



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 7TH JANUARY 2009, AT 6.00 P.M.

COMMITTEE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BURCOT LANE, BROMSGROVE

AGENDA

MEMBERS: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Leader), Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths (Deputy Leader), Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP, G. N. Denaro, Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP, R. D. Smith and M. J. A. Webb

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3rd December 2008 (Pages 1 - 6)
4. Minutes of the Joint Overview Board and Scrutiny Board held on 2nd December 2008 (Pages 7 - 12)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
5. Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Board held on 15th December 2008 (Pages 13 - 16)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
6. Minutes of the meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 16th December 2008 (to follow)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
7. Medium Term Financial Plan 2009/2010 - 2011/2012 (Pages 17 - 58)
8. Bromsgrove Museum (Pages 59 - 62)

9. Worcestershire Countywide Strategy for Telecare 2007/2011 (Pages 63 - 124)
10. The Storage and Disposal of Abandoned Vehicles (Pages 125 - 130)
11. Programme of Council and Committee Meetings 2009/2010 (Pages 131 - 138)
12. Scrutiny Report on Refuse and Recycling Value for Money (Pages 139 - 174)
13. Improvement Plan Exception Report - October 2008 (Pages 175 - 196)
14. Minutes of the Equality and Diversity Forum held on 16th October 2008 (Pages 197 - 208)
15. 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
16. To consider, and if considered appropriate, to pass the following resolution to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of item(s) of business containing exempt information -

“**RESOLVED:** that under Section 100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act, as amended, the relevant paragraph of that part, in each case, being as set out below, and that it is in the public interest to do so:-

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Paragraph</u>	“
17	4	

17. Matters arising from the Shared Services Board held on 18th December 2008 (Pages 209 - 252)
 - (a) Electoral Services Business Case (Pages 209 – 252)
 - (b) Community Safety Business Case (to follow)

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

The Council House
Burcot Lane
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B60 1AA

19th December 2008

Agenda Item 3

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 3RD DECEMBER 2008, AT 3.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths (Deputy Leader), G. N. Denaro, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP and M. J. A. Webb and P.J. Whittaker

Observers: Councillors S. R. Colella, S. R. Peters, E. C. Tibby and C. J. K. Wilson

Officers: Mr. T. Beirne, Mr. P. Street, Mr. M. Bell, Mrs. C. Felton, Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. J. Pitman, Ms. D. Poole, Mr. J. Godwin, Mr. M. Dunphy and Ms. R. Cole

103/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP, Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., R. Hollingworth and R. D. Smith

104/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

105/08 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5th November 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

106/08 OVERVIEW BOARD

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview Board held on 4th November 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

107/08 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD

The minutes of the meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 18th November 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

108/08 BROMSGROVE LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

The minutes of the meeting of the Bromsgrove Local Strategic Partnership held on 2nd October 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted and that it be requested that in future, the minutes clearly distinguish between the members of the Board and attendees.

109/08 **RESPONSE TO THE REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY PHASE 2 REVISION PREFERRED OPTION**

The Cabinet considered a report containing a detailed response to the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) – Phase 2 Revision preferred option. At the invitation of the Chairman, members of the Local Development Framework Working Party participated in the debate on this matter. Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED that the Council's response to the RSS Phase 2 Revision preferred option be as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, including the specific representation on the issues set out below. It is understood that elements of this response concur with the views of Redditch Borough Council.

- (a) that this Council objects to the level of Redditch related housing and employment growth to be provided within Bromsgrove and /or Stratford, in locations adjacent to Redditch town, when alternative more strategically viable sites within the District are available;
- (b) that this Council objects to the designation of Redditch as a Settlement of Significant Development, particularly in relation to the future implications for this growth within Bromsgrove's Green Belt;
- (c) that this Council is concerned that the low housing allocation for Bromsgrove District up to 2026 will not allow the District to address its well documented affordable housing needs and those of the increasingly elderly population;
- (d) that in response to (c) above and on the basis of the attached supporting documentation (Appendix 1), this Council requests a higher housing allocation of up to 4000 housing units for Bromsgrove District, to be located in suitable sustainable locations to be determined by the Council through the Spatial Planning Process;
- (e) that this Council is concerned that if the RSS does allocate housing and employment land to the periphery of Redditch town, the RSS should as far as possible clearly determine the exact requirements to be developed in the Bromsgrove, Redditch and Stratford Districts.

110/08 **RESPONSE TO THE NATHANIEL LICHFIELD PARTNERSHIP ADDITIONAL HOUSING GROWTH STUDY**

The Cabinet considered a report setting out the Council's response to the study prepared by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners commissioned by the Government Office for the West Midlands. The study was in response to concerns expressed by Baroness Andrews that the submitted preferred option Regional Spatial Strategy did not deliver the required amounts of housing as reported by the National Housing and Planning Advice Unit.

RECOMMENDED that the Council's response to the study be as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

111/08 **PRESENTATION ON MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2009/2010 AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/2010 - 2011/2012**

The Head of Financial Services gave a presentation on the current position in relation to the Medium Term Financial Plan 2009/2010 and the Capital Programme 2009/2010 – 2011/2012. The Head of Financial Services also referred to recommendations made at the recent joint meeting of the Overview Board and Scrutiny Board. These would be considered as part of the report and discussions on the Medium Term Financial Plan at the Cabinet meeting on 7th January 2009.

It was reported that officers were still considering the Capital Programme in view of the potential financial impact of borrowing to fund the Programme in the future.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the current position in relation to the Medium Term Financial Plan be noted; and
- (b) that officers be requested to review further the position in relation to the Capital Programme, with the aim of reducing the proposed programme to include only those projects which are considered as unavoidable to enable services to be delivered.

112/08 **COUNCIL TAX BASE CALCULATION 2009/2010**

The Cabinet considered the Council's Tax Base Calculation for the financial year 2009/2010.

RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the Council's Tax Base for 2009/2010, assuming a collection rate of 99 per cent be calculated at £36,290.23 for the area as a whole, with individual Parishes as shown at Appendix 1 of the report.

113/08 **STREET CLEANSING POLICY**

Consideration was given to a proposed Street Cleansing Policy. It was intended that the Policy would help to clarify the services provided and would provide easily accessible information to the Council's customers and stakeholders.

RESOLVED that the Street Cleansing Policy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

114/08 **FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - QUARTER 2 2008/2009**

The Cabinet considered an integrated report on the Council's performance and financial position at 30th September 2008. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that it be noted that 44% of Performance Indicators for which data was available were improving or stable;
- (b) that it be noted that 82% of Performance Indicators for which data was available were achieving their year to date target;
- (c) that it be noted that 92% of Performance Indicators for which data was available were predicted to meet their target at year end;
- (d) that the successes and areas for concern as set out in 4.4 of the report be noted.

115/08 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2008**

Consideration was given to the Improvement Plan Exception Report for September 2008, together with the corrective action being taken. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception Report and the corrective actions being taken be noted and approved; and
- (b) that it be noted that for the 134 actions highlighted within the plan for October, 73.9 percent of the plan was on target (green), 6 percent was one month behind (amber) and 11.9 percent was over one month behind (red). 8.2 percent of actions had been reprogrammed with approval.

116/08 **UNREASONABLE AND PERSISTENT COMPLAINANTS POLICY**

Consideration was given to a report on the introduction of a policy and process to enable the Council to deal effectively with unreasonable and persistent complainants. It was reported that this would assist staff to understand what was required and what options were available. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED that the Unreasonable and Persistent Complainants Policy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

117/08 **CAR PARKING CHARGES - 6TH DECEMBER 2008**

(The Chairman agreed to the consideration of this item as a matter of urgency as a decision was required prior to the next meeting of the Cabinet to enable

the additional day of free car parking to take place during the Christmas period.)

The Head of Street Scene and Community reported that following the recent reduction in VAT to 15 percent it would be impractical and financially unviable to amend the car parking charges to reflect this until the end of the financial year. It was therefore suggested that in order to provide some recompense to the community, car parking charges be suspended for an additional day on Saturday, 6th December 2008. The loss of income would be approximately equal to the amount gained from the VAT changes.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that an additional day's "free parking" be approved to take effect on Saturday, 6th December 2008 and that this be publicised as appropriate; and
- (b) that in view of the urgency of the matter and to enable the proposal to be brought into effect, the Cabinet's decision be not subject to the Council's call-in procedure as set out in the Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

118/08 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

RESOLVED that under Section 100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the item of business the subject of the following minute on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, as amended, the relevant paragraph of that part being as set out below and that it is in the public interest to do so:-

<u>Minute No</u>	<u>Paragraph</u>
119/08	4

119/08 **FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF LEISURE CENTRES**

Consideration was given to a report on the future management of the Council's leisure centres. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the reasons for the transfer of the Council's leisure centres to Wychavon Leisure Trust not proceeding be noted;
- (b) that the service review undertaken to deliver the savings identified in the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 and the additional savings in 2011/2012, together with the alternative proposals for the delivery of the service with effect from February 2009 be approved;
- (c) that it be noted that discussions are being held with Sport England and Haybridge School with a view to securing the transfer of Haybridge Sports Centre to a third party provider and that authority be delegated to the Executive Director Partnerships and Projects and the Head of Financial Services to complete the transfer of services in line with the requirements of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

RECOMMENDED that the Capital Programme 2008/2009 be amended to include the sum of £139,000, to be met from capital receipts to fund the costs associated with the purchase and installation of the Fitness Suite equipment.

The meeting closed at 4.45 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE JOINT OVERVIEW BOARD AND SCRUTINY BOARD

TUESDAY, 2ND DECEMBER 2008 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors P. M. McDonald (Chairman), D. L. Pardoe (Vice-Chairman), A. N. Blagg, Mrs. J. M. Boswell (during Minute Nos. 1/08 to 4/08), Mrs. M. Bunker, Miss D. H. Campbell JP, S. R. Colella, Dr. G. H. Lord, S. P. Shannon, C. B. Taylor, C. J. Tidmarsh and L. J. Turner

Invitees: Councillor P. J. Whittaker and Mr. J. Jordan (Democratic Services Manager, Worcestershire County Council)

Observers: Councillor Mrs. C. M. McDonald, Councillor E. J. Murray, Councillor C. R. Scurrall and Councillor C. J. K. Wilson

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mr. T. Beirne, Mr. P. Street, Mr. H. Bennett, Mrs. C. Felton, Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. J. Pitman, Mrs. S. Sellers and Ms. D. McCarthy

1/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

(At this point in the meeting it was explained that Councillor J. M. Boswell had been appointed as a Member of the Scrutiny Board.)

2/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest or whipping arrangements were made.

3/08 JOINT COUNTYWIDE FLOODING SCRUTINY REPORT

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Jordan (Democratic Services Manager from Worcestershire County Council) to the meeting. It was explained that unfortunately, the Task Group Chairman, Councillor M. T. King from Wychavon District Council, was unable to attend.

Members considered the Joint Countywide Report on Flooding in detail. Several comments were made and questions were raised relating to a number of issues including: riparian ownership; enforcement and prosecution; recommendations coming out of the Pitt Review; flash flooding; drainage responsibility; flood defence measures; roles of County Council, District Council and Parish Councils; responsibilities of other agencies such as Severn Trent, Environment Agency and Highways Agency; inconsiderate motorists; emergency planning and sustainability; clearing and maintaining ditches and culverts; role of elected Members; and Gold Command.

The Chairman was particularly interested in the issues surrounding riparian ownership which ranged from householders being unaware they were riparian owners to certain locations where it seemed impossible to establish riparian ownership. It was understood that this was an area which had been difficult for the Task Group to address.

It was explained that the Task Group was conscious not to duplicate the 90 recommendations coming out of the Pitt Review. However, some had been identified and highlighted within the Scrutiny Report to provide a strategic overview and others were picked out to give a 'local flavour'.

It was stated that approximately £7.5m had been spent on remedial work by the County Council but there was a concern that there were many people who were still unable to move back into their own homes following the floods in 2007.

Issues relating to establishing Gold Commands were mentioned. It was understood that it was often difficult to predict the weather, however, it was agreed, that Gold Commands needed to be set up early as possible.

There was a brief discussion on the future role of Councillors and it was suggested that 'Gold' representatives should include an elected Member to enable them to provide community leadership and to help cascade information to local residents.

It was stated that advice was sought from the District Council before ditches or watercourses were cleared. However, it was pointed out that such work was not always necessarily the best solution as it could potentially cause flooding problems elsewhere. Therefore, it was important to ensure such work was co-ordinated. It was also confirmed that enforcement action could be taken by the District Council under the Local Government Act 2000.

Flood defence measures were discussed. With regards to sandbags, it was confirmed that the District Council was not legally responsible to provide sandbags. It was pointed out that sandbags slowed the flow of water rather than prevent water entering a building and there were also issues regarding the length of time sandbags could be used due to water contamination. It was stated that the advice generally given was that it was vital for householders to prepare for such an occurrence (for example taking up carpets, ensuring power points are higher and so on).

There was a concern regarding resource implications and officers stated that they were currently investigating sustainability in relation to drainage engineers in this Council and Redditch Borough Council.

It was mentioned that a flood leaflet had been produced containing relevant information, including an out of hours emergency number, which could be circulated to Members.

In relation to the problem with flood barriers for Upton not being stored locally, it was reported that the Environment Agency was looking into a permanent solution.

It was pointed out that there was a need for effective communication between all agencies and it was stated that it was hoped Worcestershire would be better prepared in the future. It was stated that the Task Group would reconvene for a review in 12 months time.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects be requested to consider the financial and other implications in relation to the recommendations and report back findings at the Scrutiny Board Meeting on 27th January 2009 and the Overview Board Meeting on 3rd February 2009;
- (b) that, subject to the outcome of (a) above, the Joint Countywide Report on flooding, including recommendations be approved in principle;
- (c) that the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects be requested to circulate the leaflet produced relating to flooding; and
- (d) that during its review, the Task Group be requested to investigate the possibility of elected Members being appointed as ‘Gold’ representatives to assist them in providing Community Leadership.

RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet be requested to consider the following at its meeting due to be held on 4th February 2009:

- the Joint Countywide Report on flooding;
- the financial and other implications relating to the recommendations being put forward; and
- that the views of the Overview Board and Scrutiny Board be taken into consideration, including (d) above.

4/08 **BUDGET PRESENTATION**

The Head of Financial Services gave a presentation with updated information on the Medium Term Financial Plan (Revenue Budgets) for 2009/10 to 2011/12, including the proposed pressures and savings and the Capital Programme.

It was explained that the Budget linked to the Council’s Priorities, as agreed earlier in the year, and officers had also consulted a small cross section of the public which was called a ‘Budget Jury’.

Several questions were raised during and after the presentation with ensuing discussions. Items raised included: car parking charges; neighbourhood wardens; town centre redevelopment; community transport; CCTV; Street Scene vehicle replacement; chargeable green waste service; collection of Business Rates; spatial project savings; Monitoring Officer investigations; Equality and Diversity Forum bids; Customer Service Centre (CSC); Assistant’s Chief Executive’s team, including Improvement Manager; Basement Project and Foyer Scheme; consultants; and smoke free post.

There was a particular concern regarding the car parking charges. It was understood that the budget proposals suggested car parking charges would not be increased in 2009/10 and 2010/11. However, it was believed that having smaller annual increases at approximately the rate of inflation (2.5%) would be a better option than no increase followed by a high increase in future years. It was also noted that the same view was put forward by the Budget Jury.

With regard to car parking, questions were also raised regarding whether neighbouring areas, such as Kidderminster, had also seen a drop in car parking receipts.

It was explained that it was proposed that Neighbourhood Wardens would be increased by one rather than two posts in the proposed budget.

There was a brief discussion relating to the community transport bid and it was stated that this related to a recommendation put forward by the Public Transport (Buses) Task Group after consulting the Equality and Diversity Forum.

It was noted that there was funding within the Capital Programme to replace CCTV equipment. This led to a brief discussion on the effectiveness of CCTV in other areas and the possibility of removing CCTV equipment in Worcester City. It was believed that in Bromsgrove District, there was evidence to suggest that there had been a significant reduction in anti-social behaviour. However, it was suggested that West Mercia Police benefited from CCTV and therefore could be requested to make a financial contribution.

With regard to Street Scene Vehicle Replacement Programme, there was some concern that it included the green waste collections which would be a chargeable service from 2009/10. Therefore, it was believed that these should be separated as the new annual charge should cover the future cost of the service.

There was some confusion in relation to percentage of funds that were required for green waste, residual and recycling and it was requested that this be clarified. In relation to information on the chargeable green waste service next year, the Board was informed that the Head of Street Scene and Community had called a meeting for the following day to ensure all households in the District received the necessary information. It was suggested that such information should be given to the Parish Councils direct.

It was understood that the Council Tax level had been calculated to be 4.45% increase per annum and it was questioned whether it might be appropriate to raise this to 4.95%.

It was pointed out that the Spatial Project savings had been realised and built into the base budget and therefore had not been included as additional savings.

Officers confirmed that although there were issues with the Dolphin Centre in relation to transferring to a Trust, savings had been made via staff realignment and income from the new fitness suite and it was anticipated that further savings could be made over a 5 year period.

The Chairman questioned the new bids 'Disability Group and Finding a Voice', 'Self Advocacy' and 'Fun Farm Day'. Members were informed that these bids originated from the Equality and Diversity Forum and that the 'Fun Farm Day' bid had since been withdrawn. It was suggested by the Chairman that the County Council could be requested to assist with the relatively small amount of funds required.

It was confirmed that although Worcestershire County Council had withdrawn staffing from the Customer Service Centre, due to 90% of queries relating to the District Council, the funding had been reinvested into the Worcestershire Hub.

There was some confusion between the Basement Project and the Foyer Scheme and it was explained that the Basement Project generally dealt with the prevention of youth homelessness whereas the Foyer Scheme worked with a select group of young people who had been made homeless.

The Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects explained that in relation to the Museum, there were financial implications attached to all closure options.

Questions were raised regarding the new bid for Consultants relating to examination in public (EIP) for 2009/10. The Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects understood Members' concerns and agreed that the typical daily fee of approximately £1000 was very high. However, it was explained that the EIP funds relating to the use of consultants were for plans such as the Core Strategy and the town centre. The relevant legislation dictated that for a plan had to have the necessary Development Plan Document (DPD) status, it must go through an EIP. Nevertheless, officers agreed to investigate this further and report back to the Board.

Finally, the Head of Financial Services was thanked for her informative presentation.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Head of Street Scene and Community be requested to provide further information on the percentage of funding required for residual, green waste and recycling elements of the service;
- (b) that the Head of Street Scene and Community be requested to ensure information on the chargeable green waste service is given to the Parish Councils as well as all households within the District;
- (c) that the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects be requested to investigate further the reasons for the £100K bid for 2009/10 for Consultants in relation to EIP (Examination in Public); and
- (d) that the presentation and report be noted.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that a rise in car parking charges, at approximately the rate of inflation, be included in all years for the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2009/10 to 2011/2012 (as supported by the Budget Jury);
- (b) that Worcestershire County Council be approached for funding towards the new bids 'Disability Group and Finding a Voice' and 'Self Advocacy';
- (c) that the £25K bid in 2009/10 to fund an improvement manager for 6 months be withdrawn;
- (d) that West Mercia Police be requested to consider making a financial contribution towards the replacement of CCTV equipment; and
- (e) that the Cabinet consider ensuring all funding relating to the chargeable green waste collections is separate to the funding required for the refuse and recycling collection service.

5/08

RECOMMENDATION TRACKER REVIEW

Consideration was given to the report relating to reviewing the existing arrangements in place to monitor Cabinet approved recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny investigations.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny recommendations continue to be monitored by the relevant Board using the existing format on a quarterly basis.

The meeting closed at 8.35 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE AUDIT BOARD

MONDAY, 15TH DECEMBER 2008, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors S. R. Peters (Chairman), D. Hancox, Ms. H. J. Jones, Mrs. C. M. McDonald, Mrs. C. J. Spencer and E. C. Tibby

Observers: Councillor G. N. Denaro (Portfolio Holder for Finance), and Councillor C. J. K. Wilson (Shadow Portfolio Holder for Value for Money)

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Mr. J. Godwin (during Minute No's 29/08 to 34/08), and Ms. P. Ross

29/08 **WELCOME TO THE MEETING**

The Chairman welcomed Councillors D. Hancox, Mrs. C. M. McDonald and C. J. K. Wilson to their first meeting of the Board.

30/08 **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs. C. M. McDonald be elected Vice-Chairman of the Board for the remainder of the municipal year.

31/08 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C. R. Scurrell and Joan Hill, Audit Manager with the Audit Commission.

32/08 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

33/08 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Audit Board held on 29th September 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

34/08 **CIVIC BONFIRE AND FIREWORK EVENT - FEEDBACK**

Further to the meeting of the Audit Board held on 15th September 2008, Members considered a report on the issues raised in relation to the 2007 civic bonfire and fireworks event and the revised procedures implemented for the 2008 event.

During the discussion Members raised a number of questions which were answered by the Deputy Head of Service, Street Scene and Community. Members commented on how the revised procedures had improved the access for the public. The Head of Financial Services emphasised that the revised procedures had improved the robustness of the security of the cash.

RESOLVED that the revised procedures implemented for the 2008 event be noted.

35/08 **CORPORATE RISK REGISTER 2008-09**

Consideration was given to a report which provided the actions/improvements to quarter 2 (April – September 2008), Corporate Risk Register. The Head of Financial Services detailed and answered questions on the Key Objectives and Current Key Controls highlighted red in the Appendix to the report. Members agreed that the Corporate Risk Register be included on the Bromsgrove District Council Website.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Corporate Risk Register objectives detailed in the report be noted; and
- (b) that the progress to date against the actions for the 2nd quarter be noted.

36/08 **RISK MANAGEMENT TRACKER**

Consideration was given to a report which presented an overview of the Actions/Improvements as detailed in service area Risk Registers for the period 1st April 2008 to 30th September 2008. Members were asked to note that there was only one recommendation.

RESOLVED: that the progress to date against all business area Risk Register Actions/Improvements for Quarter 2, 2008/09 (April – September) be noted.

37/08 **AUDIT PLANNING AND THE AUDIT REPORT**

Consideration was given to a report which provided an explanation on how audits were selected for inclusion into the Annual Audit Plan and how the subsequent report was compiled. Members agreed they would use the Audit Plan, to be presented during the March 2009 meeting, to prioritise the audit reports the Board would view.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the explanation on how an audit was selected for inclusion in the audit plan be noted; and
- (b) that the Audit Report for Budgetary Control as detailed in Appendix A to the report be noted.

38/08 **INTERNAL AUDIT PERFORMANCE AND WORKLOAD**

Consideration was given to a report which provided a summary of the current performance and workload of the Internal Audit Section. The Head of Financial Services and Members agreed that the Recommendation 'Amendments to the section's standard documentation' as shown in the report be deleted.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the current status and work completed on the 2008/09 Audit Plan be noted and approved;
- (b) that the work completed by the Internal Audit Section between April and November 2008 be noted;
- (c) that it be noted that Internal Audit had not been involved in any allegations or investigations during the first period of 2008/09; and
- (d) that the current Internal Audit Performance Indicator statistics be noted.

39/08 **USE OF RESOURCES FEEDBACK 2007/08**

Consideration was given to a draft report which provided details on the Use of Resources judgement 2007/08 from the Audit Commission and the feedback in relation to improvements that had been identified.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the draft 2007/08 Use of Resources feedback and recommendations received from the Audit Commission set out at Appendix 1 to the report be noted; and
- (b) that the Head of Financial Services be tasked to prepare an action plan to address the improvements identified and to present the action plan to the next Audit Board meeting.

40/08 **BUSINESS AT RISK SURVEY 2008**

Consideration was given to a report which provided details of the Business at Risk Survey that was undertaken in 2008 by the Audit Commission as part of the Use of Resources assessment. The Head of Financial Services distributed the updated report to all Members present. Members suggested that continuous staff awareness raising campaigns should be carried out.

RESOLVED that the report and the Council's response to the improvements identified be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.35 p.m.

Chairman

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

7TH JANUARY 2009

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2009/10-2011/12

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro
Responsible Head of Service	Jayne Pickering – Head of Financial Services

1. Summary

- 1.1. To provide information to enable the Executive Cabinet to approve the medium term financial plan (revenue & capital budgets) for 2009/10-2011/12.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that Executive Cabinet request Full Council to :

- 2.1.1 approve the high pressures as identified in Appendix A of:

2009/10 £483,000
2010/11 £397,000
2011/12 £413,000

- 2.1.2 approve the unavoidable pressures as identified in Appendix B of:

2009/10 £577,000
2010/11 £580,000
2011/12 £550,000

- 2.1.3 approve the savings as identified in Appendix C of:

2009/10 £572,000
2010/11 £1,043,000
2011/12 £1,173,000

- 2.1.4 approve the revised capital programme as detailed in Appendix D of :

2009/10 £3,679,000
2010/11 £2,161,000
2011/12 £1,510,000

- 2.2 approve the release of balances of up to £198k to fund the costs associated with redundancy and early retirement for those staff not redeployed within the Council.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Council on 16th January 2008 approved a medium term financial plan that included the Revenue and Capital budget requirements for 2008/09-2010/11.
- 3.2. On 1st October 2008 the Executive Cabinet approved the budget process and timetable to be followed to review the medium term financial plan for 2009/10-2011/12.
- 3.3. As part of the approved budget process Executive Cabinet proposed a streamlined set of 4 priorities against the Council objectives for focus of resources which were approved by Council on 17th September 2008. These were:
 1. Market Town
 2. Housing
 3. Sense of Community
 4. Street Scene and Climate Change
- 3.4. The approved objectives and priorities have been used to drive the budget process as follows
 - Budget pressures have only been proposed to members by senior management if they have been identified as unavoidable / or they are fundamental in achieving the Council's priorities.
 - Financial savings have been focused on more efficient working practices and alternative methods of service delivery
 - Disinvesting in non priority areas.
 - Capital Projects to be proposed only if they meet the priorities of the Council
- 3.5. The current financial plan covers a period of 3 years. The plan is developed in conjunction with treasury management and ICT strategies to deliver a coordinated approach to the delivery of the Councils priorities.

4 Consultation

- 4.1 For the 2009/10 budget round, the Council used a new process to involve residents in determining how the budget should be spent. In the past, residents were consulted late in the calendar year on budget bids drawn up by Heads of Service, and lacked any opportunity for involvement in agreeing Council Priorities and Key Deliverables for the forthcoming year. Residents' only opportunity to gain any awareness of the competing pressures and unavoidable costs involved in annual budget deliberations (and in setting the level of Council Tax) was through

the annual Council Tax leaflet which is sent out with bills for the forthcoming year every February.

