rate for all users regardless of engine size.)				
21	Support be given to a Home Working Policy as reducing the number of times staff need to travel to and from the office will help reduce the number of cars on the road and this will help towards improving air quality. Therefore, a report from the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development should be submitted to the Corporate Management Team without delay.	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development	15th January 2008	✓	Corporate Management Team (CMT) is generally supportive of the principle and it was discussed once again on 15th January 2008. However CMT is mindful of the wider context, such as office accommodation / asset management and technological capabilities / resources. Consequently, CMT do not feel able to implement the policy at the present. Currently, there is a pilot within Revenues and Benefits to ensure that the technology to allow for home working is correct. Although a corporate Home Working Policy has not yet been adopted, Heads of Services can allow home working when appropriate.

Abbreviations:

AQMA = Air Quality Management Area

LSP = Local Strategic Partnership

RTPI = Real Time Passenger Information

BDC = Bromsgrove District Council  
CMT = Corporate Management Team  
EH = Environmental Health  
JE = Job Evaluation

NO<sub>2</sub> = Nitrogen Dioxide  
PCT = Primary Care Trust  
PPS = Planning Policy Statement  
RTFO = Renewable Transport Fuels  
Obligation

SMMT = Society of Motor Manufacturers  
and Traders Ltd  
WCC = Worcestershire County Council

\*Note: "Rec. No." is the Recommendation Number as given within a Scrutiny Report compiled by a Task Group

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## FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

### SEPTEMBER 2008 TO DECEMBER 2008

This Forward Plan lists the **Key Decisions** which it is proposed to take during the period 1 September 2008 to 31 December 2008. **Key Decisions** are executive decisions which must be taken or delegated by the Council's Cabinet and relate to matters which fall within the Council's agreed Budget and Policy Framework.

**Key Decisions** are those executive decisions which are likely to:

- (i) result in the Council incurring expenditure, foregoing income or the making of savings in excess of £50,000 or which are otherwise significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- (ii) be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the district;

**Key Decisions** will include:

1. A decision which would result in any expenditure or saving by way of a reduction in expenditure of £50,000 provided the expenditure or saving is specifically approved in the Medium Term Financial Plan.
2. A virement of any amount exceeding £50,000 provided it is within any virement limits approved by the Council;
3. Any proposal to dispose of any Council asset with a value of £50,000 or more or which is otherwise considered significant by the Corporate Property Officer;
4. Any proposal to cease to provide a Council service (other than a temporary cessation of service of not more than 6 months).
5. Any proposal which would discriminate for or against any minority group.

**Further details of each Key Decision are appended to the Forward Plan.** To assist with internal forward planning, this Plan also lists other non-key decisions which the Cabinet is expected to make during the specified four month period. The Forward Plan is updated and published on the Council's website on a monthly basis.

## CABINET MEMBERSHIP

Councillor R. Hollingworth	Leader and Portfolio Holder for Youth and Leisure
Councillor Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Street Scene including Clean, Safe and Tidy Streets, Car Parks and Community Safety
Councillor Dr. D. W. P. Booth	Portfolio Holder for Major Projects including the Paperless Office and project management of Longbridge, the Town Centre, Spatial Project and the transfer of the Dolphin Centre
Councillor G. N. Denaro	Portfolio Holder for Finance including Internal Audit and Revenues and Benefits
Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E.	Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy and Transportation
Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey	Portfolio Holder for Waste Management and Recycling
Councillor R. D. Smith	Portfolio Holder for Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, Human Resources and Older People
Councillor M. J. A. Webb	Portfolio Holder for the Customer Service Centre, Revenue Generation, Special Events, Performance Indicators and the Improvement Plan
Councillor P. J. Whittaker	Portfolio Holder for Housing, Environmental Health and Climate Change

## CONSULTATION AND REPRESENTATIONS

For **Key Decisions** the summary document appended to the Forward Plan sets out details of any proposed consultation process. Any person/organisation not listed who would like to be consulted or who wishes to make representations on the proposed decision are encouraged to get in touch with the relevant report author as soon as possible before the proposed date of the decision. Contact details are provided.

Alternatively you may write to The Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove B60 1AA or email: [k.firth@bromsgrove.gov.uk](mailto:k.firth@bromsgrove.gov.uk)