- 4.2 In 2008 a Budget Jury was run for the first time. The Budget Jury was designed to engage residents in the budget-setting process more effectively and involve them from the outset rather than consulting them at a stage when there was little opportunity for their input to be taken into account by senior officers and Members.
- 4.3 From June-November 2008 a series of four meetings was held with a single group of ten residents who were recruited on behalf of the Council by Continental Research Ltd. The Assistant Chief Executive, Head of Financial Services and Senior Policy and Performance Officer facilitated each Budget Jury meeting. The reasoning behind using the same participants throughout was to enable them to build up an understanding of the budget setting process and to provide them with the opportunity to articulate their concerns and specify their preferences for Council priorities, express support for and deliberate particular budget bids and have their questions answered at each stage. Feedback from the budget jury in the consideration of the priorities is attached at Appendix Gi and Gii.
- 4.4 Alongside the Budget Jury an online budget consultation is also being run in 2008 (this will take place from December to January), and the Equalities & Diversity Forum were once again asked to put forward a number of budget bids for consideration by the Budget Jury and by Members.
- 4.5 An outcome of the Budget Jury has been the indication from at least five members of the Jury that they would like to become more involved in local democracy and would welcome opportunities for further community engagement. One even indicated he would be considering standing for election as a District Council in the future as a result of his experience.
- 4.6 A 'lessons learned' meeting is now planned with senior officers and members to identify how the Budget Jury might be expanded in 2009. The Budget Jury has had an effect in increasing understanding and involvement among the residents who participated, however few in number.
- 4.7 A report and presentation was delivered to a joint meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Boards in December. The recommendations from this meeting in consideration of the budget priorities can be found at Appendix H.

5 Base budget information

- 5.1 The current budget book that was sent to all members in February 2008 includes the Base budget for 2009/10 and 2010/11. These budgets have

been updated for this financial plan together with the proposed plans for 2011/12.

5.2 The base budget for 2009/10-2010/11 included a number of approved changes to the funding of services from the financial position of 2008/09. These included:

- Savings in relation to delivering leisure services by alternative methods. (£150k)
- Income generated from the charging for the green waste service £400k
- Identified savings in relation to providing services in the planning department £170k
- Approval of a replacement programme for vehicles and plant
- Council Tax level to be 4.45% increase per annum

5.3 Based on the present pay structure excluding the impact of Job Evaluation but including assumptions for pay award and incremental increase the net expenditure is:

- Base Budget for 2009/10 £12.113m
- Base Budget for 2010/11 £12.514 m
- Base Budget for 2011/12 £13.048m

5.4 Within this the following assumptions have been made for the main elements of the budget:

Pay awards	2.5% per annum (Note 1)
Utility costs	5.0% per annum (<i>increased in unavoidable pressures to reflect current price increases</i>)
Business rates	5.00% per annum
Other costs	2.5% per annum
Government Grants	Based on provisional settlement (Note 4)
Investment interest	1.75%/2.75%% per annum (Note 2)
Pension fund increase	Note 3
Vacancy Management	4.0%
Council Tax Base increase	0.2% - 0.5%

Notes:

1. For the purposes of this exercise it has been assumed that a pay award of 2.5% will be given in 2009/10-2011/12
2. Investment interest for 2009/10-2011/12 has been included at 1.75%/2.75%. This is based on the most recent information obtained from our treasury advisors.

3. Following the presentation of the 2007 Pension Fund Valuation the actuaries have assessed that in order to move toward a fully funded pension scheme the rate needs to increase in incremental steps to a maximum of 20.8% by 2013/14. The applicable rate for 2009/10 is 18.3%. The rate payable from 2011/12 will be further revised following the next valuation of the Pension Fund on 31 March 2010.
4. There has been a provisional grant settlement for 2009/10 & 2010/11 provided to the Council. It is anticipated that there will be a 1% increase in 2011/12.
- 5.5 Savings of 4% each year on the pay bill have been assumed through vacancy management. These savings will also be used to cover the costs of recruitment.
- 5.6 The funding associated with the cost implications of the implementation of Job Evaluation/ Single Status will be utilised from balances as approved once the detailed pay model is approved by Cabinet. The approved budgets include £400k in relation to pay protection and £240k per annum for ongoing costs of implementing the new pay model. A report will be presented to Cabinet late January to update members on the negotiations with the unions that are currently being undertaken. The aim is for a collective agreement to be reached with the new contracts being in place for staff from 1.4.2009. If an agreement is not reached Members will consider the implications of dismissal and reengagement. The approved budget will be utilised to fund the costs associated with the proposed model.

6 Budget Pressures

- 6.1 Officers have identified a number of budget pressures that have either been deemed “unavoidable” or “high” priority. Unavoidable includes the ongoing effects of pressures during 2008/09 together with any corrections in the budget. A high priority is something that is in direct pursuit of the Council’s priorities. Each unavoidable and high pressure has a specific “funding request” schedule completed which reflects how the funding required meets the Council objectives. Unavoidable pressures are detailed in Appendix A and high pressures in Appendix B
- 6.2 A number of other budget pressures have been identified but these have been categorised as medium and low following discussions with officers and reported to Cabinet on 5th November 2008 and do not form part of the financial projections. These are included within Appendix A.
- 6.3 Those classified as unavoidable and high are included in the budget proposed.

7. Budget reductions

- 7.1 The savings have been proposed by Corporate Management Team who have sought to identify areas which could demonstrate:
 - Additional income generation

- Reduction to costs with no impact on service delivery
- Alternative methods of service delivery / more efficient working practices / shared / collaborative working to realise savings
- Reduction in cost of services which do not directly impact on the Councils priorities

7.2 The savings/ additional income details are shown in Appendix D.

7.3. As part of the review of the Financial Plan officers have included proposals to generate efficiency savings through joint working or alternative ways of providing our services over the next 3 years. There is a target of £250k saving in 2010/11 with a further £100k in 2011/12. The plans to deliver these savings will be reported to members during 2009/10 as updates on joint working arrangements.

8 Government Grant

8.1 The Council had received the draft settlement for 2009/10 and 2010/11 during the previous budget round.

8.2 The grant for 2009/10 has now been confirmed and the main elements of the provisional grant settlement are (2008/09 figures provided for information):

	2008/09 £	2009/10 £	Increase £	Increase %
Revenue Support Grant	593,669	927,449	333,780	+56.22
Redistributed business rates	4,264,616	4,018,185	-246,431	-5.77
Formula Grant (FG)	4,858,285	4,945,633	87,348	1.8%

8.3 For 2009/10 the indicative grant settlement represents a net 1.8% increase to the 2008/09 settlement. In comparison to other Districts:

	2008/09 £m	2009/10 £m	Increase £m	Increase %
Bromsgrove	4.858	4.946	0.087	1.8
Malvern Hills	5.059	5.090	0.031	0.6
Redditch	6.394	6.426	0.032	0.5
Worcester	8.112	8.152	0.040	0.5
Wychavon	7.341	7.540	0.199	2.7
Wyre Forest	7.879	7.981	0.102	1.3

9. Investment Interest

9.1 A critical element within the overall medium term financial plan is Investment Interest. Members will be aware that due to the current financial climate a decision has been taken to hold investments in very

low risk organisations which offer a lower rate of return than those institutions which may be considered as slightly higher risk. The proposed budget reflects investment income at no more than 1.75 % per annum through to the end of 2010/11 rising to 2.75% during 2011/12.

- 9.2 The quarterly integrated finance and performance report will report the position on the investments generated by the Council and detail any changes as a result of changes to the base rate.

10. Capital Programme

- 10.1 As part of the Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy members approved a number of criteria in relation to the Capital Programme including:

- The capital programme is limited to £1m per annum funded from the Council's own resources (in order to maximise the investment interest);
- Cabinet give consideration to fund housing grants over and above the £1m.

- 10.2 Cabinet also approved the capital investment criteria (as part of the Capital Strategy) that a scheme should satisfy for inclusion in the capital budget as follows:

- Enable delivery of the Councils priorities
- Maintain existing assets to standards suitable for service delivery.
- Improve and acquire assets to meet service and customer needs.
- Improve the stewardship of assets; spend to save (innovative schemes that will secure the Council a better rate of return than the investment interest earned); to reduce longer-term problems and liabilities.
- Satisfy legal obligations of the Council (e.g. health and safety requirements, and compliance with the disability discrimination legislation).
- Develop community assets in areas of need.
- Maximise the use of other funds to encourage investment in specific areas such as energy efficiency, economic development and infrastructure developments (using funds derived from Section 106 agreements with developers).
- Maximise the benefits of partnership working.

- 10.3 The Capital Programme for 2009/10 and 2010/11 was approved as part of the 3 year Financial Plan for 2008/09. The projects approved have been reviewed with the aim to reduce funding requirements whilst still maintaining service delivery. In addition the consideration of the service Business Plans has resulted in new schemes being proposed for 2009/10 – 2011/12 to meet the priorities of the Council together with the funding associated with the previously agreed replacement plan for fleet

vehicles and plant. The proposed Capital Programme is attached at Appendix D for consideration.

In September 2008 members approved a revised Capital Programme to realign the projects to be delivered during 2008/09. There are a number of projects that are to be delivered in 2009/10 from this review that have been identified as “roll forward” and are included in the proposed Capital Programme as detailed at Appendix D. The details of these schemes are:

- £174k - refurbishment of toilet block in the town centre
- £350k – grant to Registered Social Landlord in relation to affordable housing
- £129k – upgrading of Houndsfield Lane caravan site
- £215k – park / sports facilities at Barnsley Hall site
- £360k – provision of sports facilities across the District

10.5 A summary of the proposed capital programme including; approved programme, roll forward and new capital schemes is shown in the following table:

PROPOSED CAPITAL PROGRAMME	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Street Scene & Community	1,807	1,365	1,001
Policy and Performance	75		
Legal and Democratic	50	50	
Housing schemes / P&E	1,614	610	373
Support Services Recharges (to be charged to schemes)	133	136	136
TOTAL PROPOSED CAPITAL	3,679	2,161	1,510

10.6 The capital programme will be financed from a variety of sources including Government Grants, Section 106 Funds, capital receipts (including those that the Council has been allowed to retain under the new capital ‘pooling’ arrangements), and borrowing. Details of the proposed financing arrangements for the capital programme are shown below:

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital Receipts			
Capital receipts or borrowing	2,804	1,788	1,137
Government Grants	875	373	373
Total Programme	3,679	2,161	1,510

- 10.7 If Members approve the level of Capital Spend to 2011/12 the effect on capital receipts will be as follows based on expected expenditure in 2008/09:

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Opening Balance	3,400	1,232	-456
Used in Year	-2,804	-1,788	-1,137
Received in year	100	100	100
Use of Replacement reserves	536		
Closing Balance	1,232	-456	-1,493

The figures in the above table include general capital receipts for funding of projects across the District. In addition an estimate of capital receipts has been made of £100k per annum in relation to any sales of assets that the Council may make during the financial plan period.

- 10.8 If all Capital Programme funding requests are approved there will be a need to fund £456k through borrowing in 2010/11 and a further £1.037m in 2011/12. The impact of this borrowing on the revenue account is included in the overall summary at 11.
- 10.9 The proposed budget includes the charge for borrowing from 2010/11. The Council has a statutory obligation under section 21 of the Local Government Act 2003 to charge the revenue account with a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) to meet the borrowing requirements of financing the Capital Programme. The guidance does not define a "prudent provision" but makes recommendations of the interpretation of the term.
- 10.10 The option used within the accounting arrangements for Bromsgrove is the "asset life method", whereby the provision is made over the estimated life of the asset for which borrowing is undertaken. The asset life used is 7 years for vehicles and plant within Street Scene and Community as this reflects the borrowing requirement for 2010/11 and 2011/12.

11 Overall Position

- 11.1 Based on the assumptions, impact of borrowing for the Capital Programme and the proposed pressures and savings the estimated position for each of the three years is as follows:

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Base cost of General Fund Services	12,113	12,514	13,048

Pressures – High bids & unavoids	1,060	977	963
Transfer re grants received – Planning Delivery & Local Authority Business Grant	-362	-23	-22
Transfers to Earmarked Reserves – Transformational Projects	0	106	10
Savings	-573	-1,051	-1,218
Investment Income	-147	-116	-134
Cost of Borrowing	0	14	110
Recharge to capital programme	-133	-136	-136
Net operating expenditure	11,958	12,285	12,621
Transfer from (-) to balances	-146	-71	0
Collection Fund surplus	-39	0	0
Government Grant	-4,945	-5,047	-5,097
Assumed Council Tax @ 4.45%	-6,828	-7,167	-7,524
Overall Shortfall	0	0	0

11.2 The cost of borrowing will have a greater impact in 2012/13. This currently equates to a further £148k of revenue costs. Officers will need to identify further savings to fund the Capital Programme planned for future years.

12 Council Tax

12.1 The Cabinet approved on 3rd December 2008 the Council Tax Base for 2009/10 as 36,290.23 Based on a 4.45% increase in Council Tax for 2009/10 this would result in a demand on the Collection Fund of £6,828,007 an increase of £304,653 from 2008/09.

12.2 Given that the Government has given strong indications that it will cap any authority that imposes an increase in Council Tax of more than 5% it is felt that any rise needs to be carefully considered. It is therefore recommended that the Council Tax is increased by 4.45% across the 3 years of the Medium Term Financial Plan. The demand on the Collection Fund for 2010/11 and 2011/12 has assumed an increase in the Council Tax base of 0.5%.

12.3 The impact of this increase will be an additional £8.02 on Band D with a revised charge of £188.15. This will be formally considered by Council in February as part of the Council Tax resolutions which cannot be considered until details of Parish Council and other precepting bodies' figures are received.

13 Collection Fund

13.1 Every year the Council has to estimate the surplus or deficit on the Collection Fund. The surplus as at the 31st March 2009 has been estimated in accordance with statutory requirements. The surplus was calculated as £280,235. This is then distributed to the major precepting

authorities pro rata to their Band D charge, thus the surplus will be paid as follows:

Worcestershire CC Share	69.56%	£194,917
*Bromsgrove DC Share	13.94%	£39,070
West Mercia Police Share	11.69%	£32,747
Hereford & Worcester FB	4.81%	£13,501
Totals		£280,235

13.2 This means that the Council will receive £39,070 in 2009/10 to help fund the revenue budget.

13.3 The main way in which the Collection Fund generates a surplus is if the Council collects more council tax, in percentage terms, than was assumed when setting the Council Tax base. When setting the Council Tax base for 2009/10 the collection rate was set at 99.0%. At this level it is not considered that any further surplus will be generated in the period covered by the Medium Term Financial Plan 2009/10 to 2011/12.

14 Balances

14.1 The current projected level of balances at 31.03.09 is £1.313m assuming all costs approved are spent.

14.2 The impact on the use of balances are shown in the table below:

	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000
Balance available at start of year	1,313	969	898
Use of balances – potential redundancy & retirement	-198		
Use of balances – service pressures	-146	-71	0
Balance available at end of year	969	898	898

14.3 The current projected outturn for 2008/09 for the Council net cost of services is anticipated to be an over spend of £267k. This will be offset by the additional income generated from investments of £486k. This is mainly due to the rescheduling of the capital programme resulting in more funds available for investment together with the external management of a proportion of our funds that has created capital increase over the period. The revised net position would be an under spend of £219k..

14.4 The level of balances can be utilised for one off costs and it is proposed that the funds required for any redundancy or early retirement costs are met from this area.

- 14.5 The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Chief Finance Officer to report on the adequacy of financial reserves when consideration is given to the General Fund budget requirement for the year.
- 14.6 In February 2003 CIPFA published a guidance document on Local Authority Reserves and Balances. The guidance does not prescribe the minimum level of balances to be held but recommends that consideration is given to the strategic, operational and financial risks facing the authority. During the consultation on this document it was suggested that the recommended minimum should be 5% of net expenditure and this has been followed by a number of authorities.
- 14.7 5% for Bromsgrove would mean maintaining balances at or around £600k. However, just a 1% variation in gross income and gross expenditure is equivalent to £340k which would result in a significant reduction in balances. The increased pressures on limited resources as demonstrated by the projected increases in formula grant, the increases in utility costs, and the fluctuations in income receipts and investment income together with the impact of the economy on increased service demand may impact on the delivery of services within existing budgets over the 3 year period. In addition, there will be initial costs associated with the delivery of the longer term savings as a result of joint or shared service working. These costs could be funded from general fund balances if sufficient funds were available.
- 14.8 It is therefore considered, taking the above issues into account that a general fund revenue balance of £850k is a prudent minimum level.

15 Fees and charges

- 15.1 The financial plan 2009/10-2011/12 currently assumes a 2.5% increase in all income. The high pressures proposed at Appendix A include the cost of not increasing the car park tariff for 2009/10.

16 Local Government Act 2003

- 16.1 There are a number of requirements that the Council's Section 151 officer has to include in the budget report. These are set out below, together with S151 comments on each of the issues:
- 16.2 The level and use of reserves to be formally determined by the Council must be informed by the judgement and advice of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO).
Section 151 officer's comments: Review of general fund balances included in report.
- 16.3 The CFO to report the factors that have influenced his/her judgement in the context of the key financial assumptions underpinning the budget, and ensure that his/her advice is formally recorded. Where that advice is not accepted, this should be formally recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Section 151 officer's comments: The main assumptions included in the calculation of the budget are as follows:

<i>pay awards</i>	<i>2.5% increase per annum</i>
<i>utility costs</i>	<i>5% increase per annum</i>
<i>business rates</i>	<i>5% increase per annum</i>
<i>other costs</i>	<i>2.5% increase per annum</i>
<i>Government grants</i>	<i>Actual figures provided by Government</i>
<i>investment interest rate</i>	<i>See 7.1</i>
<i>employer's pension fund</i>	<i>increase to 18.3% from April 2009</i>
<i>vacancy management</i>	<i>4% per annum</i>
<i>Council Tax</i>	<i>4.45% per annum</i>
<i>Council Tax base</i>	<i>0.2% – 0.5% increase per annum.</i>

- 16.4 The report should include a statement showing the estimated opening balance on general fund reserves for the year ahead, any contribution to/from the fund, and the estimated closing balance.

Section 151 officer's comments: statement included in this report.

- 16.5 The report should show the extent to which reserves are financing ongoing expenditure.

Section 151 officer's comments: the posts that were originally funded by Planning Delivery Grant are now included in the base budget to ensure reduction in funding does not impact on service delivery

- 16.6 The report should include a statement from the CFO on the adequacy of general reserves and provisions both for the forthcoming year and in the context of the medium term financial plan.

*Section 151 officer comments: the Council holds a minimal level of reserves due to the transfer to capital financing of the Replacement and Renewal reserve. The current reserves are included at Appendix *.*

- 16.7 The report should include a statement on the annual review of earmarked reserves showing:

- list of earmarked reserves
- purpose of reserve
- advice on appropriate levels
- estimated opening / closing balances
- planned additions / withdrawals

Section 151 officer's comments: detailed at Appendix E.

- 16.8 Prudential indicators and related matters

Section 151 officer's comments: This will be covered by the Treasury Management Strategy which will be presented to Cabinet in March.

17 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 17.1 None other than those included in the report.

18 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 18.1 None as a direct result of the draft budget. Legal and Human resource issues will be addressed during any discussions in relation to restructures and redundancies.

19. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

19.1 The delivery of a balanced budget demonstrates the Councils ability to fund objectives and priorities within a reasonable level of increase to residents.

20. RISK MANAGEMENT

20.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:

20.2 Non compliance with the statutory deadlines to set a balanced budget.

20.3 No formal consultation undertaken with the public

20.4 Poor use of resources scoring in relation to consideration of the budget

20.5 These risks are being managed as follows:

20.6 Non compliance with statutory deadlines

Risk Register: Financial Services

Key Objective Ref.: 6

Key Objective: Effective and Efficient Accountancy Service

20.7 No formal consultation undertaken with the public

Risk Register: Financial Services

Key Objective Ref.: 6

Key Objective: Effective and Efficient Accountancy Service

20.8 Poor use of resources scoring in relation to consideration of the budget

Risk Register: Financial Services

Key Objective Ref.: 6

Key Objective: Effective and Efficient Accountancy Service

20.9 Key actions and controls to manage these risks include:

- Detailed timetable in place to manage the budget process with departments and accountancy support
- Allocation of qualified and professional staff to focus on budget setting accounts
- Regular updates at Corporate Management Team in relation to budget processes
- Formal consultation on the budget with the Budget Jury
- Formal consultation in place with unions and individual employees
- Formal consultation with customer panel via SNAP in place

21. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

21.1 The setting of the budget against the Corporate Priorities will ensure that the Council demonstrates to the customer that we have aligned our resources to the key services required.

22. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues 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

23. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Corporate Director (Services)	Yes
Assistant Chief Executive	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	Yes
Head of Legal & Democratic Services	Yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	Yes

24 APPENDICES

Appendix A – Unavoidable pressures
 Appendix B – High, Medium and Low Pressures
 Appendix C – Savings / additional income generated
 Appendix D – Capital Programme
 Appendix E – Reserves Statement
 Appendix F – Risk Matrix
 Appendix Gi & Gii – Feedback from consultation – budget jury
 Appendix H – Recommendations from Joint Scrutiny and Overview Boards

25 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Budget timetable
Detailed budget working papers

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NEW BIDS FOR FUNDING

APPENDIX A

Key Deliverable Bids	2009/2010 £000	2010/2011 £000	2011/2012 £000	Commentary	Link to Corporate Objectives	Priority Ranking	Risk to the delivery of priorities
CSC Staffing	76	76	76	2.5 fte CSAs + 1 manager (To replace the reduction in County funding)	Sense Of Community	High	High risk of lack of customer service if bid not approved - reduction in number of CSAs
Disability Group & Finding a voice	1	1	1	Disability Group - Enable group to provide social and information network for people with disability and Finding a voice Determine demand for network and if one, set up network to provide support and provide voice for this community.	Sense Of Community	High	High Risk to the sense of community felt by this group of residents
Allotment Project	1	1	1	Allotment Project - Regenerate run down allotment. Padstone and Greenscope Day Service to work on allotment.	Sense Of Community	High	Medium Risk - the allotment project demonstrates the Council is working with disadvantaged groups across the District
Climate Change Strategy	20	20	20	Shared post to review how the Council and its partners addresses the issues of climate change and bio-diversity	Clean Streets and Climate Change	High	High risk of the Council being unable to fulfill its role in relation to key priority of climate change
Graduate Trainee	25	25	25	New post to improve marketing and partnership involvement across the District - linked to restructure of the department	Sense Of Community	High	High risk of the Council being unable to improve its working with partners and stakeholders to increase the involvement of residents in consultation with the Council
Wardens/ ASB Officers	30	30	30	To increase the mainstream funded neighbourhood warden posts to 3, giving 4 in total dependant upon Safer Communities Board funding.	Sense Of Community	High	High risk to the sense of community as more wardens will give support to areas where there may be issues that need addressing.
Car Park Changes	38	38	38	To not increase car park charges in 2009/10	Town Centre	High	Low Risk
Project Support	35	35	35	Emergency Planning Assistant, Business Continuity/ Town Centre Support officer	Town Centre	High	High risk to the delivery of key projects to be undertaken by the Council - officer will support Director and ensure projects are delivered on time

Key Deliverable Bids	2009/2010 £000	2010/2011 £000	2011/2012 £000	Commentary	Link to Corporate Objectives	Priority Ranking	Risk to the delivery of priorities
Community Transport	30	30	30	1 Drivers and vehicle - net of income received from customers	Sense Of Community	High	High risk as concern has been raised a number of times by disadvantaged groups that this service is not available in Bromsgrove and is a high priority to our residents to improve their sense of community
Shortfall in income on B&B and Hostels	19	20	21	hostels have been transferred to BDHT and therefore no longer receive income and B&B not required	Housing	High	Low Risk
Basement Project	0	20	25	To provide SLA with basement project - support homeless and young people	Housing	High	High Risk to the delivery of the Housing priority as young people will not get the support and advice they need to prevent them from being homeless
Youth Budgeting	10	10	10	White paper - getting younger people involved	Sense Of Community	High	Medium risk to delivery of the sense of community as young people will not have the opportunity to get involved with the Council
Consultants re EIP	100			Inspectors for investigation & preparing report -	Regeneration/Environment	High	High risk to the delivery of a robust action plan for the regeneration of the District
Museum	25	10	10	Cataloging and transportation link to the closure of the facility based museum service.	Sense Of Community	High	Medium risk as the funds will not be available to support the option approved by members in relation to the museum
Permanently recruit improvement manager	25.0	0.0	0.0	Expect this to be a spend to save bid	Mike Webb	High	Medium risk as the funds will not be available to support the option approved by members in relation to the museum
Foyer 24 hour support	3.0	10.0	10.0	Joint funding of an enhanced level of support and supervision at the proposed new Foyer scheme for 16 to 25 year olds by providing (jointly funded) night time and weekend caretaking / support supervisor on site.	Housing	High	High Risk to the delivery of supported housing within the Foyer Project

Key Deliverable Bids	2009/2010 £000	2010/2011 £000	2011/2012 £000	Commentary	Link to Corporate Objectives	Priority Ranking	Risk to the delivery of priorities
MARC	15.0	15.0	15.0	Grant funding re MARC centre	Housing	High	High Risk to the sense of community as the MARC centre would ave to close and many people would not have a facility to use in the Charford area for advice and support

Key Deliverable Bids	2009/2010 £000	2010/2011 £000	2011/2012 £000	Commentary	Link to Corporate Objectives	Priority Ranking	Risk to the delivery of priorities
Neighbourhood Partnerships	22	22	22	to increase substantive funding for existing 2 neighbourhood partnerships from £4k to £15k - 08/09 funded from improvement plan (cabinet 30/04/08) (unparished)	Sense Of Community	High	Medium Risk to delivery of the sense of community as the neighbourhood partnership scheme would not be rolled out to all areas across the District and local people would not be able to be as involved as was initially expected
Neighbourhood Partnerships	8	34	44	To increase Neighbourhood partnerships to other £4k in 1st year followed by £5k in 2nd year per cllr (incr one p/ship eac yr)	Sense Of Community	High	Medium Risk to delivery of the sense of community as the neighbourhood partnership scheme would not be rolled out to all areas across the District and local people would not be able to be as involved as was initially expected
Wardens/ ASB Officers	30	30	20	To increase the mainstream funded neighbourhood warden posts to 4, giving 5 in total dependant upon Safer Communities Board funding.	Sense Of Community	Medium	Medium Risk - 1 additional warden included in high pressure
Town Centre- Cleanliness	10.0	10.0	10.0	Improve perception of cleanliness, litter pickup	Clean Streets and Climate Change	Medium	Low risk - to be picked up as part of street cleansing programme
Inflationary Increase for Housing SLA's	9	0.0	0.0	BDHT inflationary increase is based on RPI	Housing	Medium	Medium risk of BDHT nto fulfilling their SLA
Fixed Penalty Notice Implementation	15.0	6.0	6.0	Implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement	Town Centre	Medium	Low Risk - initial cost prohibitive within current climate
Civil Parking Enforcement	0.0	90.0	90.0	To implement Civil Parking Enforcement	Town Centre	Medium	Low Risk - initial cost prohibitive within current climate
Self Advocacy	4	4	4	Self advocacy for older people. Set up group sessions each fortnight to develop self advocacy skills and retain independence for longer. Changed to low priority following consideration by budget jury	Sense Of Community	Low	Low risk
Monitoring Officer Investigations	30.0	30.0	30.0	Additional officer required to service increase in member investigations	Roger Smith	Low	Medium risk - dependant on member complaints & investigations
Committee admin (LNP's)	30.0	30.0	30.0	Additional officer required to service LNP	Roger Smith	Low	Low risk
Increase Democratic Participation	5.0	5.0	5.0	Community involvement, Raising awareness, Increasing participation	Sense Of Community	Low	Low risk to be developed with budget jury
Economic Development Strategy	0.0	70.0	70.0	New post-strategic Eco Dev post. Possibly to share with WCC or RBC	Town Centre	Low	Low risk