Item No.	Decision Taker & Expected Date of Decision	Original Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Decision	Type of Decision (Key or Non-Key)	Lead Councillor/ Portfolio Holder	Comments
1	Cabinet 3 Sept 2008		Council Plan 2009/2012 Part 1	Non-Key*	Councillor R. Hollingworth	*Cabinet will make recommendations to the full Council
2	Cabinet 3 Sept 2008		Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) – Self-Assessment	Non-Key*	Councillor R. Hollingworth	*Cabinet will make recommendations to the full Council
3	Cabinet 3 Sept 2008		Customer Panel (Customer Satisfaction and Priorities)	Non-Key	Councillor M. J. A. Webb	
4	Cabinet 3 Sept 2008		Finance and Performance Monitoring – Quarter 1 2008/09	Non-Key	Councillors G. N. Denaro & M. J. A. Webb	
5	Cabinet 3 Sept 2008		Improvement Plan Exception Report – June 2008	Non-Key	Councillor M. J. A. Webb	
6	Cabinet 3 Sept 2008	Cabinet 5 September 2007	Mobile Home Sites – Model Standards	Non-Key	Councillor P. J. Whittaker	Further delayed pending consultation on new model standards
7	Cabinet 3 Sept 2008		Refuse Collection and Recycling Operation Review – Supplementary Report on Changes to Refuse Collection Vehicles	Non-Key*	Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey	*Cabinet will make recommendations to the full Council
8	Cabinet 3 Sept 2008		Review of Capital Programme	Non-Key*	Councillor G. N. Denaro	*Cabinet will make recommendations to the full Council
9	Cabinet 3 Sept 2008		Worcestershire Sustainable Community Strategy	Non-Key*	Councillor M. J. A. Webb	* Cabinet will make recommendations to the full Council

10	Cabinet 1 October 2008	Cabinet 3 Sept 2008	Bromsgrove Town Centre (Market Hall)	<b>Key</b>	Councillor Dr. D. W. P. Booth	Delayed by officers for further consideration
11	Cabinet 1 October 2008	Cabinet 3 September 2008	Fixed Penalty Notices	<b>Key</b>	Councillor Mrs. J. M. L. A Griffiths	Delayed by officers for further consideration
12	Cabinet 1 October 2008	Cabinet 30 July 2008	The Future of Bromsgrove Museum	<b>Key</b>	Councillor R. Hollingworth	Delayed by officers for further consideration
13	Cabinet 1 October 2008	Cabinet 2 April 2008	Single Status (Job Evaluation)	<b>Key</b>	Councillor R. D. Smith	Delayed due to the suspension of the ballot and ongoing negotiations with the unions
14	Cabinet 1 October 2008		Sports Strategy	<b>Key</b>	Councillor R. Hollingworth	
15	Cabinet 1 October 2008		Worcestershire Telecare Strategy	<b>Key</b>	Councillor P. J. Whittaker	
16	Cabinet 1 October 2008		Assets Management Plan	Non-Key	Councillor R. D. Smith	
17	Cabinet 1 October 2008		Bromsgrove Local Strategic Partnership Board Minutes (7 August 2008)	Non-Key	Councillor R. Hollingworth	
18	Cabinet 1 October 2008		Food Standards Agency Inspection of Food Safety Enforcement Report	Non-Key	Councillor P. J. Whittaker	
19	Cabinet 1 October 2008		Improvement Plan Exception Report – July 2008	Non-Key	Councillor M. J. A. Webb	

20	Cabinet 1 October 2008	Cabinet 3 Sept 2008	Leisure Trust Transfer	Non-Key*	Councillor R. Hollingworth	*Cabinet will make recommendations to the full Council Delayed due to ongoing negotiations
21	Cabinet 1 October 2008		Worcestershire County Council Parking Policies – BDC response to updated Residents Parking Policy and new Disabled Parking Policy	Non-Key	Councillor Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths	
22	LDF Working Party October 2008		Bromsgrove Town Centre Issues and Options – Outcome of Consultation on Area Action Plan	<b>Key</b>	Councillor Dr. D. W. P. Booth	
23	Cabinet 5 Nov 2008		Countywide Air Quality Strategy	<b>Key</b>	Councillor P. J. Whittaker	
24	Cabinet 5 Nov 2008		Preferred Planning Guidance (PPG)17 - Outturn	<b>Key</b>	Councillor R. Hollingworth	
25	Cabinet 5 Nov 2008	Cabinet 1 October 2008	Review of Planning and Environment Services	<b>Key</b>	Councillors Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E. & P. J. Whittaker	Delayed due to staff consultation
26	Cabinet 5 Nov 2008		Sports Hub Provision	<b>Key</b>	Councillor R. Hollingworth	
27	Cabinet 5 Nov 2008		Communications Strategy Review	Non-Key	Councillor M. J. A. Webb	
28	Cabinet 5 Nov 2008		Community Access Strategy	Non-Key	Councillor M. J. A. Webb	
29	Cabinet 5 Nov 2008		Community Engagement Strategy	Non-Key	Councillor M. J. A. Webb	

30	Cabinet 5 Nov 2008		Community Strategy Annual Report	Non-Key*	Councillor M. J. A. Webb	* Cabinet will make a recommendation to the full Council
31	Cabinet 5 Nov 2008	Cabinet 4 June 2008	E-Government Strategy	Non-Key	Councillor Dr. D. W. P. Booth	Delayed by officers as needs to tie in with Worcestershire Hub work to standardise ICT strategies
32	Cabinet 5 Nov 2008		Improvement Plan Exception Report – August 2008	Non-Key	Councillor M. J. A. Webb	
33	Cabinet 3 December 08		Houndsfield Lane Caravan Site	<b>Key</b>	Councillor P. J. Whittaker	
34	Cabinet 3 December 08		Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy	<b>Key</b>	Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey	
35	Cabinet 3 December 08		Street Cleansing Policy	<b>Key</b>	Councillor Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths	
36	Cabinet 3 December 08		Bromsgrove Local Strategic Partnership Board Minutes (2 October 2008)	Non-Key	Councillor R. Hollingworth	
37	Cabinet 3 December 08		Business Continuity Plan	Non-Key	Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E.	
38	Cabinet 3 December 08		Council Tax Base Calculation 2009/10	Non-Key	Councillor G. N. Denaro	
39	Cabinet 3 December 08		DCFS Play Builder Funding – Lickey End Recreation Ground	Non-Key*	Councillor R. Hollingworth	*Cabinet will make a recommendation to the full Council on an adjustment to the Capital Programme for 2008/09

40	Cabinet 3 December 08		Financial and Performance Monitoring Report – Quarter 2 2008/09	Non-Key	Councillors G. N. Denaro & M. J. A. Webb	
41	Cabinet 3 December 08		Improvement Plan Exception Report – September 2008	Non-Key	Councillor M. J. A. Webb	

**KEY DECISION**

Proposed to be made by  
the Cabinet on  
**1 October 2008**

<p><b>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b></p> <p>Councillor Dr. D. W. P. Booth</p>	<p><b>ITEM</b></p> <p>BROMSGROVE TOWN CENTRE</p>	<p><b>WARDS AFFECTED</b></p> <p>St Johns Ward will be directly affected, but there will be a wider impact across the entire district</p>
<p><b>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER</b></p> <p>Report of the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects</p> <p><b>REPORT AUTHOR</b></p> <p>Phil Street</p> <p>01527 881202</p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b></p> <p>The town centre redevelopment is one of the Council’s main priorities and members were advised at the meeting of the Cabinet on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2008 with regard to the progress that has been made in relation to the issues and options available to the Council within this context and more specifically the economic climate that exists currently in the commercial market. Members were also advised at the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> July in respect of the progress made with regard to the Area Action Plan and the Consultation process.</p> <p>At the Cabinet meeting in October members will be considering further progress made with regard to the town centre redevelopment in general and specifically in respect of the future of the Council’s market hall site.</p>	<p><b>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>Significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the district</p>

CONSULTATION DETAILS	Method of Consultation	Consultation period or dates
<p><b>Stakeholders</b></p> <p>There will be wide range of consultees including statutory partners, key stakeholders in the town centre and local people</p>	<p>The Area Action Plan consultation process will have been completed by the October Cabinet and members will receive and update in respect of this.</p>	

DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
<p>Decisions will be made in partnership with the County Council, the police, fire and rescue service and representatives of the community.</p>

**KEY DECISION**

Proposed to be made by  
the Cabinet on  
**1 October 2008**

<p><b>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b></p> <p>Councillor Mrs J.M.L.A. Griffiths</p>	<p><b>ITEM</b></p> <p>FIXED PENALTY NOTICES</p>	<p><b>WARDS AFFECTED</b></p> <p>All Wards</p>
<p><b>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER</b></p> <p>Report of The Deputy Head of Service Street Scene &amp; Community Services</p> <p><b>REPORT AUTHOR</b></p> <p>Graham Rocke, Community Safety Manager 01527 881486</p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b></p> <p>The Report's proposal is to embed the use of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) within Bromsgrove DC and its Partners as a way of tackling Anti Social Behaviour and Environmental Crime issues. The high visibility use of FPN's will be a major factor in lowering resident's Fear of Crime &amp; Disorder.</p> <p>It will cover the menu of incidents currently covered by FPN's with the range of fines available for each one. The ways BDC, its Officers and Partners achieve formal accreditation to issue Notice's will be covered together with projected Training requirements. The IT needed to support FPN's will be detailed.</p> <p>Full costings together with a communications plan and timetabled rollout of the scheme will also be included.</p>	<p><b>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>In terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the district.</p>

<b>CONSULTATION DETAILS</b>	<b>Method of Consultation</b>	<b>Consultation period or dates</b>
<p data-bbox="212 199 425 231"><b>Stakeholders</b></p> <p data-bbox="212 271 660 391">Members, Officers and members of Bromsgrove Community Safety Partnership</p>	<p data-bbox="705 199 1500 279">Formal, minuted consultation meetings and via Portfolio Holder, Cllr Griffiths for Members</p> <p data-bbox="705 311 1500 351">Benchmarking with Malvern Hills and Wyre Forest DC's</p>	<p data-bbox="1534 199 1780 239">May – July 2008</p>