Key Deliverable Bids	2009/2010 £000	2010/2011 £000	2011/2012 £000	Commentary	Link to Corporate Objectives	Priority Ranking	Risk to the delivery of priorities
Sickness absence software to improve performance & Healthy Living Campaign	22.0	5.0	5.0	Possible spend to save additional costs arising from sickness or agency		Low	Medium risk - costs prohibitive in current climate but sickness levels may not reduce as anticipated
Recruitment Adverts	2.0	2.0	2.0	Improve advertising for Council posts		Low	Low risk
Video Links improvement	8.0	5.0	5.0	To improve accessibility	Sense Of Community	Low	Low risk
Front of House	50.0	50.0	50.0	2 Customer Service Advisors - to be met from admin review/ alternative methods found	Sense Of Community	Low	Low risk

APPENDIX B

Other Possible Pressures/Unavoidables	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	Commentary
2009/10 - 2011/12	£'000	£'000	£'000	
ICT Helpdesk In-House	25	25	25	This was initially proposed as a saving but due to resource implications the department will require this to be delivered externally through the 3 year plan - options are being discussed with Redditch for support
Car Park Income - 0809 shortfall	90	90	90	Shortfall anticipated in car park income
Concessionary Fares	50	50	50	Overspend on concessionary fares usage
Fuel Bills (Utilities)	50	50	50	Rising Utility Costs across Council Buildings
Elections Budget	15	15	15	Elections budget required to deliver quality service to residents and members
JE Licence & Redditch		6		To fund software JE modelling
Over 60's free swims			26	DCMS funding only available for 2 years - proposal agreed by members
Smoke Free Post	35	35	35	Grant income no longer available - grant was left in budget calculations
Election	0	10	60	Election costs - to deliver the election in 2011/12
Increase in fuel charges based on usage	90	90	90	Impact of increase in fuel charges for use of the depot fleet
License enterprise		25	25	To update microsoft licenses
Planning apps , land charges	110	110	60	Shortfalls in income anticipated from planning applications, land charges and buildign regulations
Negative budgets offset	19	19	19	To correct prior year budgets
Members remuneration - increases over inflation	5	5	5	To address the costs associated with the changes to member Committees and Boards to include Champions
Income From BDHT re sale of houses	50	50	0	income target now reduced due to decline in sales - budget for economic recovery from 11/12
Air quality monitoring	20			To monitor air quality in the town centre- statutory requirement
SIA Licensing (CCTV) 2009	3			License cost for CCTV system
Charge for land rental Bromsgrove Rovers	15			To review position on the expiry date at the end of 09/10 with the aim to charge rental to Rovers
	577	580	550	

PROPOSED SAVINGS

APPENDIX C

Description	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	Commentary	Risk to Delivery of Service
	£'000	£'000	£'000		
Non Domestic Rates	-30	-30	-30	Saving from revaluations of properties	Low risk
Clothing & Uniforms	-5	-5	-5	Savings on procurement and use of uniforms	Low risk
Corporate Training	-50	-50	-50	Reduction in corporate training budget to £150k per annum. Based on delivery of priority training for all staff - customer service, Personal Development Reviews.	Medium Risk of staff not able to deliver services to the expected quality of the public.
Printing & Stationery	-25	-25	-25	Improved procurement - includes saving from ICT & printing	Low risk
Member Development	-8	-8	-8	Reduction in member training budget to £15k per annum. Based on robust plan delivered during 2007/08 & 2008/09.	Medium Risk of Members not being able to undertake role to the expected quality of the public.
Discretionary Rate Relief	-10	-10	-10	Reduction on relief based on prior years requests from organisations	Low risk
Emergency Planning/Works	-13	-13	-13	New SLA being discussed to reduce the level of funding allocated by Bromsgrove	Medium Risk of the Council being unable to get adequate support during emergency.
Housing Benefit Overpayment recoveries	-100	-100	-100	Additional grant received due to recovery of Housing benefit overpayments	Low risk
Income Hire Charges	-15	-15	-15	Additional income anticipated from Trade Waste Service	Medium Risk of businesses being unabel to pay due to economic climate
ICT Training	-5	-5	-5	Reduction in budget	Low risk
ICT support infrastrucutre	-20	-20	-20	Savings on infrastructure	Low risk
Disaster share with Redditch	-20	-20	-20	Sharing ICT disaster recovery with Redditch	Medium risk of the joint approach not working between the two Councils.
Additional income from licensing	-10	-10	-10	Additional licensing income including increase in taxi licenses due to economic climate	Low risk
Savings from advertising	-20	-20	-20	improved procurement from negotiating with new supplier	Low risk
CCTv	-5	-8	-8	Savings associated with the upgrading of the service to a digital platform for example reduction in tape purchases.	Medium risk of the Capital Programme being rejected which would impact on the delivery of the additional income
Lifeline	-2	-2	-2	Saving based on PNC capital bid generated by additional service delivery and income generation opportunities.	Medium risk of the Capital Programme being rejected which would impact on the delivery of the additional income
Lifeline	-1	-5	-15	Saving based on PNC capital bid and current service review and remodeling.	Medium risk of the Capital Programme being rejected which would impact on the delivery of the additional income
Dolphin Centre	0	0	-20	Additional income based on Health & Fitness investment and increased membership sales.	Medium risk of the public not using the gym as expected due to the economic climate
Grounds Maintenance cost review	-12	-12	-12	Following review of grounds maintenance provision in parks and open spaces, the service has been revised to generate savings identified.	Low risk
Alternative methods of service delivery / shared services	-135	-531	-668	Shared service working	Medium Risk of the savings not being delivered If joint CEO role not achieved. Council would aim to deliver savings through other joint working arrangements
Commencement of co-mingled recycling collections (collect as alternating collection with residual)	0	-100	-100	Savings as a result of moving to co-mingle waste operations	Medium risk of co-mingle service not being delivered by the County.
Appeal Consultants Budget	-10	-10	-10	Deletion of budget for appeals within the Planning process	Medium risk of specialist advice and support required if decisions are made that may be challenged on planning matters

Contractual/Overtime Changes	-14	-14	-14	Street Cleansing Operation - review of service delivery	Low Risk
Grounds Maintenance - Cemeteries	-18	-18	-18	Reduction in posts from 4 to 3 across the cemetery service and implementation of a flexible work pattern with in remaining operatives.	Low Risk
Postage Review	-5	-5	-5	Reduction in budget following review	Low Risk
Environmental Health Licensing	-10	-10	-10	Income received in respect of environmental health licensing service	Low risk of businesses not applying for licenses during current economic climate
Savings from business process change	-25			Savings to be delivered by improvement manager through reviewing business processes within the Council	Medium Risk of delivery of savings as change in processes may take longer than originally anticipated
General grants budget	-5	-5	-5	General savings	Low Risk
TOTAL SAVINGS	-573	-1,051	-1,218		

PROPOSED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/10-2011/12

APPENDIX D

Service Area	Description of Bid	2009/2010 £'000	2010/2011 £'000	2011/2012 £'000	Commentary	Funding	Council Priority
Legal & Democratic	Remedial Work to Council Buildings following Stock Condition Surveys	50	50		To deliver the planned programme of maintenance required for the Council buildings as identified via external assessments	Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing	Town Centre
Planning & Environment	Discretionary Home Repair Assistance & Housing Renewal Grants (Private Sector Only)	100	100	63	Home Repair & maintenance assistance grants	Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing & Gov Grants £63k pa	Housing
Planning & Environment	Grants to Principal Preferred Partners (BDHT/ W Mercia) for the development of affordable housing in the district.	700			Grants to preferred partners to deliver affordable housing across the District - not delivered during 2008/09 due to issues with economy and development of housing property	Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing	Housing
Planning & Environment	Town Centre Development	100	100		Improvements and redevelopment of Town Centre	Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing	Town Centre, Clean Streets & Climate Change.
Planning & Environment	Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) - Private & BDHT Grants	510	410	310	Mandatory Disabled facilities Grants	Government Grant (£310k) & Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing	Housing
Street Scene & Community	Replacement of CCTV Equipment	290	79		Planned programme of replacement CCTV cameras	Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing	Town Centre, Clean Streets & Climate Change.
Street Scene & Community	Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Commercial Services)	13			Maintain the planned programme of replacement vehicles for commercial services fleet	Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing	Town Centre, Clean Streets & Climate Change.
Street Scene & Community	Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Garage Services)	15	25		Maintain the planned programme of replacement vehicles for garage services fleet	Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing	Town Centre, Clean Streets & Climate Change.
Street Scene & Community	Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Grounds)	102	54	17	Maintain the planned programme of replacement vehicles for grounds maintenance fleet	Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing	Town Centre, Clean Streets & Climate Change.
Street Scene & Community	Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Multi-lift Vehicle)	12			Maintain the planned programme of replacement vehicles for multi lift plant	Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing	Town Centre, Clean Streets & Climate Change.
Street Scene & Community	Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Recycling)	13			Maintain the planned programme of replacement vehicles for recycling service	Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing	Town Centre, Clean Streets & Climate Change.

PROPOSED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/10-2011/12

APPENDIX D

Service Area	Description of Bid	2009/2010 £'000	2010/2011 £'000	2011/2012 £'000	Commentary	Funding	Council Priority
Street Scene & Community	Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Refuse Collection)	273	14	984	Maintain the planned programme of replacement vehicles for refuse collection service	Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing	Town Centre, Clean Streets & Climate Change.
Street Scene & Community	Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Street Cleaning)	146			Maintain the planned programme of replacement vehicles for street cleaning service	Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing	Town Centre, Clean Streets & Climate Change.
Street Scene & Community	New Toilet Block in Town Centre	174			Provision of refurbished town centre toilet to ensure DDA compliant. Not delivered in 2008/09 due to consultation being undertaken with users	Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing	Town Centre, Clean Streets & Climate Change.
Planning and Environment	Upgrading of Houndsfield Lane Caravan Park	204			Contribution toward seeking Government Grant for the refurbishment and extension of the Gypsy and Traveller caravan site at Wythall.	Capital Receipts / Prudential Borrowing	Housing
Street Scene and Culture	New Park at Barnsley Hall (Part funded from Liveability Fund.)	215			To provision park/sports facilities at Barnsley Hall site - not delivered in 2008/09 due to awaiting outcome of PPCG 17 to identify areas of need	Capital Receipts (£10k) & Liveability Fund	Sense of Community
Street Scene and Culture	District Wide Provision/Enhancements of Sports Facilities	360			To provision park/sports facilities across the District - not delivered in 2008/09 due to awaiting outcome of PPCG 17 to identify areas of need	Grant Funded - S106	Sense of Community
Policy & Performance	Community Transport	75			To provide 1 wheelchair adapted vehicle and related software and equipment to deliver community transport across the District.	Capital Receipts / Prudential Borrowing	Sense of Community & Town Centre
Street Scene & Community	Equipment to improve cleanliness of the brooks and watercourses	25			To purchase equipment to support the street scene department fulfill role of cleansing water courses	Capital Receipts / Prudential Borrowing	Town Centre, Clean Streets & Climate Change.
Street Scene & Community	Parks & cemeteries	45			To undertake works to comply with Health & Safety requirements to include changes to paths and access	Capital Receipts / Prudential Borrowing	Sense of Community

Service Area	Description of Bid	2009/2010 £'000	2010/2011 £'000	2011/2012 £'000	Commentary	Funding	Council Priority
Street Scene & Community	Lifeline kit replacement - PNC5	54			To purchase replacements lifeline computer system to deliver an enhanced system and generate additional income for the service	Capital Receipts / Prudential Borrowing	Sense of Community
Street Scene & Community	Wheeled bins for co-mingled collections		473		Wheeled bins for the co-mingled collection service and will provide a third bin for properties that require a green waste collection. They will replace the existing red and blue boxes.	Capital Receipts / Prudential Borrowing	Climate Change
Street Scene & Community	Replacement for recycling vehicles		670		vehicle to replace the existing fleet of recycling vehicles for the co-mingled collection service	Capital Receipts / Prudential Borrowing	Climate Change
Street Scene & Community	Repairs & maintenance of bridges	50	50		To repair the bridges under LA ownership	Capital Receipts / Prudential Borrowing	Town Centre, Clean Streets & Climate Change.
Street Scene & Community	Access Improvements to Allotment Sites	20			Access Improvements at Watt Close Allotment, Stourbridge Road Allotment and Roundhill Allotment Sites.	Capital Receipts / Prudential Borrowing	Sense of Community
Corporate	SUPPORT SERVICES RECHARGES TO CAPITAL	133	136	136	Recharge from Revenue in relation to staff spending time on capital projects	Capital Receipts/Prudential Borrowing	
TOTAL SCHEMES PROPOSED		3,679	2,161	1,510			

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**Earmarked Reserves
Position Statement 2009/10**

APPENDIX E

	Anticipated Balance as at 31st March 2009	Utilised in Year	Received in Year	Anticipated Balance as at 31st March 2010	Comment/Purpose
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Revenue					
Building Control Partnership	5	0	0	5	Ring fenced surplus re Building Control fees
Planning Delivery Grant	214	-214	0	0	Grant received for improvements in planning performance
LABGI (Local Authority Business Growth Incentive)	126	-126	0	0	Grant received for growth in rateable value
Leisure	23	-23	0	0	Government grant to be used for leisure purpose.
Litigation Reserve	140	0	0	140	Potential liability arising from ongoing legal cases
Replacement Reserve	536	-536	0	0	Repairs and renewals reserve re vehicles, plant & equipment
Total Revenue Reserves	1044	-899	0	145	

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Budget Strategy - Risk Matrix

Description	Base Budget 2009/10 £'000	Base Budget 2010/11 £'000	Base Budget 2011/12 £'000	To which year does the risk relate?	Potential Risk	Possible Solution
Salaries - vacancy management provision	-320	-332	-341	All years	4% per annum allowed for vacancy management is not achieved	The Council budget for salaries on a full establishment basis - I.e., all posts filled by the same person for the period of the budget strategy (assuming incremental increases year on year). This is unlikely and a vacancy management provision should be easily achieved, however, in order to ensure this is achieved a strict vacancy management regime needs to be followed. In addition monthly budget monitoring will need to be undertaken to ensure (with a specific element dedicated to monitoring employee related costs).
Central Government Support i.e. Formula Grant	-4,945	-5,047	-5,097	2009/10 onwards	Despite a 3 year settlement being granted the government may change the criteria year on year. Potential for efficiency cuts in the future.	There will be sufficient funds in balances to fund any short term reduction in grant. Efficiency savings will be monitored on a monthly basis.
Land Charges - Income	-268	-276	-283	All years	Not achieving income target	Tight budgetary control, and if necessary, report to Members requesting additional funds, budget reduction and/or policy changes
Insurances	325	333	342	All years	Assets not insured. Repair of damaged assets less than cost of insurance?	Need to consider levels of excess during tender exercise. Tight budgetary control, and if necessary, report to Members requesting additional funds, budget reduction and/or policy changes.
Investment Interest	-147	-116	-134	All years	Non achievement of target due to lower than anticipated investment rates and higher than anticipated spend	Tight control over investments and budgetary control in general.
Car Parking Income (excluding fines, including annual tickets/residents permits)	-1,040	-1,066	-1,093	All years	Demand led; may be subject to fluctuation if option to increase prices proceeds	Feasibility study/Market Testing prior to any price increases
Building Control - Fees and charges and Income	-328	-337	-345	All years	Income unpredictable	Tight budgetary control, and if necessary, report to Members requesting additional funds, budget reduction and/or policy changes
Planning Applications - Fees and charges and Income	-387	-396	-406	All years	Income unpredictable	Tight budgetary control, and if necessary, report to Members requesting additional funds, budget reduction and/or policy changes
Alternative Methods of service delivery	-135	-531	-668	All years	Potential of not achieving efficiency savings and quality of service provision through alternative methods eg- shared / partnerships or outsourcing	Discussions with other districts/partners underway to plan for alternative ways of providing services. Strict budgetary control and quarterly reports to members to demonstrate savings are being achieved.
Green Waste	-400	-400	-410	All years	Potential of not achieving income at 38% of take up from residents due to current economic climate	Review to be undertaken on a monthly basis dependant on income received from residents - service to be modified to address any shortfall in take up.

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Budget Jury 2008

What happened?

The programme for the Budget Jury was as follows:

Date	Activity	Purpose
18 June 2008 6.30-8pm	Jury Meeting 1	<p>'Setting the scene'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of information about what services the Council provides • How much money it spends • What the budget setting process entails etc. • Opportunity for participants to ask anything they like – <i>Assistant Chief Executive and Head of Financial Services on hand to answer questions</i>
7 July 2008 6.30-8pm	Jury Meeting 2	<p>'What matters to you?'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Chief Executive provides brief overview of current priorities • Participants discuss priorities and list what matters to them – anything goes • Participants select their top five from this list (each person has five post-it note votes) • Re-convene. Participants list the things they consider important (i.e the key deliverables) under each of these five selected priorities (anything goes) • Participants select their top three from these key deliverables (each person has three post-it note votes). <p>This information was taken to Cabinet/ CMT Away Day on 11th July to feed into discussions in setting new priorities.</p>
23 October 2008 6.30-8pm	Jury Meeting 3	<p>'Budget Bids part 1'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants go through list of budget bids drawn up by Heads of Service between August and October 2008. These bids link to new priorities. Each bid to be fully explained by Assistant Chief Executive.
6 November 2008 6.30-8pm	Jury Meeting 4	<p>'Budget Bids part 2'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants vote on the budget bids explained to them at the previous Jury meeting. Participants have 30 post-it votes to allocate collectively: 10 'High' 10 'Medium' and 10 'Low'. <p>Information from this meeting will be shared with Members in the Head of Financial Services' Medium</p>

		Term Financial Plan report ahead of Full Council in January 2009 to aid Members in their decision making.
14 January 2009	Full Council	Participants attend Full Council to observe budget setting and bid-approval by Members (no incentive provided for attendance – this is optional). Participants who wish to may attend a ‘lessons learned’ meeting with Chief Executive, Leader of Council, Leader of Opposition and Portfolio Holder ahead of the Full Council, and have opportunity to talk to the local press about their experience of the Budget Jury after it (participants have been notified in advance of this and are not compelled to attend or talk to the press unless they wish to).

The story so far

Initial feedback from the Budget Jury about their experience has been extremely positive and has done much to improve these ten participants’ perception of the Council. The budget setting process has been successfully demystified for those involved, and a greater understanding of the financial constraints and pressures facing Members and officers has been achieved in spades.

Participants said they welcomed the Council’s openness in sharing financial information with them, and were able to see how budget bids must demonstrate good links to council priorities, have a strong impact on communities and represent good value for money. They were more inclined to view the Council as being ‘on their side’ and were surprised how much better the Council seemed to be in reality compared with its representation in the local media. The meetings were full of lively discussion and debate, cooperation and good humour as the participants’ understanding of Council workings increased.

Participants particularly remarked on the Head of Financial Service’s demonstration of how Council Tax increases of varying theoretical sizes impact on what the Council can achieve, and said they would pay more Council Tax if it meant the Council could achieve the things that mattered to communities. Participants suggested that more detailed financial information such as this should be made available to the residents of the district more widely (i.e. as opposed to headline figures), so that more people had the opportunity to see what income a range of possible Council Tax increases could achieve. The forthcoming online budget consultation has been made more interactive this year as a result of these comments: web users will be able to alter Council Tax levels and prioritise budget bids to try and balance the budget themselves – effectively putting them in the shoes of the Members who represent them.

Appendix Gii details the priority ranking of the budget jury in relation to the funding bids requested by officers. The majority of the high bids are ranked the same as the officers which demonstrates that the priorities set by the Council reflect budget jury views.

One final outcome of the Budget Jury has been the indication from at least five members of the Jury that they would like to become more involved in local democracy and would welcome opportunities for further community engagement. One even

indicated he would be considering standing for election as a District Council in the future as a result of his experience.

A 'lessons learned' meeting is now planned with senior officers and members to identify how the Budget Jury might be expanded in 2009.

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PRIORITY

APPENDIX G ii

Key Deliverable Bids	2009/2010 £000	Commentary	Link to Corporate Objectives	Officer Priority Ranking	Budget Jury priority ranking	Risk to the delivery of priorities
CSC Staffing	76	2.5 fte CSAs + 1 manager (To replace the reduction in County funding)	Sense Of Community	High	High	High risk of lack of customer service if bid not approved - reduction in number of CSAs
Disability Group & Finding a voice	1	Disability Group - Enable group to provide social and information network for people with disability and Finding a voice Determine demand for network and if one, set up network to provide support and provide voice for this community.	Sense Of Community	High	High	High Risk to the sense of community felt by this group of residents
Allotment Project	1	Allotment Project - Regenerate run down allotment. Padstone and Greenscope Day Service to work on allotment.	Sense Of Community	High	High	Medium Risk - the allotment project demonstrates the Council is working with disadvantaged groups across the District
Climate Change Strategy	20	Shared post to review how the Council and its partners addresses the issues of climate change and bio-diversity	Clean Streets and Climate Change	High	High	High risk of the Council being unable to fulfill its role in relation to key priority of climate change
Graduate Trainee	25	New post to improve marketing and partnership involvement across the District - linked to restructure of the department	Sense Of Community	High	High	High risk of the Council being unable to improve its working with partners and stakeholders to increase the involvement of residents in consultation with the Council
Wardens/ ASB Officers	30	To increase the mainstream funded neighbourhood warden posts to 3, giving 4 in total dependant upon Safer Communities Board funding.	Sense Of Community	High	Medium	High risk to the sense of community as more wardens will give support to areas where there may be issues that need addressing.
Car Park Changes	38	To not increase car park charges in 2009/10	Town Centre	High	Low	Low Risk
Project Support	35	Emergency Planning Assistant, Business Continuity/ Town Centre Support officer	Town Centre	High	Medium	High risk to the delivery of key projects to be undertaken by the Council - officer will support Director and ensure projects are delivered on time
Community Transport	30	1 Drivers and vehicle - net of income received from customers	Sense Of Community	High	High	High risk as concern has been raised a number of times by disadvantaged groups that this service is not available in Bromsgrove and is a high priority to our residents to improve their sense of community

Key Deliverable Bids	2009/2010 £000	Commentary	Link to Corporate Objectives	Officer Priority Ranking	Budget Jury priority ranking	Risk to the delivery of priorities
Shortfall in income on B&B and Hostels	19	hostels have been transferred to BDHT and therefore no longer receive income and B&B not required	Housing	High	Not advised	Low Risk
Youth Budgeting	10	White paper - getting younger people involved	Sense Of Community	High	High	Medium risk to delivery of the sense of community as young people will not have the opportunity to get involved with the Council
Consultants re EIP	100	Inspectors for investigation & preparing report -	Regeneration/Environment	High	Low	High risk to the delivery of a robust action plan for the regeneration of the District
Museum	25	Cataloging and transportation link to the closure of the facility based museum service.	Sense Of Community	High	Low	Medium risk as the funds will not be available to support the option approved by members in relation to the museum
Permanently recruit improvement manager	25.0	Expect this to be a spend to save bid	Mike Webb	High		High
Foyer 24 hour support	3.0	Joint funding of an enhanced level of support and supervision at the proposed new Foyer scheme for 16 to 25 year olds by providing (jointly funded) high time and weekend caretaking / support supervisor on site.	Housing	High	Not advised	High Risk to the delivery of supported housing within the Foyer Project
MARC	15.0	Grant funding re MARC centre	Housing	High	Not advised	High Risk to the sense of community as the MARC centre would have to close and many people would not have a facility to use in the Charford area for advice and support
Neighbourhood Partnerships	22	to increase substantive funding for existing 2 neighbourhood partnerships from £4k to £15k - 08/09 funded from improvement plan (cabinet 30/04/08) (unparished)	Sense Of Community	High	Medium	Medium Risk to delivery of the sense of community as the neighbourhood partnership scheme would not be rolled out to all areas across the District and local people would not be able to be as involved as was initially expected
Neighbourhood Partnerships	8	To increase Neighbourhood partnerships to other £4k in 1st year followed by £5k in 2nd year per cllr (inc one p/ship eac yr)	Sense Of Community	High	Medium	Medium Risk to delivery of the sense of community as the neighbourhood partnership scheme would not be rolled out to all areas across the District and local people would not be able to be as involved as was initially expected

Key Deliverable Bids	2009/2010 £000	Commentary	Link to Corporate Objectives	Officer Priority Ranking	Budget Jury priority ranking	Risk to the delivery of priorities
Wardens/ ASB Officers	30	To increase the mainstream funded neighbourhood warden posts to 4, giving 5 in total dependant upon Safer Communities Board funding.	Sense Of Community	Medium	Medium	Medium Risk - 1 additional warden included in high pressure
Town Centre- Cleanliness	10.0	Improve perception of cleanliness, litter pickup	Clean Streets and Climate Change	Medium	High	Low risk - to be picked up as part of street cleansing programme
Inflationary Increase for Housing SLA	9	BDHT inflationary increase is based on RPI	Housing	Medium	Not advised	Medium risk of BDHT nto fulfilling their SLA
Fixed Penalty Notice Implementation	15.0	Implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement	Town Centre	Medium	High	Low Risk - initial cost prohibitive within current climate
Self Advocacy	4	Self advocacy for older people. Set up group sessions each fortnight to develop self advocacy skills and retain independence for longer. Changed to low priority following consideration by budget jury	Sense Of Community	Low	Medium	Low risk
Monitoring Officer Investigations	30.0	Additional officer required to service increase in member investigations	Roger Smith	Low	Low	Medium risk - dependant on member complaints & investigations
Community admin (LNP's)	30.0	Additional officer required to service LNP	Roger Smith	Low	Low	Low risk
Increase Democratic Participation	5.0	Community involvement, Raising awareness, Increasing participation	Sense Of Community	Low	Medium	Low risk to be developed with budget jury
Sickness absence software to improve performance & Healthy Living Campaign	22.0	Possible spend to save additional costs arising from sickness or agency		Low	Medium (only after lengthy discussion and vote)	Medium risk - costs prohibitive in current climate but sickness levels may not reduce as anticipated
Recruitment Adverts	2.0	Improve advertising for Council posts		Low	Not Advised	Low risk
Video Links improvement	8.0	To improve accessibility	Sense Of Community	Low	Low	Low risk
Front of House	50.0	2 Customer Service Advisors - to be met from admin review/ alternative methods found	Sense Of Community	Low	Not Advised	Low risk

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Recommendations made jointly by the **Overview Board** and **Scrutiny Board** at its meeting held on 2nd December 2008 relating to the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) are as follows:

- (a) **that a rise in car parking charges, at approximately the rate of inflation, be included in all years of the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2009/2010 to 2011/2012 (as supported by the Budget Jury);**

(REASON: It was believed by Overview and Scrutiny Members that it is better to include a smaller increase each year rather than no increase followed by a high increase in future years.)