<p data-bbox="212 710 963 742"><b>DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH</b></p> <p data-bbox="212 782 840 821">Bromsgrove Community Safety Partnership</p>
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**KEY DECISION**

Proposed to be made by  
the Cabinet on  
**1 October 2008**

<p><b>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b></p> <p>Councillor Roger Hollingworth</p>	<p><b>ITEM</b></p> <p>FUTURE OF BROMSGROVE MUSEUM</p>	<p><b>WARDS AFFECTED</b></p> <p>All Wards</p>
<p><b>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER</b></p> <p>Report of the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects</p> <p><b>REPORT AUTHOR</b></p> <p>Phil Street</p> <p>01527 881202</p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b></p> <p>The Council has closed the museum. For some time the Council has been exploring options available to it in relation to the artefacts and building and the tourist information centre. A detailed options appraisal has been carried out regarding the museum and the museum building. The Cabinet will consider the future of the artefacts and the building together with any other relevant information and determine the next steps and the process that will be involved in relation to the Charity Commission and Museum’s Association.</p>	<p><b>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>St John’s Ward and all wards indirectly</p>

<b>CONSULTATION DETAILS</b>	<b>Method of Consultation</b>	<b>Consultation period or dates</b>
<p data-bbox="212 223 425 255"><b>Stakeholders</b></p> <p data-bbox="212 295 683 438">The Council will consult with the Charity Commission and the Museum and Libraries Association</p>	<p data-bbox="705 223 1444 327">The Council will be obliged to follow due process in respect of consultation with regard to the Charity Commission and Museum Association.</p>	<p data-bbox="1534 215 2004 319">The consultation will take place between 1<sup>st</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008</p>

<b>DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH</b>
<p data-bbox="212 730 280 762">N/A</p>

**KEY DECISION**

Proposed to be made by  
the Cabinet on  
**1 October 2008**

<p><b>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b></p> <p>Councillor Roger Smith</p>	<p><b>ITEM</b></p> <p>SINGLE STATUS – IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW PAY AND GRADING STRUCTURE, AND REVIEW OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR STAFF EMPLOYED ON NJC CONDITIONS OF SERVICE.</p>	<p><b>WARDS AFFECTED</b></p> <p>All</p>
<p><b>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER</b></p> <p>Report of the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p> <p><b>REPORT AUTHOR</b></p> <p>Jo Pitman Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p> <p>01527 881479</p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b></p> <p>The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet agreement to implement “Single Status”/Job Evaluation (a new pay and grading structure) for all workers employed under National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services terms and conditions of employment, as required by the nationally negotiated pay award April 2004-7.</p> <p>It will outline proposals in respect of a new pay structure for Council employees, and will address the question of pay protection for those employees whose pay it is recommended will drop if the proposals are approved. The report will also address limited changes to terms and conditions of employment and will outline the response of the trade unions to the proposals, whilst also detailing the extent to which they have been involved in the development of the proposals.</p> <p>The report will only be put forward for Cabinet’s consideration in September if the majority response of the staff ballot is in favour of the proposals.</p>	<p><b>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>Will result in expenditure in excess of £50,000.</p>

CONSULTATION DETAILS	Method of Consultation	Consultation period or dates
<p><b>Stakeholders</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Corporate Management Team</li> <li>2. Cabinet and Lead Portfolio Holder</li> <li>3. Employees – all those employed on NJC Conditions of Service (excludes the Corporate Management Team)</li> <li>4. Trade Unions – Unison, UCATT and GMB.</li> </ol>	<p>The 3 recognised trade unions have been consulted as key members of the Single Status Steering Group since the inception of the project in 2006. The consultation and negotiations with them have taken the form of regular meetings of the joint steering group, in which they have been recognised as key partners. In accordance with the principle of openness and transparency, the trade unions have been heavily involved in the development of the pay model in order to understand the extent of the council's financial limitations and to ensure their buy-in. As the project has developed, the consultation meetings have increased in frequency. The relationship between the Council and the unions during the consultation process has however been positive throughout, with a shared principle of wishing to implement these proposals through a Collective Agreement.</p> <p>The Corporate Management Team has been consulted collectively through Corporate Management Team meetings, and individually as Heads of Service in order to consider the overall effect upon the workforce; specifically in relation to degrees of acceptance in relation to the proposals and how they may impact upon organisation performance, and the Council's reputation as an Employer.</p> <p>The staff affected are to be consulted on the proposals through a ballot – whether they are members of a trade union or not. The results of the ballot will determine whether Officers feel able to recommend the proposals to Cabinet as ready for implementation via a Collective Agreement signed by the Unions and the Council's Officers. The ballot is to be timed so that the Cabinet can make a decision when the results of the ballot are known. If the ballot generates more than 50% in a yes vote it will be considered strong enough to recommend implementation through a Collective Agreement.</p>	<p>Steering Group (including trade unions) July 2006 – May 2008.</p> <p>Staff – through the Ballot – proposed timescales May – June 2008.</p>

**DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**

N/A

**KEY DECISION**

Proposed to be made by  
the Cabinet on  
**1 October 2008**

<p><b>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b></p> <p>Cllr Roger Hollingworth</p>	<p><b>ITEM</b></p> <p>SPORTS STRATEGY</p>	<p><b>WARDS AFFECTED</b></p> <p>All wards</p>
<p><b>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER</b></p> <p>Report of the Deputy Head of Street Scene and Community Services</p> <p><b>REPORT AUTHOR</b></p> <p>Rebecca Clayton Sports Development Manager 01527 881315</p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b></p> <p>The sports strategy will outline the future delivery of sport and active recreation throughout the district, defining partnerships, identifying future priority areas for both investment and development, and will be supported by a comprehensive action plan detailing key future projects and areas of delivery. The sports strategy will include identification of significant partnerships and define key objectives linked to current Sport England objectives and the West Midlands Framework for Sport. The sports strategy will be a key document in guiding the districts investment in sport, and Bromsgrove Extended Community Activity Network will utilise the strategy to identify areas of development and support future funding bids.</p>	<p><b>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>Significant effect on the future delivery of sport and active recreation across the district</p>

<p><b>CONSULTATION DETAILS</b></p> <p><b>Stakeholders</b>  North Worcestershire School  Sport Partnership</p> <p>Worcestershire PCT</p> <p>Community Safety Partnership</p> <p>Sports Partnership  Herefordshire and  Worcestershire</p> <p>Extended Services</p> <p>Chadsgrove School and  Specialist Sports College</p> <p>Youth Support, Childrens  Services, Worcestershire  County Council</p> <p>Health &amp; Well Being LSP Theme  Group.</p>	<p><b>Method of Consultation</b>  Draft document including action plan provided for  comment to all stakeholders. Draft document amended  accordingly.</p>	<p><b>Consultation period or dates</b>  18 August – 12 September 2008</p>
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**DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**

N/A

## Item No.15

### KEY DECISION

Proposed to be made by  
the Cabinet  
on 1 October 2008

<p><b>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b></p> <p>Cllr Peter Whittaker / Cllr Mrs June Griffiths</p>	<p><b>ITEM</b></p> <p>WORCESTERSHIRE TELECARE STRATEGY</p>	<p><b>WARDS AFFECTED</b></p> <p>All</p>
<p><b>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER</b></p> <p><b>Report of The Strategic Housing Manager – in consultation with Phil Street / John Godwin and Graham JRock.</b></p> <p><b>REPORT AUTHOR</b></p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b></p> <p>The report brings forward for members information and consideration the Worcestershire Telecare Strategy and asks Members for their approval and adoption of the Strategy.</p>	<p><b>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>The Countywide Strategy seeks partnership support to help the implementation of County Council funded assistive technology and equipment to enable older people to live independently in their own homes across Worcestershire.</p>

<b>CONSULTATION DETAILS</b>	<b>Method of Consultation</b>	<b>Consultation period or dates</b>
<b>Stakeholders</b>  N/A	N/A	N/A

<b>DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH</b>
Other District Councils, County Council

**KEY DECISION**

Proposed to be made by  
the Local Development Framework Working Party in  
**October 2008**

<p><b>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b></p> <p>Councillor Dr. D. W. P. Booth</p>	<p><b>ITEM</b></p> <p>BROMSGROVE TOWN CENTRE ISSUES AND OPTIONS</p>	<p><b>WARDS AFFECTED</b></p> <p>St Johns Ward will be directly affected, but there will be a wider impact across the entire district</p>
<p><b>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER</b></p> <p>Report of the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects</p> <p><b>REPORT AUTHOR</b></p> <p>Phil Street</p> <p>01527 881202</p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b></p> <p>The redevelopment of the town centre is a corporate objective and it will be achieved through specific developments within the town centre. However, it is necessary for the Council to produce an Area Action Plan (AAP) that will provide a vision for the town centre, a context for its development and describe the various areas to be developed and what is being proposed within the town centre. The process of preparing an AAP requires thorough and on going consultation with the community and stakeholders. The first stage of an AAP is evidence gathering and the second stage is the preparation and delivery of a consultation process that puts forward a number of options for the redevelopment of the town centre. Consultees are asked for which of the options they prefer and based on the responses a preferred option is devised. The consultation process provides an evidence trail for seeking approval for the AAP.</p>	<p><b>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>Significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the district</p>

<b>CONSULTATION DETAILS</b>	<b>Method of Consultation</b>	<b>Consultation period or dates</b>
<p><b>Stakeholders</b></p> <p>There will be wide range of consultees including statutory partners, key stakeholders in the town centre and local people</p>	<p>A number of approaches will be taken to consultation. This will include the production of an issues and options report, an accompanying questionnaire, a stall at the farmers market and direct invitations to comment to statutory partners and key stakeholders.</p>	<p>Consultation on issues and options will commence on 30th June and last for eight weeks.</p>

**DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**

Decisions will be made in partnership with the County Council, the police, fire and rescue service and representatives of the community.