- (b) **that Worcestershire County Council be approached for funding towards the new bids 'Disability Group and Finding a Voice' and 'Self Advocacy';**

(REASON: These new bids relate to the work of Worcestershire County Council and therefore they should be requested to contribute towards the relatively small amount of funding required.)

- (c) **that the £25K bid in 2009/10 to fund an improvement manager for 6 months be withdrawn;**

(REASON: It was felt that this was not value for money and the existing Senior Management Team should be able to carry out this role.)

- (d) **that West Mercia Police be requested to consider making a financial contribution towards the replacement of CCTV equipment; and**

(REASON: It is understood that there is evidence to suggest that CCTV significantly reduces anti-social behaviour, however, it was felt by Overview and Scrutiny Members that CCTV benefits the Police as it assists them in "doing their job". Therefore, it was believed the Police could be asked to make a financial contribution.)

- (e) **that the Cabinet consider ensuring all funding relating to the chargeable green waste collections is separate to the funding required for the refuse and recycling collection service.**

(REASON: It was felt that it should be clear to all that funding for the chargeable green waste is separate, covered by the annual charge (currently £30) and not subsidised by the refuse and recycling collection service. (Note: Further information relating to this was requested by Overview and Scrutiny Members and was supplied by the Head of Street Scene and Community after the meeting.))

Further details of the discussion on the budget proposals can be found in the minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Overview Board and Scrutiny Board held on 2nd December 2008.

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

7TH JANUARY 2009

CLOSURE OF BROMSGROVE MUSEUM

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor
Responsible Head of Service	Phil Street
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 On November 12th Council resolved to receive a report at its meeting in January on progress with the closure of the museum. This report is asking that the requested report containing the required details is delayed until February. This request is made owing to there being insufficient opportunity to establish the museum closure advisory group, complete the identification of the costs associated with closure and arranging the meeting with the Friends of the Norton Collection Charitable Trust.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Cabinet recommends that the report to Council on the closure of the museum be delayed until February 2009.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At the Council meeting on 12th November the Leader of Council stated that decisions to be taken with regard to the future of the Bromsgrove Museum would be taken by the Council in its capacity as Trustee whereas others would be taken in its capacity as Local Authority. In its role as Trustee the Council had a duty to act in the best interests of the Trust.
- 3.2 It was stated that Cabinet had considered a report on the Future of Bromsgrove Museum which contained five options These had been considered by the Cabinet. However, a further proposal had been received by officers from a newly constituted organisation called the Friends of the Norton Collection Charitable Trust. This proposed that the Council provide the Trust with the opportunity to purchase the Museum building at market value and that the Trust be permitted nine months within which to raise the necessary capital. The Trust would enter into an option to purchase agreement to achieve this end with payment of a fee. If the proposal failed the Trust would lose that fee. As part of this new proposal the Council would transfer the artefacts to the

newly formed Trust and continue to provide storage facilities at the Council's Depot until such time as the Trust secured its own storage facility.

- 3.3 Although Cabinet had adopted option 5 of the report on the Future of Bromsgrove Museum, officers had not yet had the opportunity to advise on the detail and validity of the new proposal offer. With the consent of the meeting, the Leader therefore proposed that recommendation (b) from the Cabinet be altered to read:

“that authority be delegated to the Executive Director (Partnerships and Projects) to set up a suitable advisory group to report to Council in January 2009 having investigated the viability of the proposal from the Friends of the Norton Collection Charitable Trust and the costs and implications of option 5 (including taking specialist legal advice, specialist advice on removal and storage of the Collection and future management of the Collection) and to report back to Council to request the release of appropriate funding from balances to effect option 5;”

3.4 In pursuit of this recommendation meetings have been arranged with the Friends of the Norton Collection and an advisory group has been convened. However, it has not been possible to collect all the financial information requested and the meeting with the Friends of the Norton Collection requires follow up actions before advice on viability can be provided to Council.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Work is being initiated on the costs of the pursuit of Option Five which will include:
- Cost of: completion of cataloguing the museum based collection;
 - Identification of specialist removal company to transfer the artefacts from the museum to storage;
 - Costs associated with amending the existing trust deed and costs of advice when dealing with the Charity Commission;
 - Costs associated with sale of building;
 - Expenditure incurred in ending the watch repairers lease with the museum building;
 - Expenditure associated with transferring the Tourist Information Centre;
 - Costs of any other building associated matters
 - Costs associated with the operating the curriculum boxes for schools.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The closure of the museum or the potential transfer of the museum to the Friends of the Norton Collection will have specialist legal issues surrounding charity law.

5.2 As part of the delayed report these will be detailed and estimated costs presented in the financial implications section of the report.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

6.1 The museum does not form part of the Council's priorities.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

These will be detailing the report being prepared for February.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The closure of the museum will have a negative impact on the customers who could potentially have visited it however this is felt to be negligible given the low visitor numbers.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The museum is currently inaccessible to those with mobility difficulties and those who use a wheel chair.

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 By continuing to operate the museum as it was previously the Council would not be demonstrating value for money – visitor numbers were low and as a result the cost per visitor were high. The Museum does not directly contribute towards the achievement of the Council's objectives and priorities and as such doesn't represent value for money. Given this it is felt that Options 5 or 6 operate the best value for money to the Council.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues – Advice on removals and sale of building
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	Yes
Head of Service	Not applicable
Head of Financial Services	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	No

13. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards, but St John's more directly

14. APPENDICES

None

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

7TH JANUARY 2009

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTYWIDE STRATEGY FOR TELECARE 2007-2011

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Cllr Mrs June Griffiths
Responsible Head of Service	Mike Bell
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report brings forward for Members information the Worcestershire Telecare Strategy and outlines the implications for Bromsgrove Council's Life Line Service.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Worcestershire Countywide Strategy for Telecare 2007-2011 as set out in Appendix 1 be adopted.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Worcestershire's vision is to enable the majority of older people with disabilities, people with mental health problems and other vulnerable people to live as independently as possible in their own homes, should this be their preference.
- 3.2 The strategy sets out Worcestershire's plan for developing Telecare services throughout the county.
- 3.3 Telecare builds on traditional community alarm monitoring services. This Council already has the community alarm control centre from which this technology can be monitored.
- 3.4 Telecare has the potential, as part of a support package, to help people retain their independence and improve their quality of life. It can also provide cost-effective solutions to providing support and care services, so freeing up staff and carers to provide more personalised support where it is needed.
- 3.5 An example of Telecare assisted technology is a bed pressure sensor that could detect when a person has left their bed during the night and trigger an alarm to the community alarm control centre if they do not return to bed within an agreed time, where assistance can be offered by contacting carers or the emergency services.

- 3.6 The aim of the strategy is also to defer the need for residential or nursing care, reduce the number of acute hospital admissions and improve the hospital discharge times.
- 3.7 The strategy commenced in 2007 and whilst this has only now been agreed for sign off the objectives and outcomes of the strategy have already commenced. Appendix 1 details this work.
- 3.8 Currently four local authority based telecare services operate in Worcestershire. Bromsgrove is one and Wyre Forest, South Worcestershire and Redditch are the others.
- 3.9 The County Council Strategy indicates that the County's Adult and Community Service is proposing to seek a single telecare provider. This may be drawn from one of the local authority based services or they may select a provider from outside the county.
- 3.10 If this intention becomes practice and Bromsgrove is not selected as the service provider then Bromsgrove's Life Line Service may lose the work it currently receives from the Adult and Community Service that currently accounts for less than 3% of its customers and less than 2.5% of its income. The majority of its business is from other contracts such as BDHT and individual self funding customers.
- 3.11 A capital bid is being submitted by Bromsgrove Life Line Service to upgrade its technology so that it can provide the full range of services that telecare now includes. This will enhance its provision. Upgrading its technology has to be considered as its current system become obsolete at the end of 2009.
- 3.12 Bromsgrove Life Line Service does not want to lose its Adult and Community Service customers. However, Bromsgrove Life Line has prepared a comprehensive business plan that was in the process of being prepared before the Strategy was launched. The plan details proposed changes in the Life Line service structure and indicates the level of business it aims to achieve over the next three years. The Strategy does not affect the substance of the plan and the potential loss of Adult and Community Service business does not affect the viability of the Service.
- 3.13 Based on the assumption that the districts future demography indicates a significant increase in the proportion of older people there appears that there is likely to be increased demand for the Life Line Service to support independent living. The county will only provide a service to those who are deemed to have a critical or substantial need, however BDC can offer a service to all residents whatever their level of need.
- 3.14 BDC supports the County Telecare Strategy in promoting independent living and aims to extend support to others that would benefit from the

Life Line service. Telecare supports the National Performance Indicator (139) which measures the extent to which older people receive the support they need to live at home.

4. Key Issues

Community Alarm Centres

- 4.1 There are four community alarm monitoring centres throughout the County of Worcestershire: Redditch, Bromsgrove, Wyre Forest and Malvern.
- 4.2 Supporting People is the largest single funding service for the community alarms. A value for money framework will be developed during 2008 by Worcestershire Supporting People team and a review of the way community alarm provision is carried out will take place.

Assisted Technology

- 4.3 The assisted technology equipment is provided by the County Council free of charge.
- 4.4 There are initial installation costs for this Council which are paid for by the County Council.
- 4.5 The monitoring of the equipment is paid for by the customer, creating an income for this Council, and ensuring sustainability of service provision.
- 4.6 A demonstration flat has been set up in Redditch at Mendip House, Loxley Close, Church Hill that is receiving visits from all over the county. This is the only demonstration flat to provide a wide range of assisted technology and demonstration of the new flat pack Pod extension for DFG works in the county.

Conclusion

- 4.7 By working with the County Strategy of introducing assisted technology we will be helping those elderly and vulnerable people to live independently in the community.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications for this Council by implementing the Strategy. The equipment is provided from the Preventative Technology Grant from the Department of Health which will last until April 2009.

5.2 Identifying investment for future services is ongoing with the County Council. The Council's Control Centre already monitors some assisted technology over and above the standard Lifeline unit and charges accordingly

5.3 Approximately a third of the Lifeline Service income is indirectly financed by the Supporting People contract with BDHT. If this contract was withdrawn or a different Lifeline provider selected then there would be financial implications for the Council in providing the monitoring service. However the service is operated from the CCTV Control Room, it complements the monitoring of CCTV because the two services are busy at different times of the day. This ensures value for money in the multifunctional role.

5.3. A significant proportion of the Lifeline Service income is indirectly financed by the Supporting People contract with BDHT. If this contract was withdrawn or a different Lifeline provider selected then there would be financial implications for the Council in providing the monitoring service.

5.5 The Council will be giving consideration to a capital request to upgrade its technology for monitoring the service.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Under Section 2 of the Local Government Act .2000, the Council has the power to do anything which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the social wellbeing of its area.

7. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

7.1 Objective 3 – Sense of Community and Well Being.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 The Worcestershire Supporting People team will be carrying out a review of the way the community alarm services are provided throughout the county. There could be financial implications for this Council if Supporting People contracts with RSL's for sheltered housing scheme monitoring specified one alarm service provider for the County.

8.2 By increasing the numbers of installations of assisted technology systems that the community alarm centre monitors, this will increase the income into the service making it better value for money and less of a risk in a competing market.

- 8.3 The current service level can accommodate an increase in monitoring the assisted technology. Regular checks on performance levels show that there is sufficient capacity for increasing the number of Service Users.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 A partnership approach to supporting the aims of the Worcestershire Strategy for Telecare will promote additional choice and options for older people.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Everyone who meets the criteria set by the County Council can access the service. Eligible Service Users will be charged a nominal fee of £1.00 per week, however appropriate benefits should be available to those who qualify.
- 9.2 The strategy widens the group of people who can benefit from Telecare, and this is in line with BDC Equality and Diversity policy and initiatives which are about enabling more people including disabled and elderly to be supported to live independently in their own homes.

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no financial implications for this authority, however in due course we will need to upgrade Control Room software to continue service delivery. There is a business case being prepared to upgrade existing equipment that is currently 10 years old and no longer sustainable due to BT upgrading their telephone network (BT21CN).

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues None
Personnel Implications There are no personnel implications however in light of increased service demand in all areas, a review of the Lifeline Service structure is in progress.
Governance/Performance Management None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998

The technology could assist in keeping people safe in their homes as the community alarms centre can activate emergency services on their behalf.
Policy
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	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	No

13. WARDS AFFECTED

'All Wards'

14. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Worcestershire Countywide Strategy for Telecare 2007-2011

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Worcestershire Countywide Strategy for Telecare 2007-2011

CONTACT OFFICER

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Countywide Strategy for Telecare 2007-2011

Summary Version

Introduction to the Strategy

Worcestershire's vision is to enable the majority of older people, people with disabilities, people with mental health problems and other vulnerable people to live as independently as possible in their own homes, should this be their preference. Technology will play an increasing role in promoting such independence. This document sets out Worcestershire's plans for developing telecare services, utilising the Preventative Technology Grant awarded by the Government for this purpose and other available funding.

Why we need a strategy

In Worcestershire the number of people over 65 yrs will increase from 97,000 in 2006 to 110,100 in 2011. This increase of 13,100 older people represents a growth of 13.5 % over the five-year period. Telecare services in Worcestershire will be targeted primarily, but not exclusively, at older people to support these growing numbers (who are by far the largest service user group of health and social services) to live as independently as possible.

The Wanless review of 2005 highlighted people's preference to be supported to live in their own home rather than admission to residential care. The government White Paper 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' published in 2006, which emphasised the need for health and social care agencies to work together to provide community-based services, recommended the use of telecare solutions to support more people to be independent.

Telecare has the potential as part of a support package to help people retain their independence and improve their quality of life. It enables people to feel constantly supported at home, rather than left alone, reliant on occasional home visits or their capacity to access local services. It also gives peace of mind to carers and relatives who are able to have a better quality of life in the knowledge that the telecare equipment will trigger a response in the event the service user raises a call or their behaviour triggers an alert for assistance.

Telecare can also provide cost effective solutions to providing support and care services, so freeing up staff and carers to provide more personalised support and care where it is needed. Technology can never be a substitute for human contact and there is great value in our staff being able to spend time with vulnerable service users. At the same time, technology can reduce unwanted intrusion by carers.

Strategic Aims

The strategic aims for all partners to this Strategy for the development of Telecare across the county over the next four years are to:

1. Deliver a phased roll-out of mainstream Telecare across the County in an equitable and sustainable way, so that by April 2011 the majority of adults requiring support and care (and their carers) are able to access and benefit from Telecare services, whether provided by the County Council, local District Councils, Registered Social Landlords, or, the voluntary sector
2. Focus the County Council service on meeting the needs of older people and adults with physical disabilities or a sensory impairment, who have been assessed by Adult and Community Services as having critical and substantial needs. District Council and Registered Social Landlord providers will ensure that telecare is also available to people with lower level needs which will help prevent that person's needs from becoming substantial, for instance following a fall.
3. Ensure the County Council, District Councils, Registered Social Landlord and Voluntary Sector providers work together to provide maximum choice of telecare services for local vulnerable residents, both in terms of the range of equipment provided and the charging arrangements to ensure all needs can be met.
4. Provide Telecare services alongside a wide range of other complimentary options which together, as an individually tailored package, will support people to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible, should this be their preference
5. Work in partnership to ensure that Telecare services are more widely accessible, acceptable and understood by all those who could benefit from Telecare.
6. Increase the uptake of Telecare services by communicating the potential benefits to service users and carers and by providing Telecare opportunities in a diverse range of existing service settings across health, housing and social care
7. Work together to develop Telecare services and associated initiatives which will assist Adult and Community Services, Housing Authorities and Health agencies to achieve key performance indicators
8. Continue to explore innovative ways in which telecare can be used to improve efficiencies in health, social care and housing service provision to the benefit of local residents.
9. Review the Strategy in 2008 and develop the detailed commissioning intentions for 2009-2011, when there is greater clarity about future funding streams.

Basic Principles

The Basic Principles for Telecare services in Worcestershire are to:

- Improve service user's independence, confidence and safety whilst minimising any potential negative impact
- Ensure that service users are equipped with the necessary information about Telecare so they can make informed choices including those who are self-purchasing and using Direct Payments.
- Ensure that all people who are offered Telecare services are capable of giving full informed consent or the individual's advocate, carer or relative must give full informed consent.
- Ensure telecare services are delivered in partnership with key strategic partners such as Worcestershire County Council, District Councils and the Primary Care Trust and that they are built on existing service infrastructures and demonstrate best value for the County
- Provide good quality and accessible information for the public about the range of services and equipment available and how it can be accessed.
- Ensure that equipment supplied is acceptable and fit for purpose and meets the person's needs.
- Ensure that equipment is supplied in a timely manner to people who meet the Telecare service providers Eligibility Criteria
- Involve service users from the outset in developing their own outcome based Care Plan where appropriate.
- Provide regular reviews of equipment supplied to ensure it is still appropriate
- Provide a service which offers genuine reassurance to service users and carers
- Provide a service which complements traditional models of support and care
- Ensure an appropriate, timely and safe response to calls for assistance
- Be cost effective, monitored and evaluated.

How we have produced the strategy

- Users and Carers were involved in developing the Strategy through a telecare Users reference group supported by the County Council's Involvement Team. The group has provided an open forum to raise individual issues and concerns, to try out and appraise different Telecare devices and systems, discuss the kinds of response services required and also to champion Telecare.
- A short term Project Steering Group involving key representatives from Adult and Community Services, Older People's Forums, District Councils, Health and Provider Services was held during 2006/7 to initiate the development of the Telecare Strategy and service development.
- A short term County Council Project Management Board, was also established to link with the Project Steering group and oversee the development of the strategy and the use of the Preventative Technologies Grant in Worcestershire.

Implementing the strategy

A multi-agency Telecare Strategy Implementation Group has now taken over from the above groups to oversee the development of telecare in Worcestershire for the lifetime of the Strategy on behalf of all the partners. This group will work with the Telecare User reference group to carry out the commissioning intentions and review the Strategy.

Desired Outcomes

In addition to meeting the Department of Health targets for increasing the numbers of people with telecare equipment in their own homes by 5600 people in the county, the Telecare Strategy Steering group has agreed that the following outcomes will be monitored and reported on for Telecare services in Worcestershire:

- Installation of telecare will defer the need for residential or nursing care
- Service Users will gain greater independence
- The burden on carers will be reduced, giving them more personal freedom and support
- The number of acute hospital admissions will be reduced
- Service Users will have fewer accidents and falls in their home
- Hospital discharges will take place earlier which may not have otherwise occurred

These outcomes will be monitored and reported on by the County Council as part of their contracts monitoring process and through the District Council and Registered Social landlords' annual reports. It is envisaged that there will also be an Annual Review of the Telecare Strategy which will include supporting data on delivery of the outcomes.

Sustainability

It is essential that all telecare service provision within Worcestershire is sustainable to enable a reliable, consistent service for service users and carers providing quality of life outcomes for local older and vulnerable people.

The Preventative Technology Grant from the Department of Health will last until April 2009, and beyond that, identifying investment for future services is a complex matter.

There is the possibility of attracting new investment or through achieving positive outcomes identify efficiency savings in health, and social care which can be redirected into telecare services

The approach in Worcestershire will be based on evaluating individual outcomes for service users through the development and implementation of a simple evaluation process to assess the relative costs of any Telecare services provided compared to the likely alternative (non-Telecare) service.

Reviewing the strategy

The implementation of this strategy will be formally reviewed by the Telecare Strategy Implementation Group during 2008, in conjunction with the Telecare User and Carer Reference Group. This review will include a cost/benefit analysis to ensure that the Telecare services being provided within the county are sustainable and meeting it's the desired outcomes outlined in section 6 of this strategy. Following this review, decisions will be taken about the future of the service and the commissioning intentions for 2010-2011.

Technologies will develop quickly as manufacturers and suppliers appreciate more fully the way that Telecare services can assist in empowering people and helping in relation to their support and care needs. Such changes and the growth in service provision within the county will mean that it will be necessary to keep services under constant review. This will enable problems to be identified and quickly resolved, and to ensure that any new risks are managed and kept under review.

Countywide Strategy for Telecare

2007 - 2011



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1. Introduction to the Strategy

1.1 Vision

Worcestershire's vision is to enable the majority of older people, people with disabilities, people with mental health problems and other vulnerable people to live as independently as possible in their own homes, should this be their preference. Technology will play an increasing role in promoting such independence. This document sets out Worcestershire's plans for developing telecare services, utilising the Preventative Technology Grant awarded by the Government for this purpose and other available funding.

Technology can never be a substitute for human contact and there is great value in our staff being able to spend time with vulnerable service users. At the same time, technology can reduce unwanted intrusion by carers.

The concept of Telecare is simple: technology does what technology is good at (constant monitoring and automatic feedback), freeing our staff to do what they are good at – the human touch. Telecare is not just about equipment; it is a complete service which includes providing an appropriate response. For service users, the benefit is increased reassurance, with less intrusion in their lives. The main benefit to social care services is that staff may be deployed more productively and in a more targeted way. It can give carers more personal freedom and more time to concentrate on the human aspects of care and support.

However, Telecare needs to be part of a 'whole systems' integrated approach, with the goal of improving quality of support and/or care rather than cutting care hours to service users. Telecare is complementary to the support and social care systems we have in place and is not a wholesale substitute.

Telecare builds on traditional community alarm monitoring services, but it requires a change in the way that challenges have been addressed in the past and the adoption of a new approach. It will involve new responsibilities for some people involved in the provision of support and care services and it will involve changes in working practices for others.

The primary objective of Telecare itself remains that of enabling people to live as independently as possible, with dignity, and with the risks which threaten independence being managed to their (and their carers') satisfaction.

1.2 Summary of Strategic Aims

The strategic aims for all partners to this Strategy for the development of Telecare across the county over the next four years are;

1. Deliver a phased roll-out of mainstream Telecare across the County in an equitable and sustainable way, so that by April 2011 the majority of adults requiring support and care (and their carers) are able to access and benefit from Telecare services, whether provided by the County

- Council, local District Councils, Registered Social Landlords, or, the voluntary sector
2. Focus the County Council service on meeting the needs of older people and adults with physical disabilities or a sensory impairment, who have been assessed by Adult and Community Services as having critical and substantial needs. District Council and Registered Social Landlord providers will ensure that telecare is also available to people with lower level needs which will help prevent that person's needs from becoming substantial, for instance following a fall.
 3. Ensure the County Council, District Councils, Registered Social Landlord and Voluntary Sector providers work together to provide maximum choice of telecare services for local vulnerable residents, both in terms of the range of equipment provided and the charging arrangements to ensure all needs can be met.
 4. Provide Telecare services alongside a wide range of other complimentary options which together, as an individually tailored package, will support people to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible, should this be their preference
 5. Work in partnership to ensure that Telecare services are more widely accessible, acceptable and understood by all those who could benefit from Telecare.
 6. Increase the uptake of Telecare services by communicating the potential benefits to service users and carers and by providing Telecare opportunities in a diverse range of existing service settings across health, housing and social care
 7. Work together to develop Telecare services and associated initiatives which will assist Adult and Community Services, Housing Authorities and Health agencies to achieve key performance indicators
 8. Continue to explore innovative ways in which telecare can be used to improve efficiencies in health, social care and housing service provision to the benefit of local residents.
 9. Review the Strategy in 2008 and develop the detailed commissioning intentions for 2009-2011, when there is greater clarity about future funding streams.

1.3 Definitions of Telecare, Assistive Technology and Telemedicine

Telecare is the use of sensor and communication technologies to monitor the safety and well being of vulnerable people in their normal place of residence and alert appropriate people (family, carers, monitoring centre, the person themselves, or others) when help or action is required. It is the deployment of Telecare that is the main focus for this Strategy.

Assistive technology is a product or system that enables independence of people with cognitive, physical or communication difficulties. For the purposes of this strategy, assistive technology will be used as an umbrella term to cover community equipment, community alarms and Telecare.

Telemedicine is the rapid access to shared and remote medical expertise by means of telecommunications and information technologies, no matter where the patient or relevant information is located.

1.4 Who Will Benefit from Telecare Services in Worcestershire?

In Worcestershire, Telecare services will be delivered primarily for older people, however the services will also be accessible by younger adults and for the benefit of children where such technology could help them remain safely in the community. Telecare services will not be provided for adults or older people in long term residential care establishments, or to assist such establishments introduce Telecare systems of their own.

This strategy encompasses Telecare equipment that can be;

- Provided for free by the County Council to older people, and adults with physical disabilities or a sensory impairment, who have been assessed by Adult and Community Services as having critical and substantial needs. This is due to funding being made available from the Department of Health through an allocation of Preventative Technology Grant for the period of 2006 – 2009.
- Provided on a rental basis by the District Council and Registered Social Landlord providers for those on low incomes, and
- Private purchase for those who can afford it from the District Council and Registered Social Landlord providers within the County.

Leaflets about the various telecare services available within the county are widely distributed at various community outlets. These leaflets set out the benefits, the range of equipment available and where they can be obtained.

1.5 The Future is Now

According to the White Paper, 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' published in 2006, "Telecare services already in use in or near the home, include:

- house alarms linked to a call centre staffed by a nurse, coordinated by the local council;
- 'Well Elderly Clinics' for people living on their own but requiring some simple monitoring, including blood pressure, heart rate and glucose measurements;
- local intermediate care programmes that provide in-home support during recovery, aim to prevent unnecessary acute admission and maximise independence;
- spirometric and cardiac readings from in the home to detect acute episodes early and minimise or eliminate the need for hospitalisation – currently in place for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cardiac and pulmonary patients in limited geographies;

- in-home touch-screen and video link-up for patients to self-monitor and feed information to health professionals;
- bed sensors that determine if the resident has failed to return to bed by a set time.”

1.6 Basic Principles

At an early stage in the process, the Telecare Project Steering Group agreed some basic principles for the Strategy.

Telecare services in Worcestershire will:

1. Improve service user's independence, confidence and safety whilst minimising any potential negative impact
2. Ensure that service users are equipped with the necessary information about Telecare so they can make informed choices including those who are self-purchasing and using Direct Payments.
3. Ensure that all people who are offered Telecare services are capable of giving full informed consent or the individual's advocate, carer or relative must give full informed consent.
4. Ensure telecare services are delivered in partnership with key strategic partners such as Worcestershire County Council, District Councils and the Primary Care Trust and that they are built on existing service infrastructures and demonstrate best value for the County
5. Provide good quality and accessible information for the public about the range of services and equipment available and how it can be accessed.
6. Ensure that equipment supplied is acceptable and fit for purpose and meets the person's needs.
7. Ensure that equipment is supplied in a timely manner to people who meet the Telecare service providers Eligibility Criteria
8. Involve service users from the outset in developing their own outcome based Care Plan where appropriate.
9. Provide regular reviews of equipment supplied to ensure it is still appropriate
10. Provide a service which offers genuine reassurance to service users and carers
11. Provide a service which complements traditional models of support and care

12. Ensure an appropriate, timely and safe response to calls for assistance
13. Be cost effective, monitored and evaluated.