**KEY DECISION**

Proposed to be made by  
the Cabinet on  
**5 November 2008**

<p><b>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b></p> <p>Councillor Peter Whittaker</p>	<p><b>ITEM</b></p> <p>COUNTYWIDE AIR QUALITY STRATEGY</p>	<p><b>WARDS AFFECTED</b></p> <p>District Wide</p>
<p><b>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER</b></p> <p>Report of the Team Leader ( Pollution &amp; General)</p> <p><b>REPORT AUTHOR</b></p> <p>Robin Goundry Team Leader ( Pollution &amp; General) 01527 881435</p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b></p> <p>The Local Authorities of Worcestershire and Herefordshire Council, whilst fulfilling their statutory responsibilities and obligations to identify air quality hot spots, have recognised a need to develop a more holistic and unified approach to managing local air quality across the two Counties. Herefordshire and Worcestershire County Pollution Group in 2007 initiated the preparation of a cross-County Herefordshire and Worcestershire Air Quality Strategy (AQS). The improvement of air quality requires input from a wide range of planning and other professions. Therefore this AQS identifies broad actions, particularly for communication and co-operation within and between local authorities and wider bodies and the community.</p> <p>The key advantages of developing and implementing an AQS at County-wide level can be summarised as follows:</p>	<p><b>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>This has affects and implications District wide by its nature.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It provides greater consistency across a range of policy areas for the achievement of improved local air quality, including local planning, transport planning, health, industry, housing and environmental protection, and ensures air quality is addressed in a multi-disciplinary way within the different departments of a local authority and across Herefordshire and Worcestershire;</li><li>• It provides the framework for a consistent approach to addressing local air quality considerations in development control processes;</li><li>• It is a vehicle for developing a coherent air quality policy across Herefordshire and Worcestershire for local planning processes;</li><li>• It provides a link to wider initiatives across both the one and two-tier authorities (for example Local Transport Plans, Climate Change programmes, Community Plans and energy efficiency programmes), and</li><li>• It provides the platform for local air quality considerations in future rounds of Local Transport Plans.</li></ul> <p>The cost of the project has been co - funded by the authorities. It will be launched in autumn 2008.</p>	
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<b>CONSULTATION DETAILS</b>	<b>Method of Consultation</b>	<b>Consultation period or dates</b>
<p data-bbox="210 172 427 210"><b>Stakeholders</b></p> <p data-bbox="210 248 488 284">District Councillors</p> <p data-bbox="210 322 595 357">Adjacent District Councils</p> <p data-bbox="210 395 665 430">Worcestershire County Council</p>	<p data-bbox="707 172 1003 226">Distribution by email</p>	<p data-bbox="1532 172 1957 236">Non Statutory – ongoing until September 2008</p>

**DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**

District Councils, Worcestershire County Council.

**KEY DECISION**

Proposed to be made by the Cabinet on  
**5 November 2008**

<p><b>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b></p> <p>Cllr Roger Hollingworth</p>	<p><b>ITEM</b></p> <p>PREFERRED PLANNING GUIDANCE 17 (PPG17) –          OUT TURN REPORT</p>	<p><b>WARDS AFFECTED</b></p> <p>All Wards</p>
<p><b>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER</b></p> <p>Report of the Head of Street Scene &amp; Community</p> <p><b>REPORT AUTHOR</b></p> <p>John Godwin          Deputy Head of Street Scene &amp; Community          01257 881730          j.godwin@bromsgrove.gov.uk</p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b></p> <p>The report is to update members on the out turn of the recent PPG17 review of the district and to advise members of the key items contained with in it in relation to service delivery and future budget requirements.</p> <p>The report will also be used as a basis for the recommendation to cabinet on the current level and future requirements of the Councils Park, Open Space, Play Areas &amp; Pitches provision and Inc potential areas for redevelopment, removal and/or disposal.</p>	<p><b>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>This report will result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council incurring additional expenditure in excess of £50,000.</li> </ul> <p>Further more it may result :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the disposal of a Council asset with a value over £50,000</li> <li>• In the identification of a proposal to cease the delivery of a service.</li> </ul>

<b>CONSULTATION DETAILS</b>	<b>Method of Consultation</b>	<b>Consultation period or dates</b>
<p><b>Stakeholders</b></p> <p>Elected members SMT &amp; CMT Planning Officers Parks Officers</p>	<p>The PPG 17 out turn report the is final stage of an in depth consultation process that will be closed by the time the report is written.</p> <p>Consultation has been undertaken with:</p> <p>Elected members District &amp; County Council Officers Parish Council Residents Inc Children &amp; Young People User Groups WCC Officers Sport England Community Sports Network (BECAN)</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<b>DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH</b>
<p>N/A</p>

**KEY DECISION**

Proposed to be made by  
the Cabinet on  
**5 November 2008**

<p><b>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b> Councillor Jill Dyer Councillor Peter Whittaker</p>	<p><b>ITEM</b> REVIEW OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICES</p>	<p><b>WARDS AFFECTED</b> All Wards</p>
<p><b>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER</b> Report of the Head of Planning and Environment Services</p> <p><b>REPORT AUTHOR</b> Dave Hammond 881330</p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b> The Head of Planning and Environment Services is to undertake a review of his Department with a view to achieving efficiencies in line with the Council's three year financial plan. The review will look at working practices within all 8 sections of the Department, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Administration</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Building Control</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Development Control</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Economic Development</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Environmental Health</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Licensing</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Strategic Housing</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Strategic Planning</b></li> </ul> <p><b>The review will look at structures within each section with a view to ensuring efficient service delivery</b></p>	<p><b>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</b> Potential savings in excess of £50,000</p>

<p><b>CONSULTATION DETAILS</b></p> <p><b>Stakeholders</b> Corporate Management Team</p>	<p><b>Method of Consultation</b> Report to Corporate Management Team</p>	<p><b>Consultation period or dates</b> September 08</p>
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**DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**  
N/A

**KEY DECISION**

Proposed to be made by the Cabinet on  
**5 November 2008**

<p><b>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b></p> <p>Cllr Roger Hollingworth</p>	<p><b>ITEM</b></p> <p>SPORTS HUB PROVISION</p>	<p><b>WARDS AFFECTED</b></p> <p>All Wards</p>
<p><b>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER</b></p> <p>Report of the Head of Street Scene &amp; Community</p> <p><b>REPORT AUTHOR</b></p> <p>John Godwin Deputy Head of Street Scene &amp; Community 01257 881730 j.godwin@bromsgrove.gov.uk</p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b></p> <p>The report is to update members on the out turn of the recent PPG17 review of the district and to advise members of the key items contained with in it in relation to the future need of play pitches with in the District.</p> <p>The report will also be used as a basis for the recommendation to cabinet on the proposed use of the Capital funding allocated this year for the provision of Sports Hubs and potential partnership funding in the delivery of these schemes.</p>	<p><b>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>This report will result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council incurring additional expenditure in excess of £50,000.</li> <li>• A significant effect on communities living or working in an area comprising of two or more wards in the district.</li> </ul>

<b>CONSULTATION DETAILS</b>	<b>Method of Consultation</b>	<b>Consultation period or dates</b>
<p><b>Stakeholders</b></p> <p>Elected members SMT &amp; CMT Planning Officers Sports development Officers Parks Officers</p>	<p>The PPG 17 out turn report is the final stage of an in depth consultation process that will be closed by the time the report is written.</p> <p>Consultation has been undertaken with:</p> <p>Elected members District &amp; County Council Officers Parish Council Residents Inc Children &amp; Young People User Groups WCC Officers Sport England Community Sports Network (BECAN)</p>	<p>N/A</p>

**DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**

N/A

**KEY DECISION**

Proposed to be made by  
the Cabinet on  
**3 December 2008**

<p><b>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b></p> <p>Peter Whittaker</p>	<p><b>ITEM</b></p> <p>GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITE PROVISION AND REVIEW OF HOUNDSFIELD LANE CARAVAN SITE</p>	<p><b>WARDS AFFECTED</b></p> <p>Whole District Plus Hollywood and Majors Green</p>
<p><b>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER</b></p> <p>Report of the Head of Planning and Environment</p> <p><b>REPORT AUTHOR</b></p> <p>A.M. Coel Strategic Housing Manager 01527 881270</p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b></p> <p>Following on from the report made to Cabinet in June 2008, this report will provide members with an update upon the consultation with site residents and upon the progress and negotiations undertaken in pursuance of the two favoured options regarding the future management, ownership and improvement of the site</p>	<p><b>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>Recommendations of a recent Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment relate to provision in the whole district.</p> <p>Provision of site facilities at Houndsfield Lane Site affect the Hollywood and Majors Green Ward.</p>

<b>CONSULTATION DETAILS</b>	<b>Method of Consultation</b>	<b>Consultation period or dates</b>
<p data-bbox="219 316 427 347"><b>Stakeholders</b></p> <p data-bbox="219 387 674 571">With site residents to assess preferences for improvement to individual pitch and amenity block facilities and the future use of the Transit site.</p>	<p data-bbox="707 363 1514 435">Personal consultation visits to all Houndsfield Lane Site residents by Strategic Housing Officers.</p>	<p data-bbox="1525 363 1771 403">September 2008</p>