2. Why we need a strategy

2.1 Government policy

The starting point of Government policy is that everyone in society has a positive contribution to make and they should have a right to control their own lives. This is expounded in the 2005 Department of Health Green Paper, 'Independence, Well-being and Choice' – a vision for the future of social care for adults in England. The local authority will have a key strategic and leadership role and work in an inclusive way with key partners to provide integrated services to meet the needs of a diverse community. People with the highest needs will receive the necessary support and protection and the risks of independence will be shared openly with individuals and balanced against the benefits. Services will be of a high quality delivered by a well-trained workforce or by well-supported carers. Technology will be better used and there will be a wide range of supported housing options. The NHS, social care, housing authorities and other bodies such as Supporting People, will work together with an emphasis on preventing ill health where possible and maintaining the independence of individuals.

The White Paper, 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' published in 2006 builds on the Green Paper and the new ideas can be grouped into six themes:

1. More services in the community
2. Greater prevention
3. Enhanced access to general practice and community services
4. Better support to people with long-term conditions
5. Integrating health and social care
6. Providing people with a louder voice

Telecare has the potential as part of a support package to help people retain their independence and improve their quality of life. It enables people to feel constantly supported at home, rather than left alone, reliant on occasional home visits or their capacity to access local services. It is essential that the key strategic partners, Worcestershire County Council, the District Councils and the Worcestershire Primary Care Trust work together in providing telecare services which deliver the government's vision.

2.2 Local needs and demands

In Worcestershire the number of people over 65 yrs will increase from 97,000 in 2006 to 110,100 in 2011. This increase of 13,100 older people represents a growth of 13.5 % over the five-year period.

Telecare services in Worcestershire will be targeted primarily, but not exclusively, at older people to support these growing numbers (who are by far the largest service user group of health and social services) to live as independently as possible.

“Older people’s expectations are changing, and the aspirations and preferences of people now in their 60s are vastly different from those of their counterparts 20 or more years ago. The so-called baby boom generation (born 1945–54), who will be in their 70s in 20 years’ time (Huber and Skidmore 2003), are already exhibiting a big change in approach towards their later lives”.
(Wanless 2005)

The Wanless review also highlighted people’s preference to be supported to live in their own home rather than admission to residential care

The Department of Health has used computer-modelling techniques in an attempt to predict the requirements for residential care according to whether Telecare is developed across the UK or not. This suggests that Telecare will significantly reduce the need for residential care, at least initially. By 2009 the model suggests there will need to be a return to some growth in the residential care sector.

This same model has also been used to predict the impact Telecare might have on home care uptake. This shows that although Telecare initially reduces the demands on home care services, after 2010 there is actually a greater demand – presumably as the combination of Telecare with home care enables the two to become a more viable option to residential care.

In Worcestershire, the County Council does not yet collect reportable data on the critical reasons a person goes into residential care, and this is an issue that will need to be addressed to provide valuable information which will assist in measuring the effectiveness of Telecare in the longer term. There is however anecdotal evidence from front line workers and managers that the top five reasons for loss of independence at home are as follows:

- Breakdown of informal support or carers/care networks
- Increase in personal care requirements which cause any home care support to cost more than residential care
- In the case of mental health needs, an increase in the supervision required to ensure personal safety to the extent that the person’s home no longer provides sufficient security
- Absence of 24 hr home care support (i.e. at night)
- Sudden severe illness or injury (falls, fractures and strokes) or deterioration in longstanding condition to point where hospital care becomes necessary.

Some people are happy to receive a remotely monitored service but for others, Telecare does not *replace* the existing service provision but can still make a valuable contribution towards preventing the loss of independence at home. A telecare response plan will be designed in partnership with the user and their carers and regular testing and maintenance checks on the equipment will also be carried out to ensure that risks are managed and minimised as far as possible.

For the large number of people who need lower-level support services, rather than care in the home, telecare makes a valuable contribution. Provided

primarily to older service users, it helps to provide the confidence needed for people to remain living at home independently. It gives service users a sense of security in the knowledge that if a problem occurs they are able to raise a call for assistance. It also gives peace of mind to carers and relatives who are able to have a better quality of life in the knowledge that the telecare equipment will trigger a response in the event the service user raises a call or their behaviour triggers an alert for assistance.

This equipment plays a significant role in preventing the need for active intervention by social care and health partners, enabling the partners' resources to be spread more widely. Telecare ensures that people with low level support needs are able to live independently, can call for reassurance or help when needed and receive a speedy response in an emergency for example when someone has fallen, The provision of telecare as a prevention tool results in well proven outcomes for improved quality of life.

In sheltered housing and increasingly in general needs housing this equipment is linked with a regular visiting service. It is important that telecare complements existing support provision which can only be achieved in a effective way through joint working.

2.3 The Preventative Technology Grant

Worcestershire County Council has been allocated £300,000 in 2006/7 and £500,000 in 2007/8 from the national Preventative Technology Grant. The grant will make a significant contribution to the provision of Telecare services in the County. The government has agreed that councils can roll these funds forward to be spent until the end of March 2009.

According to the Department of Health, the Preventative Technology Grant should be used to increase the numbers of people who are supported to remain independent with Telecare. It is expected that most of the beneficiaries will be older people. The grant will be used for other adults, but not for children. The grant should be used to increase the numbers of people who benefit from Telecare, by at least 160,000 older people nationally.

2.4 Some Case Examples

The following are mainly local case examples to illustrate some of the potential benefits of Telecare for service users and carers

:Case Study 1: Hypothermia Risk

Mrs C lives alone in an older property which she and her late husband moved into soon after their marriage. Mrs C feels safe there and does not see the need to move to a smaller more modern home. Although it has had some modernisation work done over the years, including installation of central heating and roof insulation, it has never been an easy property to keep warm. Mrs C remembers the times when she and her husband had to watch every penny and although this is no longer the case, she still feels reluctant to keep the house properly heated and is inclined to turn the heating thermostat to minimum. Last winter during a cold snap her son found her cold, confused and disorientated. She was taken to hospital where it was confirmed she was hypothermic. Following this incident Mrs C agreed with her son that a low temperature sensor should be installed, linked via a telecare base station to send an alert to her son's mobile phone should the indoor temperature fall too low. Mrs C likes this arrangement because she feels she can still have some control over her heating (and the heating bills) but knows her son will be alerted if she allows the property to get too cold. Her son is reassured by this and is now considering other environmental sensors around his mother's house to warn him of any other problems

Case Study 2: Falls

Mrs A has a history of falling. Following discharge from hospital she was provided with a basic Telecare package that included a bed pressure sensor that could detect when she left the bed during the night and turned on the lighting to her bathroom. It would then trigger an alarm if she did not return to bed within an agreed time.

The package was programmed to record how many times Mrs A left her bed during the night. A few weeks after it was installed it was noticed at the alarm centre that Mrs A's nocturnal visits to the bathroom had increased significantly over a three-day period. They alerted a care professional and Mrs A was diagnosed with a urinary tract infection, which was then quickly treated enabling a full and quick recovery.

Case Study 3: Cognitive Difficulties

Mr B, a smoker, lives with his wife who cares for him full-time. Mr B has a form of Parkinson's Disease, which has left him with cognitive difficulties (although he has a high level of understanding). He has difficulty walking, but 'some days are worse than others'. The pendant device is always placed near to Mr B when Mrs B is not around. Mr B is also content in the knowledge that neighbours are looking out for him.

Despite mental health and mobility problems, Mr B was fully involved in decision-making regarding Telecare. He was 'very pleased about the whole idea'. Both Mr B and Mrs B are aware of the potential that Telecare offers. Mrs B is now happier for Mr B to be left alone as he feels 'more secure'. Mr B is happier because Mrs B is able to enjoy more freedom and is not as worried about him when she's out. Mrs B now has a mobile phone so she can be contacted in an emergency.

Mr and Mrs B feel reassured and relaxed living with Telecare, and Mrs B in particular is grateful that Telecare might prevent the embarrassment (and cost) of having to dial 999 for a situation that turns out to be a non-emergency.

2.5 Costs and services

Comparison between estimated cost of Telecare equipment and response service to the non-Telecare option

The following estimated costings have been extracted from a variety of sources including the Department of Health National Tariff and the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency. This has been supplemented by information based on local experience in Adult and Community Services and the Housing Sector.

Desired Outcome	Telecare Equipment	Telecare Cost	Non Telecare Option	Non Telecare Cost to Health & Social Care
Safe and timely administration of medication	One off purchase of automatic pill dispensers (stocked by agreement with pharmacists)	Ranging from £100 to £200 plus a £2 weekly fee for the monitoring alarm	Daily home care call	£8 per call costing £2,500 per year.
Fall prevention	Wristcare	£800 per unit + monitoring wellness data @ £5 pw	Hospital admission for hip fracture	£7,500 + recuperative care
Timely response to falls	Pendant alarm Fall detector Bed occupancy sensor Home visit	£105 £50 £50-£150 £50	Emergency ambulance journey to A&E Up to 6 wks recuperative care	Tariff charge for A&E £50-100 + £200 per patient journey £2,400
Flood prevention	Automatic water shut-off valves	£25 - £85	2 week admission to care home.	£500-800 (net)

			Home renovations	£900
Kitchen fire prevention	Smoke detector/rapid heat surge detector	Up to £100	4-week admission to care home. Home renovations	£ 1000-1600 (net) £400
Hypothermia prevention	Low temperature monitor	£85	1-week admission to care home.	£250-400(net)

There is evidence that wearing a falls detector increases confidence and actually reduces the likelihood of falling. Floods and fires tend to be major life events which can trigger an emergency admission into long term care. It is also recognised with Telecare that there are economies of scale and that costs decrease the more technology is used.

3. How we have produced the strategy

3.1 Involving Service Users and Carers

A reference group was formed by the County Council with the User Involvement Team (which includes carers) with clear terms of reference to work together to develop the strategic approach to rolling out telecare services across Worcestershire utilising the Preventative Technologies Grant. Also for the group to consider whether over the longer term it should become a standing group representing the needs of users and carers on Telecare issues for Worcestershire.

The group has provided an open forum to raise individual issues and concerns and to consider the following range of issues:

- equipment appraisal – trying out examples of Telecare devices and systems
- service appraisal - discussing the kinds of response service available here and elsewhere in the UK
- communication appraisal - is written material produced for users and carers readable and in the right format?
- championing Telecare

3.2 Involving Stakeholders

A stakeholders conference was held in May 2006 which brought together all interested parties, including service users and carers, relevant statutory organisations, telecare providers and the key local stakeholders to examine the direction of telecare services for Worcestershire.

In addition to raising awareness about the background to the provision of telecare services, workshop sessions helped participants explore the vision for Worcestershire, identify who the partners should be and consider the key priorities for the Strategy.

3.3 Formulating the Strategy

3.3(1) The Telecare Project Steering Group 2006/7

A short term Project Steering Group involving key representatives from Adult and Community Services, Older People's Forums, District Councils, Health and Provider Services was held during 2006/7 to initiate the development of the Telecare Strategy and service development. (See Appendix B for list of members)

3.3 (2) The Telecare Project Management Board 2006/7

A short term County Council Project Management Board (see Appendix B for list of members), was also established to oversee the development of the strategy and the use of the Preventative Technologies Grant within

Worcestershire. This includes capturing the views and interests of people using Telecare equipment and services and reviewing potential suppliers etc. Both the Project Steering Group (3.3) and the Project Management Board were time-limited groups to set up the initial infrastructure for the service.

3.3(3) The Telecare Strategy Implementation Group 2008 onwards

A multi-agency group has been formed to oversee and review the development of the Strategy on behalf of all the partners. This group will work with the User and Carer Reference group to carry out the commissioning intentions and review the Strategy, (see section 11).

3.4 Links to other strategies and areas of activity

The Telecare Strategy for Worcestershire has been developed in conjunction with all the identified partner agencies, including representation from users and carers. It has also taken into account existing relevant strategies and areas of activity including:

- The Integrated Community Equipment Service
- The Worcestershire Telecare Providers Group
- The WINN Project
- The Supporting People review of Community Alarms
- The Single Assessment Process Framework (County Council Care Management System) Home Care system procurement (swipe card system)
- Training programme on “Outcome Based Social Work Practice”
- The review of the Reviewing process
- The Older People’s Strategy for Worcestershire
- The Older People’s Mental Health Strategy for Worcestershire
- The Older People’s Commissioning Strategy
- Commissioning Strategy for Carers 2005 -2008
- Commissioning Strategy for people with a physical disability or sensory impairment
- The Direct Payments Scheme.
- Community Safety Strategies.
- Supporting People Strategy
- District Council Housing Strategies
- Worcestershire Homelessness Strategy

4. Making the links

Using what we have better – mapping what currently exists and outlining how this will be used and developed in future.

The Telecare Strategy has been developed in the context of understanding existing services and how they operate and are funded. The telecare providers and other agencies need to work together to ensure that their services 'fit' and are delivered in a way that is complimentary rather than competing with each other. It has involved engaging with people who use the services (and their representative organisations), older people's forums, carers, policy makers and service managers.

4.1 Links with existing Worcestershire Monitoring and Response Centres

The District Councils and Registered Social Landlords, (which are not for profit organisations), currently provide a range of telecare services through four monitoring and response centres. These District Councils, Registered Social Landlords and the four monitoring and response centres have for a number of years worked collaboratively via a Worcestershire Telecare Providers (WTPG) Group and in April 2005 submitted proposals to the County Council for developing telecare across the county utilising the Preventative Technologies Grant. The County Council is working with WTPG to develop monitored telecare services for Worcestershire. This integrated approach will aim to build on the existing infrastructure for monitored telecare services subject to achieving best value and ensure countywide equity. This includes working with the voluntary sector as a telecare alarm provider. The County Council will ensure that the telecare services it provides deliver best value through a benchmarking and tendering exercise to be undertaken in 2008.

4.2 Links with Supporting People review of Community Alarms

Telecare services are closely aligned with Community Alarm provision. There are four Monitoring and Response Centres and a range of Community Alarm providers operating within Worcestershire who provide differing levels of response to their customers. This varies from a comprehensive service including direct assistance once an alarm has been raised through to contact with a carer or relative to respond to the person.

In Worcestershire, Supporting People is the largest single funding source for community alarms. 13 providers are funded through block subsidy contracts excluding alarms provided through Sheltered or Very Sheltered Schemes. In 2005/6 there were 4475 older users with a potential upper limit of 6125 users who could be funded through Supporting People. However this is not the whole picture as two thirds of the users are self-funded.

Worcestershire's Supporting People Strategy highlights investment in community alarms as an area identified for change. A 'Value for Money' framework will be developed during 2008 in consultation with providers and

users, based on regional comparators and benchmarks, the proportion of on-costs and quality issues. It will also involve comparing the advantages and disadvantages of locally based and national services. The review will consider some possible options for the future provision of Community Alarm and Telecare services across Worcestershire.

4.3 Links with the Integrated Community Equipment Service

The Integrated Community Equipment Service has the necessary experience and track record to ensure that 'stand-alone' telecare equipment is acquired, stored, managed, maintained and recycled well. The jointly managed 'store' arrangements have helped to ensure that people receive home equipment (such as commodes, toilet seat raisers and alternating pressure mattresses) in an efficient manner. It is planned that the ICES service will work closely with the County Council telecare staff to roll out the provision of 'stand alone' Telecare equipment, which is not linked to a remote monitoring service, but may be linked to a carer or neighbour.

4.4 Links with Home Improvement Agencies

Home Improvement Agencies (HIA's) are small, locally based not-for-profit organisations. They help homeowners and private sector tenants who are older, disabled or on a low income to repair, maintain or adapt their homes. They provide advice and advocacy (for example on energy efficiency), financial advice on entitlements, technical oversight of any work and links to other relevant services such as health and social care.

One of the action points in the Older People's Strategy for Worcestershire 2006-2110 is to 'Explore the scope for HIA's to play a greater role in specifying and installing telecare when undertaking property repairs, equipment and adaptations to existing homes'. During the production of this Telecare Strategy, thinking has evolved and HIA's have been assessed as being well placed to identify people who could benefit from Telecare and to circulate information including the Directory of Telecare Services to potential service users.

4.5 Links with Intermediate Care

Intermediate Care includes a range of services provided by health, social care and independent sector care services that are focussed on short term (up to six weeks) treatment and rehabilitation to maximise the ability of older people and people with disabilities or illness to live independently.

The aim of Intermediate Care services is to prevent unnecessary hospital admission, support timely discharge from hospital or care home and reduce avoidable use of long term care including care homes and home care. These services are provided in a variety of settings including community hospitals, resource centres, in the community and in people's own homes.

Telecare has the potential to support Intermediate Care in its goal of maintaining people at home rather than have to be admitted to hospital. It can also support the team in its work of supporting people on their discharge from hospital.

4.6 Links with Community Matrons

There are eight Community Matrons employed across Worcestershire. During the 2005/6 financial year they were funded by Adult and Community Services but this funding has now been picked up by the PCT (five temporarily and three permanently). Community Matrons work with people who are terminally ill, people with Long Term Conditions as well as promoting self care. This service provides an immediate opportunity for joint working between social care and health to show the early benefits telecare can bring as well as to make full use of Wristcare equipment already purchased. There is a real interest in exploring how Telecare can assist in monitoring the well-being of patients. In the short term the costs of monitoring the Wristcare service at £5 per week per patient will be covered by the Preventative Technology Grant but it is acknowledged that arrangements need to be put in place to ensure this service is sustained in the longer term.

4.7 Links with Home Care Services

The County Council retains an in-house independent business unit (IBU), which delivers domiciliary care services to all service user groups, although older people account for the majority of the work carried out. The role of the in-house service has been reviewed in recent years to be developed into a short-term, intensive assessment service aimed at promoting independence and providing the right support at the right time.

Adult and Community Services is working together with the independent sector providers to deliver longer term domiciliary care support for older people, following this short term assessment service from the IBU. The IBU along with the independent sector home care providers will be looking to extend the appropriate use of Telecare equipment with particular reference in the initial stages to the use of automatic pill dispensers. This involves a close dialogue with the Primary Care Trust and lead pharmacist, to address some of the real issues concerning the risk of mis-management of medication, providing an ideal vehicle to bring about joint working between Health and Social Care.

4.8 Links with Extra Care Housing

Extra Care housing is based on self-contained accommodation therefore any Telecare equipment that could be useful in someone's own home can be used in an Extra Care setting. In addition Extra Care developments include a range of facilities and amenities that may be made safer, more useable or accessible by Telecare. In public areas of buildings additional uses may be found or indeed be necessary such as CCTV, door openers, remote door entry system.

There are currently three Extra Care Housing schemes in Worcestershire in Redditch, Evesham and Wyre Forest. There is also an agreement with Redditch Borough Council for the provision of an Integrated Very Sheltered Housing and Home Care service. There are plans to develop a further Extra Care scheme in Bromsgrove.

The approach in Worcestershire will be to work with Extra Care schemes in a similar way to the Resource Centres outlined in section 7.4. It is essential that the types of equipment that should be installed are identified, whilst taking account of ethical issues raised by equipment such as door sensors which could restrict an individual's right to privacy and risk-taking. Also to contribute to the development of any new Extra Care schemes as it is more cost effective to integrate Telecare services into the initial design rather than install it retrospectively.

4.9 Links with Sheltered and Supported Housing

A range of sheltered and supported housing schemes are available within Worcestershire providing different levels of support and a wide range of facilities and in this way offering the service users choice about what type of service / scheme will meet their needs. Support can range from a weekly visit to 24 hour support and facilities from none through to social activities, guest room provision, laundry, assisted bathing facilities, hobbies rooms, on-site luncheon, computer suites to name a few.

In recent years there has been a significant shift from providing on-site support at sheltered housing schemes towards more flexible, mobile support staff that can provide assistance to a range of people living in a number of sheltered and supported housing environments cross tenure including independent living with floating support. This range of provision encourages people to make the appropriate choices based on their needs and helps to make this type of support service more affordable for those who need it.

Traditional sheltered housing was key to the development of fixed, hard wired alarm systems but now there is the potential to move to a more flexible approach using dispersed community alarms. This opens up opportunities for the use of telecare equipment within sheltered and supported housing as a complimentary tool in delivering support and care to service users who need it.

Dispersed community alarms in sheltered and supported housing schemes link either partially or 24 hours a day to a monitoring & response centre providing a comprehensive, value for money service.

It is also recognised that there are opportunities to forge stronger links between appropriate support / care services for example the Home Care service could use the dispersed alarm provision to monitor the duration of their visits or to prompt service users to take their medication on time etc

4.10 Direct Payments and Telecare

In order to stimulate the provision and uptake of community care direct payments, legislation in force from April 2003 has made direct payments a legal duty, rather than a power. The effect of the legislation is that if certain conditions are satisfied (assessment, eligibility, consent, management, and that the service/ equipment will meet the need), then the County Council must offer to make a direct payment up to the reasonable cost of securing the provision of the service or equipment.

In addition, the categories of people eligible for direct payments have progressively been increased by legislation. The Direct Payments Uptake programme promised in the White Paper 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say', is currently being launched, underlining central government's intention that direct payments will become more prevalent. In support of this, Direct Payments are now one of the critical performance indicators against which the County Council's performance is measured.

Further work will be undertaken to develop clear policies and procedures in relation to Direct Payments, Telecare and Equipment generally. These will address some of the complex areas around ownership and maintenance of equipment, securing best value, providing choice etc.

4.11 Self Assessment

The White Paper, 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' emphasises that in the future people will be able to undertake their own assessment of need and plan and arrange their own services. Eleven pilot sites have been chosen around the country to test self-assessment for a range of services, including equipment services. The pilots could, for example, involve people using the Internet, or approaching a third sector organisation for help with filling in an online form. The outcome of an assessment could be receiving reliable information about equipment and services, or result in them receiving a piece of equipment directly, rather than being assessed by social care services.

4.12 Carers

Many people with significant needs receive care from relatives or friends. These relationships are essential to the community. The key to supporting carers in undertaking their vital role is to provide the right level of support for them, which enables them to make choices about their personal life. Telecare equipment can go some way towards reducing the burden on carers as well as providing some peace of mind. A range of easy communication devices could mean that the carer would not be required to be constantly physically present.

Carers have been involved through the User Involvement Team (which includes carers) and their role in the reference group in the production of

strategic plans for development of telecare in Worcestershire. The Carer Support Plan will include reference to Telecare services.

4.13 People with Sensory Impairment

Often equipment currently available is unsuitable for people with auditory impairment. Expanding the use of SMS texting via mobile phone technology will be particularly valuable for the deaf community. Work will be undertaken with Sensory Impairment Services to develop the thinking in this area and to ensure that technologies, which are currently in use via these services, are included in the Telecare performance statistics where appropriate. The County Council Sensory Impairment Team is a countywide team which already exists to offer support and issue equipment to adults with a sensory impairment. It is envisaged that this team will have a key role in rolling out telecare services for people with a critical and substantial need.

4.14 Links to Community Safety

The 'Safe and Sound' project in Wychavon is an example of this where dispersed community alarms are being fitted to provide reassurance and an emergency response to domestic homes and businesses that are at risk of repeat burglary. Telecare is also used to help support lone workers, people who are working in isolated conditions. This is provided via an automated response service linked to a personal mobile phone.

5. Outline of telecare pilots, key learning points and recommendations

5.1 The Wyre Forest WristCare Falls Prevention Pilot

This pilot was initially established to run from April 2005 for 6 months but was extended until March 2006. The aims of the pilot were to:

- increase confidence for older people who have a history of falling
- provide peace of mind for carers
- prevent falls

by providing service users with additional support to standard community alarms, monitoring computer generated wellness data and providing timely intervention.

Adult and Community Services purchased 26 units at a cost of £800 per unit. These are worn as a wristwatch 24 hours per day, including in bed but not in the shower or bath. The base unit is set up by telephone and is compatible with most community alarm services. It has several different alarm functions and other detectors such as flood, bed occupancy and medication compliance monitors can be connected.

A project group was formed with representatives from Wyre Forest PCT, Housing and Adult and Community Services. Wyre Forest Community Housing's 'Central Control' agreed to provide the response service that was free of charge to the service user. Units were initially allocated to the Falls Clinic, Discharge Liaison nurses, Intermediate Care, Reablement Services, Nurse Advisors and the Monitoring & Response Centre.

The scheme has launched the use of the wellness data in the community based Intermediate Care team and Community Matron service.

The wellness data produced by WristCare provides:

- Easily accessible up to date information on the Internet using secure codes.
- Information on the user's sleep quantity and pattern, hourly activity levels and provides a circadian rhythm measure which gives an indication as to how well the person is based on their sleep and activity levels. The circadian rhythm can indicate infections in the very early stages.
- Data which has been shown to support intermediate care services.

The key learning points from the pilot have been:

- The WristCare alarm functionalities provide additional benefits to a standard pendant alarm and the units are comfortable and discreet to wear.

- WristCare offers benefits that standard community alarms do not offer.
- There has been positive feedback from service users.
- There is good potential for financial savings for both Health and Adult and Community Services.

5.2 The Wychavon Dementia Care Project

In June 2006 Insight Social Research Ltd was appointed by the County Council to undertake an evaluation of the Wychavon Dementia Telecare Project. The Project's aim was to "...establish patterns of behaviour and to provide relevant equipment to reduce risks..." with an emphasis on people with dementia who had critical or substantial needs, who were known to the Wychavon Older Adults Community Mental Health Team.

The project was funded jointly by Worcestershire County Council and Wychavon District Council and was carried out in conjunction with Worcestershire Telecare.

The main findings from the evaluation were:

1. Service users felt more secure at home following the installation of Telecare equipment:

"It gives you a feeling of faith... it's somebody there at the end of the line"

"I haven't had any call to use it... you just feel secure"

2. Carers felt it gave them peace of mind:

"I'm more relaxed and I can go in and be a friend and not somebody who's 'checking up'"

"He feels more secure and that bounces back off me"

"I knew that she was aware of how to boil a kettle, but she might leave the gas on"

"I wouldn't like to have to do without it now, I mean you don't have to want to use it"

3. Information provided through Telecare devices reduced anxieties for front line staff and encouraged them to be more creative beyond conventional care options.

"People would have ended up in care because of safety risks"

"It enables us to address problems we were previously unable to address"

"What often stops people from living at home is the risk of fire"

4. Other findings were that heat, smoke detectors and wandering client devices were seen as being particularly useful. Carers mentioned 'other' benefits, such as being alerted during a power cut. Service users and

carers were generally confused about the role of the base unit and there were some delays in supplying products from the manufacturer, although all systems were fitted within six weeks of referral.

5.3 Recommendations from the Wychavon Project that have already been implemented or are in progress

Agree a Telecare service 'vision'.

Ensure a clear role for Telecare including 'prevention' and a necessary 'shift' in relation to different forms of accommodation and support service frameworks.