<b>DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH</b>
<p data-bbox="219 788 282 820">N/A</p>

**KEY DECISION**

Proposed to be made by  
the Cabinet on  
**3 December 2008**

<p><b>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b></p> <p>Cllr M Sherrey</p>	<p><b>ITEM</b></p> <p>REFRESH OF WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY DOCUMENT</p>	<p><b>WARDS AFFECTED</b></p> <p>All</p>
<p><b>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER</b></p> <p>Report of Head of Street Scene and Community</p> <p><b>REPORT AUTHOR</b></p> <p>Michael Bell</p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b></p> <p>All County and District Councils are required to produce a long term Waste Management Strategy and review it every 5 years. This is the first review of the existing strategy that has been in place since 2004. The document sets out the long term aims of the waste partnership and how it will achieve its statutory targets over the next 25 years.</p>	<p><b>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>Significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the district;</p>



<b>CONSULTATION DETAILS</b>	<b>Method of Consultation</b>	<b>Consultation period or dates</b>
<p>Consultation will be carried out with statutory consultees over a period of several months.</p>	<p>Direct access to statutory consultees.</p>	

**DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**

County Council as Waste Disposal Authority and the other district Councils with Worcestershire and Herefordshire.

**KEY DECISION**

Proposed to be made by  
the Cabinet on  
**3 December 2008**

<p><b>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b></p> <p>Cllr Mrs J M L A Griffiths</p>	<p><b>ITEM</b></p> <p>STREET CLEANSING POLICY</p>	<p><b>WARDS AFFECTED</b></p> <p>All</p>
<p><b>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER</b></p> <p>Report of Head of Street Scene and Community</p> <p><b>REPORT AUTHOR</b></p> <p>Michael Bell</p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b></p> <p>Document outlines the elements undertaken by the Street Cleansing team and will act as a guidance document for staff and residents.</p> <p>Street Cleansing is an important function and therefore require robust procedures within which to operate.</p>	<p><b>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>Significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the district;</p>

<b>CONSULTATION DETAILS</b>	<b>Method of Consultation</b>	<b>Consultation period or dates</b>
n/a	n/a	n/a

**DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**

n/a

## SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD

### WORK PROGRAMME

**2ND SEPTEMBER 2008**

The Work Programme consists of three sections: Items for Future Scrutiny and Updates; Current Scrutiny Task Groups; and Scrutiny Task Group Reviews.

**RECOMMENDATION:** To consider and agree the work programme.

### ITEMS FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY AND UPDATES

Subject	Date of Consideration	Other Information
Recommendation Tracker - <i>Permanent Item</i> -	Jan/Mar/April/ July/Sept/Nov	A bi-monthly report monitoring the implementation of scrutiny recommendations. (Initially for a trial period of 12 months starting January 2008.)
Worcestershire Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen Network (Update) - <i>Permanent Item</i> -	29th July 2008	Members to receive an update from the Chairman (Councillor Pardoe) on the Joint Countywide Flooding Scrutiny. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on 6th August 2008 at 4pm and this will be the first meeting Councillor Pardoe will be attending as the Board's representative.
Bromsgrove Town Centre Area Action Plan Issues and Options Consultation	29th July 2008	Requested by the Board at its meeting on 22nd May 2008.
Older People (Councillor Mrs. Bunker)	TBA	Possible area for future scrutiny following the outcome of focus groups to find out specific issues which may need to be scrutinised. A scrutiny proposal would need to be completed if the Board was minded to scrutinise this area.

### CURRENT SCRUTINY TASK GROUPS

<b>Current Task Groups</b>	<b>Date Report Due</b>	<b>Other Information</b>
Anti-Social Behaviour and Alcohol Free Zones	4th November 2008 / 2nd December 2008	Task Group merged and Councillor C. B. Taylor appointed as Task Group Chairman. Membership and Terms of Reference agreed by the Board on 29th April and 22nd May 2008. First meeting held on 25th June 2008.
Refuse and Recycling - VFM	2nd December 2008  (First report considered and approved by Cabinet on 2nd April 2008.)	Task Group to carry out additional work in relation to Value for Money (VFM). Terms of Reference agreed by the Board on 22nd May 2008. Four of the five original Task Group Members agreed to carry out the work on behalf of the Board following VFM Training in June 2008. Councillor C. R. Scurrell remains as Task Group Chairman. First meeting held on 7th July 2008.

### SCRUTINY TASK GROUP REVIEWS

<b>Task Group</b>	<b>Date of Review (when Task Group is due to reconvene)</b>
Air Quality	February 2009
Public Transport (Buses)	March 2009

Note: A seminar relating to the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 will be held in the future covering key courses of action. This will be arranged once more is known on what the impact will be on overview and scrutiny committees.