Ensure basic understanding of Telecare by service users.

Set up a 'Demonstration House' to help raise public and staff awareness and act as a training resource.

Invest in appropriate training regarding Telecare technologies and service options

Ensure that the Telecare Strategy address issues of user and carer consent, operational protocols and the development of new service frameworks and service charges.

Evaluate the Telecare service based on feedback from users, carers and professionals.

5.4 Recommendations not yet fully implemented

Seek funding to facilitate the mainstreaming of Telecare services in the county, including an element from NHS Trusts.

Develop Telecare as a preventative service as well as serving people with critical and/or substantial needs whilst recognising the cost implications of *not* adopting a preventative approach to Telecare.

Invest more resources to purchase Telecare devices.

6. Monitoring the Performance of Worcestershire Telecare Services

6.1 National and Local Telecare Performance Indicators

'Building Telecare in England', published by the Department of Health in 2005, advised that the Preventative Technologies Grant should be used to increase the numbers of people who benefit from telecare by at least 160,000 older people nationally. The Delivery and Improvement Statement Guidance for Adult Social Care 2006/7 requires County Councils to report on the number of projected new service users aged 65 and over to be provided in 2007-08 with 1 or more items of Telecare equipment in their own homes (or equivalent such as Extra Care/Warden Housing). The table below identifies the targets which have been locally agreed for Worcestershire:

Worcestershire Adult Social Care Telecare Performance Indicators			
Number of projected new users aged 65 and over provided with 1 or more items of telecare equipment in their own homes (or equivalent such as Extra Care/Warden Housing) by March 2008.	1. Adult and Community Services alone	2. A&CS in partnership with other agency	3. Other agencies without A&CS input.
	450	200	4950

From 2007 it is proposed that the County Councils' adult services will be assessed against the outcomes in the health and social care white paper (Our Health, Our Care, Our Say), which are improving health, quality of life, choice, freedom from discrimination, economic well-being and dignity, and helping people make a positive contribution. The performance indicators will be changed to reflect the white paper by 2009.

6.2 Locally agreed outcomes for Telecare Services

In addition to meeting the Department of Health targets for increasing the numbers of people with telecare equipment in their own homes, the Telecare Strategy Steering group has agreed that the following outcomes will be monitored and reported on for Telecare services in Worcestershire:

- Installation of telecare will defer the need for residential or nursing care
- Service Users will gain greater independence

- The burden on carers will be reduced, giving them more personal freedom and support
- The number of acute hospital admissions will be reduced
- Service Users will have fewer accidents and falls in their home
- Hospital discharges will take place earlier which may not have otherwise occurred

These outcomes will be monitored and reported on by the County Council as part of their contracts monitoring process and through the District Council and Registered Social landlords' annual reports. It is envisaged that there will also be an Annual Review of the Telecare Strategy which will include supporting data on delivery of the outcomes.

7. Promoting Telecare Services

A key starting point for implementing the strategy is to promote the potential benefits of Telecare services to the general public and to staff involved in all aspects of assessment. These are some of the ways in which Telecare will be promoted in Worcestershire:

7.1 Telecare Champions

Successful implementation needs champions, within all the participating health, housing and social care organisations including everybody involved in developing the service as well as users and carers. Members of the Telecare Project Steering Group will be the internal champions who will remove barriers and help promote Telecare. Other champions who share the Telecare vision will include:

- An elected Member of the County Council
- A representative of the Worcestershire Chief Housing Officers Group
- A representative from the BME community
- The Telecare User and Carer Group
- A member of staff in the Independent Business Unit Home Care Team
- Two staff members in the Primary Care Trust including Pharmacy.
- A representative of the Worcestershire Telecare Providers Group
- District Council Representatives

7.2 Communications Strategy

Successful implementation of Telecare services depends on all stakeholders having a sound grasp of what Telecare is about. The communication strategy will be jointly drawn up with key partner agencies and will include a robust and a detailed "Communication Plan" .

The main approaches will include informing:

- **service users** via websites, local newsletters, focus groups, local press and radio, face to face meetings and use of the film made by the Care Services Improvement Partnership (Telecare - Living with Independence)
- **carers** as above but also through the newsletter produced by the Carer's Unit and the Telecare Project Officer
- **health, social care and housing staff and other partner agencies** through newsletters, websites, local forums, training workshops, local press and radio and face to face meetings
- **Council members** through newsletters and written reports.

7.3 Training and workforce development

Different levels of awareness training will be provided to all people involved in assessing needs or delivering support / care services. This includes domiciliary carers, support workers, volunteer visitors, carers and others. The

training will positively encourage people to use the opportunities offered by Telecare equipment wherever appropriate.

Key groups of staff are those working in providing preventative support services and the reablement and rehabilitation setting. There are three reablement teams across the county which work within their local communities.

7.4 Familiarisation for Service Users in a rehabilitation setting

A range of equipment will be available for service users to try within the three Intermediate Care Resource Centres based in Kidderminster, Worcester and Malvern. Service users who have received a rehabilitative or respite service at any of the Centres will have an opportunity to test out equipment set up in bedrooms and/or portable equipment for use around the home. There will be the opportunity to see how telecare equipment works before service users are discharged home and the equipment may become part of their packages of care.

7.5 Demonstration sites in a domestic home setting

There are two demonstration homes in the County. A WISE house has been established in Wyre Forest as a domestic unit where people can test out a range of facilities. Work is underway to develop this scheme further to provide an increased range of equipment (for example automated curtain-closing devices, video entry system and various stand-alone technologies) to showcase what is available.

A similar scheme at Mendip House sheltered housing complex in Redditch has been developed with Redditch Borough Council. This unit has a range of facilities to try out including a walk-in shower with additional sensors and a specially equipped hob in the kitchen. Consideration will be given to developing a further site in the south of the county.

7.6 The WiNN Project

The Worcestershire Neighbourhood Network (WiNN) projects in Evesham, Redditch and Worcester are funded by the Department of Health Partnerships for Older People grant. WiNN is a high impact initiative to establish a comprehensive network of neighbourhood based prevention, healthy living, early intervention and support services for older people and their carers. The aim is to deliver a range of services to improve the quality of life and reduce or delay more costly interventions such as hospital or care home admissions.

As part of WiNN in the short term, a mobile disability demonstration vehicle will visit people who have needs for low level types of equipment such as bath seats etc. If the person has more complex needs or if professional installation is required then staff will refer them on as appropriate. In the longer term, the service will visit community groups to raise awareness of the range of equipment available. This service will also provide an opportunity to raise

awareness about Telecare through leaflets, one on existing Telecare services such as pendant alarm schemes and another on stand-alone equipment which can be self-purchased. The service will also carry a stock of sample Telecare equipment..

In 2008 the WiNN project will become part of mainstream preventative services in the county.

8. Implementing the strategy

8.1 Basic Requirements

The basic requirements of a responsive Telecare service are an assessment leading to prescription and installation of equipment together with procedures for monitoring and response. Traditional Telecare services such as community alarms have been excellent tools for promoting confidence and providing reassurance but have been reactive in the sense that they respond to emergencies usually after the event. Whilst recognising the benefits this approach has provided, the majority of telecare devices enables a more proactive, preventative approach, for example automatic devices that turn on a light by the bedside when the occupant gets out of the bed, so reducing the chance of them falling in the dark.

8.2 Response Services

In terms of response services where they are required, there is a range of options including:

- Monitoring & response centres
- Alerts to mobile phones
- Individual arrangements based on specific wishes and requirements, eg carer, clinician, warden etc
- Priority responses - 999, Fire Brigade etc

The key stakeholders will need to undertake further work to determine whether the monitoring & response centre will be purely a point of contact or whether it should be developed into a fully-fledged response service. The response provider will be required to be accredited with the Telecare Services Association Code of Practice 1 and 2 which are nationally recognised standards for the operation of Telecare Response Services

The longer term strategic approach to response services will be developed based on:

- The lessons learned through evaluation during the early stage development of the Telecare service in Worcestershire and elsewhere
- The outcome of the Review of Community Alarms
- Discussions with key strategic partners
- A clearer picture of the financial resources available at the end of the lifespan of the Preventative Technology Grant
- Evolving advice on procurement from the Department of Health including the National Framework Agreement for Telecare recently developed by the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (NHS PASA).

8.3 Protocols and Ethics

There is currently much debate about risk management, and achieving the right balance between protecting individuals and enabling them to make their own decisions about their lives, including assessment of the risks that such decisions might involve. All services must strive to achieve this balance.

Telecare can gather potentially sensitive information about people's activities or lifestyles. This is particularly significant in relation to people with dementia or learning disabilities. There are ethical issues concerning the use of certain kinds of equipment, in particular those devices that monitor someone's day to day activity which could potentially intrude on their privacy.

Very clear protocols will be developed between commissioners and providers, staff and service users that will protect service users and their well-being. The protocols will address ethical issues and consent, based on the Principles for the Service outlined in section 1 of this strategy and will be adopted by the partnership.

8.4 Equality and diversity

It is important that telecare services are accessible to, relevant and culturally appropriate for people from Black and Minority Ethnic Communities and other socially excluded groups. The same service criteria will apply, but there will be a particular focus on:

- Being clear about the range of needs requirements.
- Building these requirements into any specifications, contracts and job descriptions.
- Developing a directory of information and services along with explanations on how equipment works and producing this in the main community languages and in spoken formats (disc and tape).
- Identifying and supporting a Telecare Champion from the BME community.
- Undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment in relation to this strategy.
- Involving partner agencies

8.5 Commissioning and Contracting by all Telecare Providers

The contracting and commissioning of telecare services within Worcestershire shall be carried out in a fair and robust way with the aim of providing high quality, value for money services for local people.

The plans in Worcestershire include:

- All telecare providers to follow the Department of Health's advice on procurement which includes the National Framework Agreement for Telecare recently developed by the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (NHS PASA). Using this free service providers will select from a range of products and services from approved suppliers. Through this national

pricing structure there is the potential to make savings through collective public sector buying power and negotiated discounts.

- Exploring other options that are available from suppliers who are not currently on the PASA list including equipment which may not yet be perceived as having a Telecare application
- Working with and learning from other Telecare providers within and beyond the West Midlands region through the Telecare Network to share procurement knowledge and opportunities.

8.6 Commissioning and Contracting for Services via the Preventative Technologies Grant

The County Council's Adult and Community Services will ensure a robust commissioning approach to implement the commissioning intentions which are attached as Appendix A. These intentions have been informed by this Strategy and based on the range and level of need identified across the County. This approach will ensure that the services commissioned will deliver the best value possible

Specifications will be drawn up covering the equipment, monitoring and response services, where the latter are required. The Government is encouraging all County Councils and their partners to use modern methods of procurement wherever possible.

8.7 Charging Arrangements for Telecare Services

There are a range of price structures operating within Worcestershire depending upon eligibility and level of need.

All equipment services provided by the County Council, including Telecare are provided free of charge. People whose needs meet the County Council's eligibility criteria (critical and substantial) and who require a Telecare monitoring service from a call centre will be able to access a Fairer Charging Assessment to ensure their charges are appropriate. Different levels of service are possible, governed both by the range of technologies for the person in question and the type of response service that is required. It is proposed that a single charge will be made for the call monitoring service, regardless of the number of sensors in the property (including in Extra Care Schemes). Charges may vary but are based on the cost of the equipment, monitoring and maintenance. The charges are normally based on initial installation costs followed by weekly rental charges. Some items of equipment may be available for purchase. Some service users may be eligible for additional financial assistance and details will be provided by the relevant Telecare provider.

9. Sustainability

It is essential that all telecare service provision within Worcestershire is sustainable to enable a reliable, consistent service for service users and carers providing quality of life outcomes for local older and vulnerable people.

The Preventative Technology Grant from the Department of Health will last until April 2009, and beyond that, identifying investment for future services is a complex matter.

There may be the possibility of attracting new investment or through achieving positive outcomes identify efficiency savings in health, and social care which can be redirected into telecare services

The approach in Worcestershire will be based on evaluating individual outcomes for service users through the development and implementation of a simple evaluation process to assess the relative costs of any Telecare services provided compared to the likely alternative (non-Telecare) service.

There are a number of issues to take into account:

- There is the potential for additional funding to be invested from Supporting People or by some of the Telecare providers in attracting new business from outside of the county.
- It is acknowledged that Telecare can replace some activities presently carried out by individual social care and health staff. It is possible, for example to use Health Act flexibilities to free up PCT funds so they can be transferred to a budget for care and support technology. However, research will be required by the Council and the PCT to identify appropriate activities and funds.
- The County Council and the PCT could decide to top slice portions of their existing spend on older people's services to create a dedicated budget.
- Through careful procurement, costs can be kept down. This would not create any extra funds but would ensure good value for money.
- The charging policy of the various Telecare providers will help to ensure sustainability
- It is necessary to demonstrate that the installation of equipment is paying for itself by freeing up money that would otherwise be spent on traditional care services. A simple form is being developed to be used on follow up reviews with service users to check whether the specified outcomes are being met. There will also be the option to assess and compare the costs of support / care packages for Telecare users with non-Telecare users).
- The Telecare Strategy will allow for the possibility of other funding opportunities arising locally, regionally or nationally.

10. Managing the programme

The Project Management Board will continue to oversee the implementation of this Strategy until the end of April 2008 and thereafter Telecare services will be co-ordinated via the Telecare Strategy Implementation Group, which will be reconvened at regular intervals to oversee the general progress of the Strategy and examine the issues of sustainability.

11. Reviewing the strategy

The implementation of this strategy will be formally reviewed by the Telecare Strategy Implementation Group during 2008, in conjunction with the Telecare User and Carer Reference Group. This review will include a cost/benefit analysis to ensure that the Telecare services being provided within the county are sustainable and meeting it's the desired outcomes outlined in section 6 of this strategy. Following this review, decisions will be taken about the future of the service and the commissioning intentions for 2010-2011.

Technologies will develop quickly as manufacturers and suppliers appreciate more fully the way that Telecare services can assist in empowering people and helping in relation to their support and care needs. Such changes and the growth in service provision within the county will mean that it will be necessary to keep services under constant review. This will enable problems to be identified and quickly resolved, and to ensure that any new risks are managed and kept under review.

Commissioning Intentions for 2007/8 and 2008/9

1. To ensure service users and carers have a voice in the way Telecare services are planned, commissioned and delivered in Worcestershire			
Approach to be used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a reference group of service users and carers • Provision to the group of all necessary information about Telecare services to enable them to provide proper scrutiny and advice to the Telecare Project Steering Group • Provision of necessary resources to enable the group to meet (travelling, venue, refreshments, distribution of reports, photocopying, etc) 		
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecare Project Steering Group + Carer and User Involvement Team 		
Milestones 2007/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing support to group in order to attend to its business 		
2008/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review with group 		
Resource Implications	<table border="0"> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue + refreshments • Transport • Admin </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £100 per meeting • £150 per meeting • £20 per meeting </td> </tr> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue + refreshments • Transport • Admin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £100 per meeting • £150 per meeting • £20 per meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue + refreshments • Transport • Admin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £100 per meeting • £150 per meeting • £20 per meeting 		
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target: • Group established • Group able to offer scrutiny and advice • Review with group in 2008 		

2. To enable service users, carers, professionals and the general public to have access to up-to-date information on the range of Telecare equipment available	
Approach to be used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create a website providing information on the range of telecare equipment available • The website to enable people to post reviews of the telecare equipment they have tried • The website to have a message board so that people can post questions which can be answered by other site users
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecare Provider Managers
Milestones 2007/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain outline costs for development of the website
2008/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link website to Health, Social Care and Housing sites • Commission website • Monitor use of website • Evaluate website to determine long term sustainability
Resource Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial cost of building site (approx. £1,100) • Annual renewal of hosting (approx. £100) • Ongoing moderating (to be determined)

Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="459 197 1283 264">• Raised awareness of the telecare equipment available within Worcestershire
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3. To provide opportunities to demonstrate Telecare equipment to potential users and carers in order for them to try these out and determine suitability	
Approach to be used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide the following services with suitable equipment for demonstration and trial use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The three Resource Centres for Older People (in Kidderminster, Worcester and Malvern) The County Reablement Services The WiNN mobile unit The proposed Independent Living Centre (ICES) as above To consider developing further demonstration units (Wise houses) elsewhere in the county
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various Service Managers
Milestones 2007/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the telecare equipment requirements of the services mentioned above Determine the infrastructure to support the use of the above equipment in these services
2008/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of suitable equipment in the places identified above Training of staff in the facilities on assessment and use Monitor and reviewing usage of equipment installed Evaluation of impact of above proposal on service
Resource Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs of procurement and installation
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in take up of telecare services Better understanding of peoples needs and the combination of telecare devices to be used

4. To ensure appropriate assessments are carried out for all Telecare equipment so that people's needs are adequately met	
Approach to be used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop a robust assessment process which can be used by all telecare providers To ensure a review is carried out after the first 4 weeks after installation and thereafter on annual basis or on a change of circumstances to ensure the equipment being provided is meeting the needs of the service users
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telecare Project Steering Group
Milestones 2007/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree the assessment process and associated paperwork Determine a common approach to review Implement for the Preventative Technologies Grant work
2008/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider roll out beyond the PTG work
Resource Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder staff time
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high percentage of service users and / or their carers being satisfied with the package of telecare services being provided to them and less interventions needed by health

	and social care
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5 a) To benchmark with other telecare services to ensure best value and b) develop a lasting evaluation model to assess the benefits of telecare based on outcomes for service users and carers

Approach to be used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To compare costs with similar schemes • To develop a benchmarking survey • Seek responses from similar 2 tier Local Authority areas • Research good practice in evaluation of telecare services • Assess lessons to be learned from pilot projects and new services • In partnership develop a lasting evaluation tool
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecare Strategy Implementation Group
Milestones 2007/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify similar areas to benchmark with • Ensure both quantitative and qualitative questions included in the survey • Review good practice examples • Review lessons learned
2008/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To undertake survey of telecare service provision in other similar areas • Evaluate the results • Develop future evaluation tool and agree timescales for future evaluation
Resource Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time • Design and printing of the survey • Postage • Evaluation process
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of whether achieving best value within Worcestershire • Action Plan to make changes where needed

6. To promote and market the provision of telecare services within Worcestershire

Approach to be used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to work in partnership to develop a joined up approach • consider shared funding sources
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecare Strategy Implementation Group
Milestones <u>2007/8</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a common Communications Strategy • Consult the Reference Group for their views
<u>2008/9</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a shared leaflet regarding telecare services available within Worcestershire • Promote the benefits of telecare services through the media • Identify opportunities for raising awareness e.g. local partnership meetings, fora etc,
Resource Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder staff time • Funding for the design and printing of promotional material

Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Target: To raise awareness and market the telecare services available within Worcestershire to existing and potential service users and local stakeholders
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7. Ensure emerging technologies contribute to current and future Strategic issues across Worcestershire	
Approach to be used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review of the Telecare Strategy for Worcestershire • Publication of achievements against strategic intentions • Ensure telecare staff attend national and regional telecare training events and keep up to date with telecare developments • Ensure equipment procured meets latest specifications
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecare Strategy Implementation Group in conjunction with the Users and Carers Reference Group • Telecare Service Managers
Milestones 2007/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To hold stakeholder event in 2008
2008/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce annual report outlining progress, new strategic links and any new targets
Resource Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosting of the stakeholder event • Staff time to produce the annual review report • Staff time to attend training, cost of courses
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust monitoring of the Telecare Strategy • Regular review of strategic links and appropriate targets

8. To explore the need for a night time care response service for users of telecare equipment (where linked to a Monitoring & Response Centre) to supplement existing daytime services	
Approach to be used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collection and needs analysis of existing data from community alarm providers and Intermediate Care Teams ▪ Research the role paramedics currently responding to alarm calls that do not result in hospital admission ▪ Analysis of the reasons for delayed hospital discharge from hospital ▪ Further mapping of current use of out of hours services
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecare Strategy Implementation Group
Milestones 2007/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of data collection
2008/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of data • Conclusions and recommendations
Resource Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 6 weeks project management time
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence to inform the decision as to whether a night time care response service is needed •

9.To explore innovative approaches to using telecare to improve people’s quality of life and well being, where possible improving services and creating efficiencies, so extending the reach of services	
Approach to be used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific initiative with health colleagues to reduce unnecessary admission to hospital of people with chronic health conditions • Explore the possibility of linking telecare services with general home visits • Explore the opportunities to work with Home Care Service to monitor visits and to use telecare to provide prompt calls to check people are taking medication on time and trial medication dispensers to promote greater independence for service users • Work with health services to ensure telecare services compliment emerging telehealth services to support people to manage their health conditions more effectively and build telecare into individual care pathways
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecare Strategy Implementation Group
Milestones 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities for innovative working • Identify potential stakeholders for each initiative • Produce Project plans
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise initiatives • Identify Task & Finish Groups
Resource Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time • Funding • Partnership working required with all agencies
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of new uses for telecare which will result in efficiencies in joint working

10. To ensure that Telecare services within Worcestershire are sustainable for the future.	
Approach to be used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify other potential funding sources • Identify where efficiencies may enable reinvestment from other service areas • Review charging policy
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecare Strategy Implementation Group
Milestones 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing budget profile • Investigate potential funding sources
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate budget projections • Review charging policy • Develop Year 3 and 4 commissioning intentions
Resource Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time • Reprioritisation of existing resources
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To sustain the provision of telecare services within Worcestershire at minimal cost to service users

1 Membership of the Telecare Strategy Project Steering Group 2006/7

Sue Pidduck	Locality Manager, Older People and Physical Disabilities, Adult and Community Services
Catherine McWalter	Commissioning Manager, Adult and Community Services
Sue Williams	Consultant
Heather Gill	Wyre Forest Older Persons Team Manager
Andrew Parry	Telecare Project Manager
Margaret Dow	Service User and Care Representative
Emma Matthews	Supporting People Contracts Officer
Kate Pike	Reablement Team Manager, Adult and Community Services
Keith Parry	Housing Manager, Malvern Hills District Council
Nigel Fain	Wyre Forest Community Housing Manager
Robert Redman	Worcestershire Telecare Providers Group representative
Jenny Stanford	Manager, Integrated Community Equipment Service
Prisca Hall	Joint Commissioning Manager, Worcestershire Primary Care Trust
Sally-Anne Osborne	Clinical Development Manager, Worcestershire Primary Care Trust
Richard Vakis	Emergency Care Practitioner Manager (Ambulance Trust)
Mike Fowler	Occupational Therapist, Mental Health Partnership Trust

Appendix B continued

2 Membership of the Telecare Strategy Adult and Community Services Project Management Board 2006/7

Sue Pidduck	Locality Manager, Older People and Physical Disabilities
Andrew Parry	Telecare Project Manager
Charles Huntington	Business Systems Manager
Terry Davies	Information and Performance Manager
Catherine McWalter	Commissioning Manager
Andrew Morley	Access Centre Manager
Louise Clarke	Assistant Locality Manager, Older People and Physical Disabilities

3 Membership of the Telecare Strategy Implementation Group 2008

Sue Pidduck	Locality Manager, Older People and Physical Disabilities, Adult and Community Services
Elaine Salter	Housing Services Manager, Wychavon District Council
Nigel Fain	Wyre Forest Community Housing Manager
Prisca Hall	Joint Commissioning Manager, Worcestershire Primary Care Trust
Nisha Sankey	Clinical Development Programme Lead, Worcestershire Primary Care Trust
Jenny Stanford	Manager, Integrated Community Equipment Service
Mike Fowler	Occupational Therapist, Mental Health Partnership Trust
Alison Farnworth	Senior Occupational Therapist, Worcestershire Primary Care Trust
Margaret Dow	Service User and Care Representative
Louise Clarke	Assistant Locality Manager, Older People and Physical Disabilities, Adult and Community Services
Sarah Masterson	Contracts Officer, Adult and Community Services
Vicki Seymour	Sensory impairment and Telecare Team Manager, Adult and Community Services
Emma Matthews	Supporting People Contracts Officer

Louise Wilson

Reablement Team Manager, Adult and Community
Services

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

7TH JANUARY 2009

THE STORAGE AND DISPOSAL OF ABANDONED VEHICLES

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Cllr Margaret Sherrey
Responsible Head of Service	Mike Bell
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY

This report seeks Cabinet approval to enter into an agreement with Worcestershire County Council ("WCC") for the storage and disposal of abandoned vehicles in Bromsgrove and to discharge on behalf of the County Council the functions set out in that Agency Agreement relating to the storage and disposal of abandoned vehicles.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes the procurement exercise currently being undertaken.
- 2.2 That the Head of Street Scene and Community Services be authorised to enter into an Agency Agreement with Worcestershire County Council for the storage and disposal of abandoned vehicles within Bromsgrove.
- 2.3 That the Senior Solicitor be authorised to finalise the terms of the proposed Agency Agreement in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and Head of Street Scene and Community Services.
- 2.4 That the Scheme of Delegation be amended to delegate authority to the Head of Street Scene and Community Services to discharge all of the Council's functions relating to abandoned vehicles including such functions as are delegated to Bromsgrove District Council by the County Council (including storage and disposal).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Bromsgrove District Council (acting as a Waste Collection Authority) has a duty to arrange for the removal of a vehicle it believes to be abandoned and to deliver it to the County Council (acting as Waste Disposal Authority) which in turn has a duty to store and dispose of all abandoned vehicles delivered to it.
- 3.2 Historically, each district council in the county has made its own arrangements with its own contractors to remove abandoned vehicles and

with the County Council for their storage and disposal. To take advantage of economies of scale a joint procurement exercise is being undertaken by Bromsgrove District Council, Redditch Borough Council, Wyre Forest District Council and the County Council to identify one service provider to undertake collection, storage and disposal of all vehicles abandoned within Redditch, Wyre Forest and Bromsgrove (“the Main Contract”). Redditch BC is leading on the procurement exercise. Incidental to the Main Contract will be a Partnership Agreement to be entered into between Bromsgrove District Council, Redditch Borough Council and Wyre Forest District Council setting out the basis on which the three authorities will work together to ensure the contractor meets the obligations set out in the Main Contract. The timescale for the procurement process is as follows:

- Issue of Invitation to Tender - 12.11.08
- Closing date for responses - 02.01.09
- Contract award – 06.02.09.

3.3 The Main Contract envisages that the County Council delegates to Bromsgrove District Council the storage and disposal of abandoned vehicles removed within the district of Bromsgrove by way of an Agency Agreement. The preparation of the Agency Agreement is under way and will be completed at the same time as the Main Contract. Members are requested to delegate to the Senior Solicitor authority to finalise the terms of the Agency Agreement in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and the Head of Service.

3.4 Authority from members is required to enable the Council to undertake the County Council functions proposed by the Agency Agreement. Members should note that the Head of Service will enter into the Main Contract and into the Partnership Agreement pursuant to authority delegated to him under the Scheme of Delegation and so members’ authority is not required or sought in this regard.

3.5 The Scheme of Delegation currently authorises the Head of Street Scene and Community Services to deal with the collection of abandoned vehicles and authority is sought to extend this to include the storage and disposal of abandoned vehicles.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Currently the Council has a contract with a contractor for the collection and delivery to the County Council of abandoned vehicles. The Council is invoiced by both the contractor for the removal and by the County Council for the storage and disposal. The joint procurement exercise should result in savings to the Council. The contract for the removal, storage and disposal of abandoned vehicles will require the contractor to specify a contract price for the provision of the services which will be fixed for the first twelve months of the contract period. At this point it is not possible to quantify the savings accurately until the tendering process has been completed.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 District Councils' and County Councils' powers in relation to abandoned vehicles are contained within the Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978, the Removal and Disposal of Vehicles Regulations 1986 and the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005.
- 5.2 The Council's power to undertake the County Council functions on its behalf arise under Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 (the well-being power), Sections 101 (power to arrange for the discharge of a local authority function by another local authority and discharge of functions joint by two or more local authorities) and 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 (power to do anything to facilitate or which is incidental to the discharge of any of its functions) and Section 1 of the Local Authority (Goods and Services) Act 1970 (power for local authorities to supply of goods and services to public bodies);.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

CO4- Environment- Clean Streets.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:

- Failure by the contractor to properly perform the requirements of the Main Contract insofar as they relate to the County Council's storage and disposal functions may expose the Council to claims from either members of the public or from the County Council that it has failed to perform those statutory functions.

7.2 This risk is being managed as follows:

- The Agency Agreement and the Main Contract are being drafted to ensure that the contractor's performance is closely monitored and that there is adequate redress in the event of breach of the terms of the Main Contract. The contractor will be required to hold Insurance/ indemnity cover.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

There are no significant implications.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

None

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

The economies of scale which will arise by virtue of the procurement exercise will result in savings for the Council.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues	As set out in paragraph 3.2, 3.6 and 4.
Personnel Implications	None
Governance/Performance Management	None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998	None
Policy	None
Environmental	This report relates to the Council's statutory duties under Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978, the Removal and Disposal of Vehicles Regulations 1986, and the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005.

12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	No
Executive Director - Partnerships and Projects	No
Executive Director - Services	No
Assistant Chief Executive	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	Yes

Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	No
Corporate Procurement Team	Yes

13. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards

14. APPENDICES

None

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

CONTACT OFFICER

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

7TH JANUARY 2009

COMMITTEE PROGRAMME 2009/10

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor R. D Smith
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the proposed programme of Council and Committee meetings for 2009/10.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Cabinet recommend the Council to approve the Committee Programme for 2009/10 as set out at Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The proposed Committee Programme for 2009/10 is on similar lines to the current year in that the Cabinet is scheduled to meet on a monthly basis and the ordinary meetings of the Council will be every two months. The full Council will meet two weeks after the Cabinet to allow time for recommendations from the preceding Cabinet to be included within the Council agenda book.
- 3.2 Although the Cabinet usually meets on the first Wednesday in the month, this is not possible in May each year due to the Annual Meeting of the Council. As a consequence the Cabinet is scheduled to meet on the last Wednesday in April.
- 3.3 For the purposes of the Programme it has been assumed that the new overview and scrutiny arrangements will continue beyond the current trial period due to end in April 2009. The Overview Board will, in general, meet on the first Tuesday of the month in order to facilitate consideration of the Forward Plan of executive decisions in a timely manner. The Scrutiny Board will, in general, meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month. It is proposed that the Scrutiny Board be scheduled to meet in the daytime due to staffing pressures within Legal Services.
- 3.4 Joint meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Boards will be required for consideration of the budget and these have been included within the programme. Other joint meetings will be arranged as and when required.

- 3.5 It is proposed that, where possible, no meetings be scheduled during August 2009. The only exception at this stage is the Planning Committee which will require a meeting due to the timescales to be met for the determination of major planning applications. As a consequence the Cabinet will meet at the end of July 2009 (which will still allow for a 4 week gap between the meeting scheduled for the start of July).
- 3.6 The meetings of the Performance Management Board have been rescheduled from Tuesdays to Mondays to avoid clashing with meetings of the controlling group.
- 3.7 At the start of the current municipal year the meetings of the Licensing Committee were arranged as and when required. However, during the course of the year a programme of dates was agreed to facilitate forward planning by Member and officers. A series of proposed dates based on the Licensing Committee meeting every six weeks has been incorporated within the Programme for 2009/10, on the basis that any meeting not required will be cancelled.
- 3.8 The Standards Committee has been scheduled to meet six times which reflects the programmed meetings for the current year. Any further meetings will be arranged if and when required.
- 3.9 A special meeting of the Cabinet and an extraordinary meeting of the Council have been included at the end of June 2009 to approve the Council's accounts. It is a statutory requirement that the accounts be approved by the end of June 2009.
- 3.10 An extraordinary meeting of the Council has been included in late February 2010 for the setting of the Council Tax.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 The forward planning of the Council's decision-making processes links to the Council's Improvement and Sense of Community objectives.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There are no direct risks arising from this report.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Once approved the programme of Council and Committee meetings will be publicised within the Council and on the Council's website to provide advance notice of future meetings.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Efforts have been made to avoid meetings clashing with key religious festivals.

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	No
Executive Director - Partnerships and Projects	No
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 Committee Programme 2009/10

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

CONTACT OFFICER

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COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE DATES 2009/10

Bank Holidays:

2009 – 4th May, 25th May, 31st August

2010 – 3rd May, 31st May, 30th August

Easter:

2009 – 10th April (Good Friday), 13th April (Easter Monday)

2010 – 2nd April (Good Friday), 5th April (Easter Monday)

Elections:

2009 – 4th June, County Council / combined European Parliamentary
Elections

Wednesday 6th May 2009

Monday 18th May 2009

Monday 18th May 2009

Monday 18th May 2009

Tuesday 19th May 2009

Wednesday 20th May 2009

Council (Annual Meeting)

Planning Committee

Licensing Committee

Performance Man. Board

Scrutiny Board

Standards Committee

Tuesday 2nd June 2009

Overview Board

Wednesday 3rd June 2009

Cabinet

Monday 8th June 2009

Audit Board

Monday 15th June 2009

Planning Committee

Monday 15th June 2009

Performance Man. Board

Wednesday 24th June 2009

Cabinet (Special Meeting)/

Council (Extraordinary Meeting)

(Accounts)

Tuesday 30th June 2009

Scrutiny Board

Wednesday 1st July 2009

Cabinet

Tuesday 7th July 2009

Overview Board

Monday 13th July 2009

Planning Committee

Wednesday 15th July 2009

Council

Monday 20th July 2009

Performance Man. Board

Wednesday 22nd July 2009

Standards Committee

Monday 27th July 2009

Licensing Committee

Tuesday 28th July 2009

Scrutiny Board

Wednesday 29th July 2009

Cabinet

Monday 10th August 2009

Planning Committee

Tuesday 1st September 2009

Overview Board

Wednesday 2nd September 2009

Cabinet

Monday 7th September 2009

Planning Committee

Monday 7th September 2009

Licensing Committee

Monday 14th September 2009

Audit Board

Wednesday 16th September 2009

Council

Monday 21st September 2009

Performance Man. Board

Wednesday 23rd September 2009	Standards Committee
Tuesday 29th September 2009	Scrutiny Board
Tuesday 6th October 2009	Overview Board
Wednesday 7th October 2009	Cabinet
Monday 12th October 2009	Planning Committee
Monday 19th October 2009	Licensing Committee
Monday 19th October 2009	Performance Man. Board
Tuesday 27th October 2009	Scrutiny Board
Monday 2nd November 2009	Planning Committee
Tuesday 3rd November 2009	Overview Board
Wednesday 4th November 2009	Cabinet
Wednesday 11th November 2009	Standards Committee
Monday 16th November 2009	Performance Man. Board
Wednesday 18th November 2009	Council
Tuesday 24th November 2009	Scrutiny Board
Monday 30th November 2009	Licensing Committee
Tuesday 1st December 2009	Scrutiny & Overview Board (Joint Meeting)
Wednesday 2nd December 2009	Cabinet
Monday 7th December 2009	Planning Committee
Monday 14th December 2009	Audit Board
Monday 21st December 2009	Performance Man. Board
Monday 4th January 2010	Planning Committee
Tuesday 5th January 2010	Scrutiny / Overview Board (Joint Meeting)
Tuesday 5th January 2010	Overview Board
Wednesday 6th January 2010	Cabinet
Monday 11th January 2010	Licensing Committee
Wednesday 13th January 2010	Standards Committee
Monday 18th January 2010	Performance Man. Board
Wednesday 20th January 2010	Council
Tuesday 26th January 2010	Scrutiny Board
Monday 1st February 2010	Planning Committee
Tuesday 2nd February 2010	Overview Board
Wednesday 3rd February 2010	Cabinet
Monday 15th February 2010	Performance Man. Board
Monday 22nd February 2010	Licensing Committee
Tuesday 23rd February 2010	Scrutiny Board
Wednesday 24th February 2010	Council (Extraordinary Meeting – Council Tax)
Monday 1st March 2010	Planning Committee
Tuesday 2nd March 2010	Overview Board
Wednesday 3rd March 2010	Cabinet
Monday 15th March 2010	Audit Board
Monday 15th March 2010	Performance Man. Board
Wednesday 17th March 2010	Council

Tuesday 23rd March 2010
Wednesday 24th March 2010
Monday 29th March 2010
Tuesday 30th March 2010

Scrutiny Board
Standards Committee
Planning Committee
Overview Board

Wednesday 7th April 2010

Monday 19th April 2010
Monday 19th April 2010
Tuesday 20th April 2010

Cabinet
Planning Committee
Performance Man. Board
Scrutiny Board

Wednesday 21st April 2010

Tuesday 27th April 2010

Wednesday 28th April 2010

Council
Overview Board
Cabinet

Wednesday 5th May 2010

Council (Annual Meeting)

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

7TH JANUARY 2009

REFUSE AND RECYCLING – VALUE FOR MONEY

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Street Scene and Community
Task Group Chairman	Councillor C. R. Scurrall

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To consider the findings and recommendations contained within the attached report relating to the second scrutiny investigation undertaken by the Refuse and Recycling Task Group on Value for Money.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are requested to consider and approve the attached report, including the recommendations contained within it.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At the Meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held in March 2008, the first report from the Refuse and Recycling Task Group was considered and approved. It was submitted to the Cabinet the following month and 14 of the 15 recommendations were approved. However, at that meeting the Cabinet suggested that the Task Group could be requested to carry out a separate scrutiny exercise specifically relating to Value for Money.
- 3.2 At the next meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board, the Cabinet's response was discussed and it was decided that the Task Group could be requested to undertake this second piece of work. The majority of the Task Group agreed and at the end of May 2008, the Scrutiny Steering Board agreed its terms of reference.
- 3.3 The Task Group Members ensured they attended the Value for Money training in June 2008 before their first meeting which took place in July 2008. At this meeting, the Task Group discussed its terms of reference and minor amendments were put forward and agreed by the Scrutiny Steering Board.

- 3.4 In relation to the report format, the Cabinet made the following suggestions which the former Scrutiny Steering Board approved in April 2008:
- Prioritising recommendations as being of low, medium or high priority
 - Including officer actions that are already being undertaken which the Task Group supports (highlighted in ***bold italics*** within the report)
 - Including issues which were considered by a Task Group but did not form part of the final recommendations
- The above have been incorporated into the attached report.
- 3.5 At the first meeting of the new Scrutiny Board held on 25th November 2008, the Task Group Chairman presented the attached report. After some discussion the report, including the three recommendations, were approved.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications to any of the recommendations, however, as with any recommendations, even where there is no cost, there will be an impact on officer time.
- 4.2 If the recommendations are approved, the final outcomes may have future financial implications. These financial implications would need to be considered as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) at that time. (For example, with regard to recommendation 1, officers would undertake an investigation which could lead to a proposal for the provision of additional wheelie bins on request at an additional charge. Such a proposal would need to be considered as part of the MTFP).

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications relating to the recommendations.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 This report links to Council Objectives 'Environment' and 'Improvement' and to the Council Priority 'Recycling'.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The risk of not implementing the recommendations contained within the attached report is that this Council does not continue to improve the refuse and recycling service in relation to providing a service which is value for money.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no direct customer implications in relation to the recommendations contained within the attached report. However, in relation to the new co-mingled service, it is considered that residents will benefit from a more convenient and improved level of service which will be excellent value for money.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no implications directly relating to the recommendations for the Council's Equalities and Diversity Policies. However, the Task Group supports the move back to using rear loading vehicles with a 3 person team on each vehicle. Therefore, it could be argued that this will improve the Council's capacity to deal with the increasing number of assisted collections as a result of the ageing population of the District. As the age profile within the area is moving towards an older population, this move could help to future proof the service.

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Savings for the service will be generated by changing the system to co-mingled collections after the new MRF has opened at the end of 2009. Savings of £100K have been included in the financial plan for 2010/11.
- 10.2 Changing the system to a standard operation will improve reliability and therefore consistency of service to residents. Savings will be generated in the longer terms due to the greater reliability of equipment.
- 10.3 By having a standard vehicle fleet similar to neighbouring authorities will enable greater opportunity for shared working resulting in efficiency gains and it will also allow more accurate benchmarking.
- 10.4 A co-mingled collection service will allow the Council to use some smaller vehicles with the result that a greater number of households will be suitable for the collection. It is anticipated that the Council will be able to increase coverage from 94% to 98%.
- 10.5 By moving to a co-mingled collection service, performance will improve as recycling rates will increase.
- 10.6 Continuing to use the side-arm vehicles for the green waste collection service will ensure the Council is not wasting its resources and because not all vehicles will be required, there will be spares meaning unreliability issues will not impact on our customers.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues – None
Personnel Implications – None directly, however, if recommendation 3 is approved, following further investigation by officers in future years, if an alternative method of service delivery was agreed, any possible personnel implications would need to be taken into consideration at that time.
Governance/Performance Management – Providing a value for money service will inevitably lead to improved performance.

Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – None
Policy – None
Environmental – The refuse and recycling service is inextricably linked to environmental issues and ensuring the service is value for money will help improve Performance Indicators.

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	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	No

13. **WARDS AFFECTED**

All Wards.

14. **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Refuse and Recycling Value for Money Overview and Scrutiny Report including its seven appendices.

15. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

CONTACT OFFICER

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Overview and Scrutiny Refuse and Recycling Value for Money

SECOND REPORT

Completed November 2008

SCRUTINY BOARD

Supporting Officer: Della McCarthy



Bromsgrove
District Council

Page 143

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SECOND REPORT OF THE REFUSE AND RECYCLING TASK GROUP - VALUE FOR MONEY

NOVEMBER 2008

MEMBERS

Councillors C. R. Scurrall (Chairman), Mrs. M. Bunker, Mrs. A. E. Doyle and C. J. Tidmarsh

BACKGROUND

The first report from the refuse and recycling scrutiny investigation was considered by the Cabinet in April 2008. Out of 15 recommendations, 14 were approved by the Cabinet. One recommendation was referred back to the Scrutiny Steering Board and Cabinet also suggested that the Refuse and Recycling Task Group be requested to carry out a separate scrutiny exercise specifically relating to Value for Money (VFM).

The Scrutiny Steering Board considered the Cabinet's response and agreed that the additional piece of work relating to VFM was a key scrutiny exercise. The Board therefore agreed that the Task Group should be asked to look at VFM specifically in relation to the refuse and recycling service.

Out of the 5 Task Group Members, 4 Members agreed to undertake the second scrutiny investigation, as listed in the section above.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference were agreed by the Scrutiny Steering Board at the end of May 2008 and Task Group Members subsequently attended Value for Money training in June 2008. In July, the Task Group had an initial meeting to discuss the terms of reference and minor amendments were made which were agreed by the Scrutiny Steering Board.

In brief, the role of the Task Group in relation to its second scrutiny exercise was to carry out a VFM analysis of the refuse and recycling service and reconsider the one recommendation referred back. The full terms of reference are attached as Appendix 1.

The Task Group was requested to complete its work November 2008 and report to the next available Board meeting.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the Task Group were pleased to find that officers are already working hard to ensure that the Council is providing residents of Bromsgrove District with a refuse and recycling service which is value for money.

Members involved in the scrutiny would like to support the efforts of those officers and would like to put forward three recommendations which are summarised below (in no particular order):

1. **Additional wheelie bins for green waste service** (High / Medium Priority)

Once the chargeable green waste collection service has been implemented and the take up of the service is known, Street Scene officers be requested to investigate the option of providing additional wheelie bins for green waste on request at an additional charge.

2. **Monitoring on-street recycling** (Low Priority)

Officers from Street Scene be requested to monitor on-street recycling trials being undertaken by other Councils to see if there is any evidence to suggest it would provide value for money.

3. **Investigate alternative methods of service delivery (e.g. Private contractor)** (Low / Medium Priority)

When the new co-mingled service has been in operation for a minimum of one year, the option of delivering the service using an alternative method (including using a private contractor) be considered to see if it would be an appropriate time for market testing and comparisons to be undertaken.

The Cabinet requested that one of the original recommendations contained within the first refuse and recycling scrutiny report should be reconsidered by Scrutiny Members. The recommendation had suggested that officers investigate trialling wheelie bin stickers to inform the public which collections are scheduled. The Task Group discussed the matter and decided to withdraw the recommendation. Reasons for the decision are outlined on page 14.

Financial Implications to Recommendations

There are no direct financial implications relating to the recommendations contained within this report. However, it should be said that, as with any recommendations for improvement, even if there are no direct costs, there is an impact on officer time as inevitably, officers will be expected to spend time implementing approved recommendations.

We believe that the recommendations put forward will support the Council in ensuring that it is providing a service which is value for money and for this reason, we believe that implementing the recommendations, should they be approved, would be officer time well spent.

If the recommendations are approved, the final outcomes may have future financial implications. These financial implications would need to be considered as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) at that time. (For example, with regard to recommendation 1, officers would undertake an investigation which could lead to a proposal for the provision of additional wheelie bins on request at an additional charge. Such a proposal would need to be considered as part of the MTFP).

Officer Actions supported by the Task Group

The Task Group were pleased to hear the good work that is taking place within Street Scene in relation to the refuse and recycling service. The actions that are already taking place which the Task Group support are highlighted within this report. However, for ease of reference, below is a bullet point summary:

- Regular communication in different forms with the public in relation to the changes to the service (i.e. the chargeable green waste service and the future co-mingled service)
- Striving to increase the percentage of households which can access the chargeable green waste service
- Continued use of the side-arm vehicles for the green waste collection service so not to waste the resource
- Shared working with Redditch Borough Council
- Joint Waste Forums for both officers and relevant Portfolio Holders from neighbouring authorities
- The Joint Waste Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire
- Requesting that the recently collated cost comparison data is discussed with Worcestershire County Council and other neighbouring authorities, particularly in relation to how figures are calculated
- Continuing to investigate ways to reduce the cost per household of the service

Issues considered which were not included within Recommendations

The Task Group was careful to remain focussed on value for money as requested, particularly as other issues relating to refuse and recycling had already been scrutinised under the first investigation which was completed earlier this year.

Issues that the Task Group considered but did not form part of our final recommendations included the change of the vehicle fleet. Although the Task Group discussed the change in vehicles to rear loading vehicles and had several questions on this aspect, the Task Group concluded that this change was necessary. This is covered in a future section of this report on page 7.

Other issues considered which did not form part of the recommendations were:

- Food waste collection
- Frequency of collections and night time collections
- Containers used for refuse and recycling collections
- Disposal routes
- Household Waste Site and Recycling Banks
- Progress of MRF (Material Reclamation Facility)
- Boundary issues
- Vehicle Fleet including compensation arrangements

METHODOLOGY

Views of local residents

When the Task Group was initially set up in July 2007, a press release was issued informing and encouraging the public to submit their views, comments and suggestions for the Task Group to consider. Information relating to the Task Group could also be found on the website where again the public were encouraged to voice their opinions and suggestions for improvements. As previously reported, a total of almost 30 letters and emails were received during July and August 2007 and the Task Group revisited these when it carried out its second scrutiny investigation.

During the second scrutiny investigation, the results of the Customer Panel Surveys for 2008 became available. Therefore, the Task Group was able to compare the results of the Customer Panel Surveys for 2007 and 2008, specifically in relation to how satisfied or dissatisfied residents were with the refuse collection service in general.

Internal witnesses

The Refuse and Recycling Task Group requested reports from Street Scene and Waste Management officers and obtained guidance from the Head of Financial Services. The Task Group also believed it was important to gain input from the relevant Portfolio Holder and once again, Councillor Mrs. Sherrey was invited to attend the final meeting of the Task Group when the draft scrutiny report was being finalised.

External witnesses

It was recommended to the Chairman of the Task Group that Dr. Johnston, Head of Centre for Local Sustainability at the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU), would be a good contact for the Task Group with regard to providing examples of best practice which would be of relevance to the scrutiny investigation.

The Task Group researched and contacted local authorities suggested by Dr. Johnston from the LGiU and also contacted neighbouring Councils so that comparisons could be made between the levels of services, performance and cost.

In addition, information was obtained from Worcestershire County Council, as the local authority responsible for refuse disposal.

A full list of those contacted is set out in Appendix 2.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At Bromsgrove District Council providing excellent Value for Money is defined as “*providing the right balance between cost and performance for each service, where right is defined as what our customers want as represented by their Councillors*”.

With this in mind, we wanted to look at different elements of the refuse and recycling service in terms of cost, efficiency, effectiveness, use of resources and customer satisfaction.

➤ Co-mingled Collections

Although there had previously been some uncertainty as to whether or not the MRF (Material Reclamation Facility) also known as ‘Enviro Sort’ being built by Worcestershire County Council would be delayed further, the County Council has confirmed that it is on target for completion in November 2009. As Members will know, once the MRF is operational, not only will a co-mingled service be provided, there will also be a capacity to collect and recycle more types of recyclables with the MRF meaning an increase in recycling rates.

Although the County Council at this time will not commit to any dates as to where this Council fits into its roll out programme, officers from Street Scene are keen to provide a co-mingled service to local residents as soon as possible. ***The Task Group support this as it will mean: an improved level of service; an improved level of performance as recycling rates would increase; and savings could be made.*** For example, residents will no longer need to sort and separate the recyclables into different boxes and recycling teams will no longer need to sort recyclables into the three hoppers on the side of the vehicle at the kerbside. Instead, all materials will be tipped into a single compartment of a compacting vehicle, transferred to the MRF and then sorted electronically, mechanically and with a small degree of manual input. The material will be high quality and re-saleable on the open market. The benefit to the Council is the reduction in cost of the recycling collection because of the need to employ less staff due to the increased speed of the operation and by using compacting vehicles. The benefit to local residents will be providing an efficient, effective, more convenient service which we believe will be excellent value for money.

A co-mingled collection service will allow the Council to use some smaller vehicles resulting in a greater number of households which will be suitable for the collection. ***It is anticipated that the Council will be able to increase coverage from 94% to 98%.***

By improving the service and its performance, making certain as many households as possible can access the service, as well as making savings, are all ways in which the Council is working towards providing a service to its customers which will deliver excellent value for money.

Effective communication was referred to in the Task Group's first scrutiny report because it is our view that there is a **strong correlation between communication and customer satisfaction**. As moving to a co-mingled collection will be a major change to the service, ensuring local residents are clear about what those changes are is vital. Therefore, **the Task Group supports the officers' proposals** to issue regular press releases in local papers, print articles in the Together Bromsgrove magazine, include updates on the Council's website and ensure all Members of the Council and the Parish Councils are fully informed.

The communication would also need to cover any changes to the containers so that residents are clear about what waste needs to go into which wheelie bin and which materials can be recycled, especially as there appears to be some confusion, even now, as to what can and cannot be recycled. Ensuring local residents are fully informed and reminding them about what their role is in relation to recycling, will assist the Council in maintaining good customer satisfaction levels and increasing recycling rates further. This is supported by evidence we found at East Hampshire District Council which had strong community engagement and a good communication plan which assisted it to achieve Beacon Council status.

➤ Chargeable Green Waste Collections

As Members are aware, the new chargeable service will be implemented in March 2009 costing £30 per household for a 9 month service and we were pleased to learn that residents are being provided information on the new chargeable green waste collection service using a variety of methods including: calendars; regular press releases now and in the future; Customer Service Centre; the Council's website; and Parish Councils. As stated under the previous section relating to the new co-mingled service, we believe effective communication with local residents is key to help increase customer satisfaction.

We questioned why the Council could not provide different options for green waste collections such as a slightly higher fee for a 12 month service. However, it is understood that having different options would be very difficult to implement and would cause operational difficulties. As the tonnage collected during the winter months reduces significantly, it does appear unlikely that 12 month service would provide value for money at this time. This may of course change in the future, if it became clear that it was a 12 month service, rather than a 9 month service, that local residents preferred and this would then need to be reconsidered.

Unlike some local authorities, such as Wychavon District Council, which operate a limited chargeable green waste service for approximately 15% of the total population, Bromsgrove District Council will ensure it is open to approximately 90% of households should they wish to opt for the service. **The Task Group feels it is important that as many households as possible have the opportunity to access the chargeable green waste service and therefore supports officers in striving to increase the service coverage, wherever practically possible.**

Within the Task Group’s terms of reference, it was asked that an extended level of service that could be achievable through greater spending be considered. As the green waste collection service is popular with local residents (in the 2007 Customer Survey 70% of residents stated they would be willing to pay for the green waste service) and previously, some residents have requested a second wheelie bin for their green waste, we would like this option investigated further in the future. Hence our first recommendation is:

Recommendation 1	Once the chargeable green waste collection service has been implemented and the take up of the service is known, Street Scene officers be requested to investigate the option of providing additional wheelie bins for green waste on request at an additional charge.
Priority	High / Medium – The Task Group feel this is a high priority as it is something that some of our customers have been requesting and therefore is important to consider. However, as it is not something that can be investigated until the take-up of the new service is known next year, we have stated it is as high/medium.
Financial Implications	There are no direct financial implications to this recommendation. (However, inevitably, officer time would be required to investigate the option.) Any additional charge for extra green bins would need to be fully considered at that time.

➤ Vehicle Fleet

As reported to the Cabinet in July, the Task Group was informed of the serious reliability problems with the vehicles, particularly with the mechanical side-arm leading to major difficulties of keeping all vehicles on the road on a daily basis. As all Members will know, the unreliability of the vehicles is having a negative impact on customer service.

Although we questioned whether a move back to rear loading vehicles was necessary, after our investigation, we are satisfied that rear loading vehicles are required due to: helping maintain and improve customer satisfaction levels by improving the reliability and consistency of the service; make savings in the long term; and increase the Council’s opportunities for shared working (as all other local authorities in the County have rear loading vehicles). It is understood that the current vehicles are due to be replaced in 2 years time regardless.

We also ***support the idea that the side-arm vehicles will continue to be used for the green waste collection service to ensure the Council is not wasting the resource.*** As not all vehicles will be required, there will be spare vehicles meaning unreliability issues should not impact on our customers.

➤ Comparison of costs of current and future service

As there are several changing factors which will affect the overall cost of the service (e.g. charging for green waste collections; replacing the vehicle fleet; introducing co-mingled collections; and disposal options) the most appropriate way for the Task Group to compare costs of current and future services was to look at vehicles and staffing.

The costs of vehicles, vehicle maintenance, fuel and staffing (assuming vehicles continue to tip at either Bromsgrove or Redditch locations) over a 12 month period are shown below:

Side Arm and Kerbsiders	£1,681,500
Rear Loading and Kerbsiders	£1,619,500
All Rear Loading (Co-mingled)	£1,562,800

The above shows that changing the vehicle fleet could see savings of approximately £62,000 and a further saving of over £56,000 when the Council move to providing a co-mingled service. The total amount saved by providing a co-mingled service using rear loading vehicles would be almost £120,000. (Please note: As stated above, these figures relate to the vehicle and staffing costs only and are dependent upon a capital investment to purchase new and additional bins and replacement vehicles.)

➤ Comparison against other local authorities

We contacted Dr. Andy Johnston, Head of Centre for Local Sustainability at Local Government Information Unit (LGIU), and asked him to assist the Task Group by providing examples of best practice which might be of relevance to the second scrutiny investigation.

Dr. Andy Johnston kindly agreed to help the Task Group and suggested 6 different local authorities he believed would be useful for us to look at which were:

- Daventry District Council
- East Hampshire District Council
- St. Edmundsbury Borough Council
- Stroud District Council
- Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
- Tumbridge Wells Borough Council

We obtained a large amount of information from these Councils and some neighbouring Councils including:

- Redditch Borough Council
- Wychavon District Council
- Wyre Forest District Council

We compared all the information and although there were several variations of service provided by each Council, the Task Group found that there were no major differences between the level of service provided by Bromsgrove District Council compared to Beacon authorities such as Daventry District Council.

Nevertheless, the small differences were discussed. After some consideration, only one relating to on-street recycling trials formed part of our final recommendations. We believe that on-street recycling may influence recycling rates by helping to change attitudes and encourage people to recycle more and therefore felt it was worth investigating further by simply monitoring the existing trials taking place:

Recommendation 2	Officers from Street Scene be requested to monitor on-street recycling trials being undertaken by other Councils (such as Wyre Forest District Council) to see if there is any evidence to suggest it would provide value for money.
Priority	Low – This is set as a low priority as at present there does not appear to be strong evidence that on-street recycling has been successful. However, we feel that it is worth monitoring other trials taking place at other Councils.
Financial Implications	There are no direct financial implications. However, inevitably, officer time would be required. Officers would simply be expected to monitor the success of the on-street recycling trials by communicating with those local councils (e.g. Wyre Forest) such as at the Joint Waste Forums which officers are already attending.

➤ Cost comparisons with neighbouring authorities

Worcestershire County Council commissioned consultants to compile data on the costs of the waste collection services provided by District and Borough Councils in the area and this information recently became available (attached as Appendix 3). The Task Group considered in detail the costs of the service provided by Bromsgrove District Council compared to other local authorities and, initially, we were concerned to find that it appeared that Bromsgrove District Council costs were very high compared to our neighbours.

It was expected that there would be some differences in costs, particularly where we provided a higher level of service, however this did not account for the significant cost difference in staff related overheads.

Officers too questioned the data and offered the explanation that officers at Bromsgrove District Council include a proportion of the running costs of the

Council as a whole (e.g. ICT, HR). The reason for this was officers believed that this would show a more accurate cost of the service; however, it seemed unlikely that the overhead costs were calculated in the same way by other local authorities which made it difficult to obtain a true comparison. ***The Task Group support officers in requesting this recently collated cost comparison data is discussed with Worcestershire County Council and other neighbouring authorities, particularly in relation to how figures are calculated.***

The cost per household is a performance indicator and we support the efforts of officers in improving this figure. For example, it is expected that in 2010/11 over £100,000 will be saved due to the MRF as kerbside sorting will no longer be necessary and therefore there will be a reduction in the workforce. As the chargeable green waste collection service is due to be introduced in March 2009, this will also contribute to decreasing the cost per household. Additional savings are also expected in the future through shared working with Redditch Borough Council. Furthermore, officers are challenging the County Council on recycling credits as other local authorities outside Worcestershire receive such financial credits which gives them an advantage. Therefore, ***the Task Group supports the work of officers who are continuing to investigate ways to reduce the cost per household of the service.***

One final point on this is it should be noted that within the data compiled by Worcestershire County Council, it shows that ***our recycling rates are the highest within the County by up to 17% higher.***

➤ Shared Working

The possibility of joint working was discussed by the Task Group and it is understood that ***options for shared working with Redditch Borough Council are already being investigated by officers***, not just with the refuse and recycling collections but across the whole service (and indeed the whole Council) and the ***Task Group support this move.***

It was questioned whether we could consider joint working with other neighbouring authorities such as Wychavon District Council, however we understand that Wychavon use a private contractor, unlike Bromsgrove and Redditch which both have an in-house service.

Although it is understood that there are hurdles to cross in terms of shared working with Redditch, as previously mentioned earlier in this report, standardising the vehicle fleet assists the Council in progressing shared working as most local authorities, including Redditch, have rear loading vehicles.

There is also good communication between local authorities across the County, particular via the ***monthly Joint Waste Forums for both officers and relevant Portfolio Holders which the Task Group very much supports.*** Furthermore,

the Task Group ***supports the Joint Municipal Waste Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire 2004-2034*** which outlines the problems we face, where we are now and how we can move forward together.

➤ Alternative methods of service delivery (e.g. private contractor)

Members enquired about the possibility of using alternative methods of service delivery such as using a private contractor. However, the advice received from the Government Office is currently, when the service is undergoing a considerable change to its refuse vehicle fleet and disposal methods, as well as adopting a co-mingled recycling service and introducing a chargeable green waste collection, it is unlikely any outside contractor would be interested at this time.

Although this is not a viable option at present due to the imminent changes, Members believe this may be worth investigating further in the future and at a more appropriate time, market testing and comparisons could be undertaken.

Recommendation 3	When the new co-mingled service has been in operation for a minimum of one year, the option of delivering the service using an alternative method (including using a private contractor) be considered to see if it would be an appropriate time for market testing and comparisons to be undertaken.
Priority	Low / Medium – We feel this is an important option that needs to be considered. However, as the Government Office has advised it is not a suitable time, we have rated this as a low / medium priority at this time.
Financial Implications	There are no direct financial implications. However, as already pointed out, with all recommendations, even if there are no financial implications, there will be a need for some officer input to implement them. The option of using a private contractor, similar to Wychavon, may be a viable option for the future in terms of ensuring the Council is providing a value for money service.

➤ Customer Satisfaction

Similar to last year, Bromsgrove District Council commissioned Snap Survey Shop to assist with their Customer Panel Survey for 2008. The purpose of the surveys is to seek residents' views on how the Council could improve the local area and the services it provides.

During the Task Group's first scrutiny investigation, results from the 2007 survey were considered. However, at the time of the second scrutiny investigation, the results of the 2008 survey were available and therefore a comparison of the results could be undertaken.

The satisfaction levels of the refuse collection service in general for 2007 and 2008 can be found in the following table:

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the refuse collection service in general?		
	2007	2008
Very satisfied	27%	29%
Fairly satisfied	41%	42%
Neither	6%	5%
Fairly dissatisfied	18%	15%
Very dissatisfied	7%	9%

You will see in the next table that the overall satisfaction level (respondents who stated they were “very satisfied” or “fairly satisfied”) in 2007 was 68% and in 2008, the **satisfaction rate increased by 3% to 71%**.

Overall Satisfaction level of the Refuse Collection Service (% who gave a positive response)	
2007	2008
68%	71%

The dissatisfaction level (made up of respondents who stated they were “fairly dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied”) was 25% in 2007 and in 2008 it decreased by 1% overall to 24%.

Some of the reasons for dissatisfaction with the service during 2008 which we looked at are provided within Appendices 4 and 5.

Overall Dissatisfaction level of the Refuse Collection Service (% who gave a negative response)	
2007	2008
25%	24%

The remainder of respondents stated that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the service. Further information can be found in Appendices 4, 5 and 6.

Members also revisited the comments received from the public and Parish Councils during their first scrutiny exercise and as previously reported, it was interesting to find that not only did we have a very good response rate from local residents but what was more unusual for a scrutiny investigation, was the high level of positive responses, particularly in relation to the recycling service. An extract of comments made by local residents can be found under Appendix 7.

We are very pleased with the positive comments we received from the public and to see that the customer satisfaction rate has increased and the dissatisfaction rate and decreased to 24%. However, this is still a significant amount of our customers who are unhappy with the service which is why we considered the reasons for their dissatisfaction as outlined in appendix 4. What we noticed was there seemed to be four main causes for dissatisfaction with the service:

- Waste containers not left in the correct place after emptying (e.g. not beside the correct property or blocking a drive)
- Recycling boxes not big enough
- Missed bins/bins emptied late
- Certain recyclables being left behind and not collected

With regard to the first and second bullet point, we believe that recommendations contained within our first report address these issues. For example, we recommended NVQ Training in Waste Management from WAMITAB (Waste Management Industry Training Advisory Board) for the existing workforce and new staff members. The recommendations relating to training, which were at no direct financial cost to the Council, were approved and training recently commenced. We believe this will help improve service efficiency and help us achieve higher sustainable levels of customer satisfaction.

As Members will know, with the change to a co-mingled collection, it is likely a wheelie bin which will be used for recyclables instead of the existing blue and red boxes and this should also help ensure residents have enough space in the future to dispose of all of their recyclables. However, in the meantime, another recommendation within our first report addresses the problem as it related to communicating with local residents which specifically included making sure they are aware that they can request additional recycling boxes free of charge. This was also approved.

The third bullet point above highlights the problems with the unreliability of the side-arm vehicles which is why we support officers actions in replacing these vehicles with the standard rear loaders so that our customers receive a more reliable and consistent service. As mentioned earlier in the report, it will also assist with shared working.

The final bullet point on the previous page relating to 'certain recyclables being left behind and not collected' is more difficult for this Council to address as it is reliant on the County Council as the disposal authority. The District Council can only collect recyclables which the County Council is able to process. This means there have been occasions when the District Council's refuse crews have had no choice but to leave certain items behind which householders have left out. However, it is anticipated that more materials could be recycled once the new MRF is in operation and as recommended within the first report (and reiterated within this report), officers are working closely with the County Council in relation to investigating recycling additional materials through the Joint Waste Forums. In the meantime, refuse crews will continue to leave yellow tags with items that cannot be collected so as to inform the householder of the reasons why particular items were left behind.

➤ Reconsideration of one original recommendation

From the first scrutiny investigation carried out by this Task Group, only one recommendation was not approved and instead was referred back:

Scrutiny Recommendation 12 – Collection Arrangements

To ensure that local residents are clear about which containers should be placed in the kerbside and when, officers be requested to investigate trialling wheelie bin stickers during 2008/09 or 2009/10, similar to Lichfield District Council.

Cabinet Response

The Cabinet requested that the Task Group reconsider this proposal as it was felt that the calendars were very popular with residents as an easily accessible source of information on dates of collections and there appeared to be little evidence that a change to wheelie bin stickers would be welcomed.

As requested, we did revisit this recommendation and discussed it once again with Street Scene officers.

When this recommendation was discussed initially in December 2007, we believed that this was an option worth looking into further. Partly due to the success of a similar scheme in Lichfield District Council and also because there had been some problems at this Council in relation to communicating to residents changes to the refuse and recycling service. Therefore, at that time, we believed it was an appropriate suggestion that could be *investigated* (not necessarily implemented).

However, as communication does seem to have improved considerably, we are happy to withdraw this particular recommendation.

CONCLUSION

Value for Money is extremely important as we need to ensure that we are providing our residents good quality services at the right level of cost. Using our terms of reference as a guide, we would like to make the following points:

- In relation to the refuse and recycling collections, we believe the current level of the service is very good; however, the current level of performance and cost of the service could be improved. The way in which this can be achieved is by:
 - Replacing the current vehicle fleet to more reliable rear loading vehicles - This would ensure a reliable and consistent service for residents and assist in future joint working with neighbouring authorities such as Redditch Borough Council; and
 - Introducing a co-mingled service as soon as possible - This would mean an improved level of service, an improved level of performance, extending the service to reach potentially 98% of households and all at a reduced level of cost.

This is something the Council is already working towards and although we did have concerns initially regarding replacing the vehicle fleet and reverting back to rear loaders, we believe this is the best way to ensure a value for money service.

- When we compared the current level, performance and cost of the service provided by other local authorities similar to Bromsgrove District Council, including Beacon authorities, we were encouraged to find that we fared very well and there were no major differences. In fact, comparing ourselves with neighbouring authorities, our level and performance of service is the best in the County. However, we do have some concerns regarding the costs and more specifically, how the costs are calculated by each authority as we found it very difficult to find a true comparison. Therefore we strongly support officers in discussing this further with Worcestershire County Council who collated the cost data.
- Other differences were also discussed although the majority did not appear in our final recommendations. For example, we looked at the possibility of introducing food waste collections but we found that it was questionable whether this would be a value for money service as: the volume of food waste is relatively small; a different style vehicle and specialised containers would be required which would increase costs; and there is also the issue relating to the disposal of food waste as the necessary machinery is not available in the County. We do, however, feel it would be worthwhile to monitor the on-street recycling trials of other Councils such as Wyre Forest District Council, to see if there is anything we can learn in terms of VFM.

- The refuse and recycling collection service is the one service used by all residents and consequently, it is not surprising that it is often used to judge the performance of the Council. Therefore, we were very encouraged to find that customer satisfaction levels with the service have increased this year compared to last year and by implementing approved recommendations contained within our first report, together with the change to a co-mingled service by 2010, we believe that customer satisfaction is likely to continue to increase.
- The main area of the service where savings could be identified is what is already planned which is the move to providing a co-mingled collection service. With compacting vehicles and a reduction in the workforce, savings will be seen in future years. Furthermore, through shared working with Redditch Borough Council, more savings could be found.
- We believe the best level of service that could be provided by the Council based on the current budget is: a co-mingled recycling service; a chargeable green waste collection available to all residents who have been able to use the current green waste collection service; and a fortnightly refuse (grey bin) service. What would further improve the service would be to increase the types of materials that could be recycled, but unfortunately, this is not something that this Council has direct control over. However, the Task Group is confident that officers will continue to regularly communicate with the County Council and other neighbouring authorities as stated in this report and recommended in our previous report (which was approved).
- With regard to an improved or extended level of service that could be achievable through greater spending, we believe one viable option would be to allow residents the ability to request additional green wheelie bins for an additional charge which is why this is included as a recommendation within this report.

It should be pointed out that the contents of this report are in line with two of the Council's Objectives which are Improvement and Environment and it is also in line with the Council's existing priority on recycling.

We believe our findings during our second piece of work show that the Council is already moving in the right direction in making sure it strikes the right balance between cost and performance of the refuse and recycling service and we believe this is reflected by the low number of recommendations contained within this report. Therefore, we would like to thank Street Scene Officers for all their hard work as all Members of the Task Group agree that they are doing an excellent job in trying to ensure we provide excellent value for money services to our customers.

REVIEW

The Refuse and Recycling Task Group will reconvene in 12-18 months time to carry out a review of the outcome of both of its reports including whether or not recommendations were approved and implemented and the impact of these actions.

Councillor C. R. Scurrall
Chairman of the Refuse and Recycling Task Group

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Task Group’s Terms of Reference

Appendix 2 – A List of those the Task Group consulted

Appendix 3 – Worcestershire Districts Collection Summary Data

Appendix 4 – Extract from SNAP Survey - 2008

Appendix 5 – Extract from Appendix to SNAP Survey - 2008

Appendix 6 – Extract from SNAP Survey - 2007

Appendix 7 – Extracts of comments made by local residents

REFUSE AND RECYCLING TASK GROUP

SECOND INVESTIGATION – VALUE FOR MONEY

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference below was approved by both the former Scrutiny Steering Board and the Refuse and Recycling Task Group.

General Area to be Scrutinised:

A Value for Money analysis of the Refuse and Recycling Service.

Specific Subject to be Scrutinised:

The Task Group is requested to carry out a benchmarking exercise and therefore investigate the following and make any appropriate recommendations for improvement:

- The level, performance and cost of service currently provided by BDC
- The level, performance and cost of service provided by other local authorities similar to BDC to enable a like for like comparison. (This should include both a selection of neighbouring authorities and similar local authorities higher up in the recycling league table.)
- A comparison of the data in bullet points 1 and 2 above which should include identifying the underlying reasons for differences in levels of performance and costs of the service between BDC and other local authorities
- A comparison of customer satisfaction levels year on year to find out whether or not they are increasing, decreasing or remaining the same.
- Any areas of the service where possible savings could be identified
- The maximum/optimum level of service that could be provided by BDC based on the current budget
- An improved/extended level of service that could be achievable through greater spending (to include costs)

(BDC = Bromsgrove District Council)

A List of those the Task Group Consulted

External Witnesses:

Public:

- Consulted via a press release and the Council's website. A total of 26 emails and letters were received and these were reconsidered by the Task Group.

Parish Councils:

- The Task Group revisited comments received from Parish Councils who were asked to complete the "Waste Matters" survey during the first investigation.

Other Local Authorities:

- Daventry District Council
- East Hampshire District Council
- Redditch Borough Council
- St. Edmundsbury Borough Council
- Stroud District Council
- Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
- Tumbridge Wells Borough Council
- Worcestershire County Council
- Wychavon District Council
- Wyre Forest District Council

Experts:

- Dr. Andy Johnston, Head of Centre for Local Sustainability at the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU)

Internal Witnesses:

Portfolio Holder:

- Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP, Portfolio Holder for Waste Management and Recycling

Street Scene and Waste Management:

- Mr. M. Bell, Head of Street Scene and Waste Management
- Mr. K. Hirons, Street Scene and Waste Manager (attended all Task Group Meetings)
- Ms. A. Wardell, Waste Policy and Promotions Manager

All relevant officers were made aware of the recommendations and were given an opportunity to comment.

As with all overview and scrutiny reports, all financial implications were checked by the Head of Financial Services and all legal implications were checked by the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services and/or a Senior Solicitor.

Worcestershire Districts Collection Summary Data

Worcestershire Collection Costs 2007-8 Actuals

Ref	Description	Bromsgrove DC		Redditch DC		Malvern Hills (excl trade)		Wyre Forest DC (excl trade)		Worcester City Council		Wychavon DC		Total Gross Costs		* Average %
		Costs (£'000's)	% of Gross Total	Costs (£'000's)	% of Gross Total	Costs (£'000's)	% of Gross Total	Costs (£'000's)	% of Gross Total	Costs (£'000's)	% of Gross Total	Costs (£'000's)	% of Gross Total	Costs (£'000's)	% of Gross Total	
Employees																
1	Sabries and Wages	1005.4	33.51%	545.6	33.46%	576	33.46%	1114.8	44.80%	851	44.80%	1050	42.42%	5142.8	38.01%	
2	Agency Costs	127.9	4.26%	121.1	7.43%	213	7.43%	116.6	4.69%	32	1.69%	225	9.09%	835.6	6.18%	
Transport																
3	Contract Hire/Leasing	85.5	2.85%	72.6	4.45%	174	4.45%	23.3	0.94%	Zero	n/a	375	15.15%	5978.40	44.18%	
4	Fuel	181.9	6.06%	130.4	8.00%	174	8.00%	203.5	8.18%	139	7.36%	300	12.12%	11288	8.34%	
5	Maintenance	196.9	6.46%	122.7	7.52%	150	7.52%	214.6	8.62%	107	5.66%	300	12.12%	1091.2	8.06%	
6	Insurance	53.4	1.78%	9.4	0.58%	33	0.58%	32.9	1.32%	8	0.42%	75	3.03%	211.7	1.56%	
7	Other (small misc)			1	0.06%	44	0.06%	5.3	0.21%	20	1.06%	75	3.03%	145.3	1.07%	
Supplies and Services																
8	Recycling Gate Fees					42	3.45%		3.89%	10	0.53%	n/a	n/a	52.0	0.38%	
9	Replacement Bins			56.3	3.45%		3.45%	96.8	3.89%	13	0.69%	n/a	n/a	214.1	1.58%	
10	Other (including communication and other misc)			37.9	2.32%	220	2.32%	89.7	3.60%	60	3.18%	75	3.03%	468.7	3.46%	
		1760.1		1097		1452		1897.5		1240		2475		734.8		5.43%
Overheads																
11	Staff related, including payroll, HR and finance	935.1	31.17%	435	26.68%	414	26.68%	240.6	9.67%	395	20.91%		n/a	2419.7	17.88%	
12	Capital Charge	305.2	10.17%	98.7	6.05%	181	6.05%	350.2	14.07%	254	13.45%		n/a	1189.1	8.79%	
13	Total Gross Costs (£000's)	3000.4	100.00%	1630.7	100.00%	2047	100.00%	2488.3	100.00%	1889	100.00%	2475	100.00%	13530.4	26.67%	100.00%
Gross Costs Per Household (excl income e.g. grants, recycling credits, bulkywaste income)		£76.93		£48.21		£62.43		£56.50		£44.74		£49.50		£	55.94	
		39000		33824		32791		44042		42219		50000		241876		
Cost/Property excluding overhead costs		45.13		32.43		44.28		43.08		29.37		49.50				
Recycling percentage approx		43%		33%		26%		28%		35%		29%				

* Note this total excludes £522k costs from Wychavon - detail unavailable from Focsa

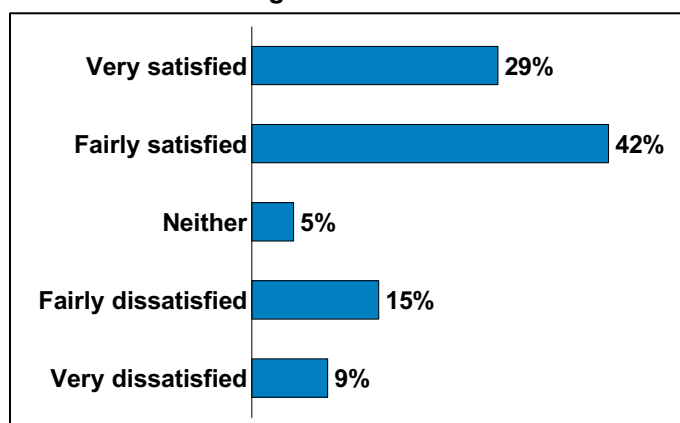
Extract from SNAP Survey - 2008

7.4 The refuse collection service

Residents were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with the refuse collection service. 71% said they were satisfied, while 24% were dissatisfied. Older respondents tended to be more satisfied than younger respondents:

- 60% of 18-34 year olds were satisfied
- 61% of 35-54 year olds were satisfied
- 75% of 55-74 year olds were satisfied
- 92% of those aged 75 or over were satisfied.

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the refuse collection service in general?



Base: All respondents (603)

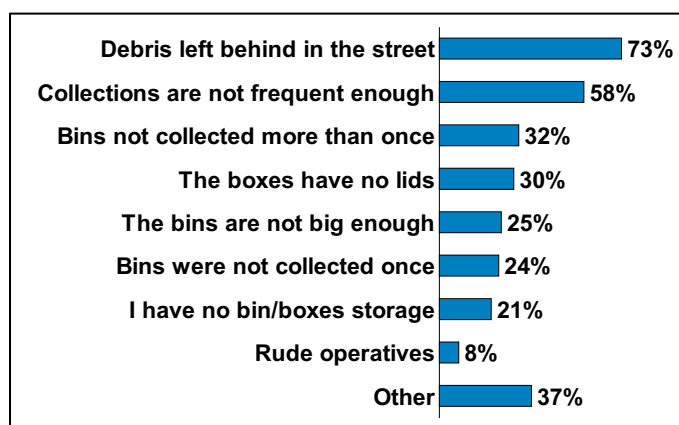
The findings for different areas are shown in the table below. The differences are not statistically significant.

<i>Satisfaction with refuse collection service</i>	Urban 1	Urban 2	Rural 1	Rural 2
Very satisfied	27%	34%	25%	36%
Fairly satisfied	44%	37%	43%	34%
Neither	5%	4%	6%	7%
Fairly dissatisfied	16%	19%	10%	14%
Very dissatisfied	8%	6%	15%	9%

Respondents who were dissatisfied with the refuse collection service were asked if they had experienced any problems with their refuse collection service, and were given a list of possible issues to choose from.

The main issue was debris left in the street (73%), although 58% felt that collections were not frequent enough. There were few differences between subgroups, with the exception of respondents in Urban 1 being significantly more likely than residents in Urban 2 to say that they have had debris left behind in the street (82% of Urban 1 compared to 47% of Urban 2).

Have you ever experienced any of the following issues with your refuse collection service?



Base: All respondents who are dissatisfied with the refuse collection service (142)

Respondents were given the opportunity to list other problems that they may have experienced with the refuse collection service. A selection of these are shown below, and a full list can be found in the appendix.

"7 a.m. on Saturdays!"

"Bins and boxes left blocking pavement and driveways."

"Bins missed on more than 15 occasions - we give up! My husband takes waste to commercial bins himself. Any chance of reduction in Council Tax?"

"Insufficient recycling, no cardboard, metal, etc."

"Other people's wheelie bins left in my drive."

"Recycling should be weekly."

"Recycling boxes not big enough."

"The bins advertise that they take textiles, but textiles left behind."

"This service is generally very poor, it needs dynamic improvement."

Extract from Appendix to SNAP Survey - 2008

Q31. If you are dissatisfied with the refuse collection service, please indicate whether you have ever experienced any of the following issues with your refuse collections – Other

"7 a.m. on Saturdays!"

"Appalling service for both grey and green bin collection."

"Bin collections can be a day or more late."

"Bins and boxes left blocking pavement and driveways."

"Bins are always left haphazardly on footpaths causing extreme life threatening situations for the elderly, disabled and young children."

"Bins are not left outside my property, always left further up the road and not even left tidily or with consideration for other path users."

"Bins are not left outside your house."

"Bins collected after 4 p.m. and not always on the correct day. You never know why or when."

"Bins left all over the place. White marks painted on bins and I do not know why."

"Bins left because not exactly in right place. We are not encouraged to recycle by charging us and give small boxes, emptied fortnightly."

"Bins left far away from property or blocking driveways."

"Bins missed on more than 15 occasions - we give up! My husband takes waste to commercial bins himself. Any chance of reduction in Council Tax?"

"Bins routinely left obstructing the pavement, hazard for motorized buggy users and mothers with small children. If a car is parked on the pavement, I understand it is an offence. What about bins?"

"Blocked pavements, having to walk in road but advised that the Council have insurances in case we are injured."

"Boxes are no good on windy days, have to keep putting boxes back, they blow over. When at work all day this causes recycling to be blown around."

"Boxes are not big enough."

"Boxes frequently broken and scattered around the street by the bin men."

"Boxes not big enough (consider small bins)."

"Boxes not big enough, need more boxes."

"Broken boxes (council damage) are not replaced."

"Completely unreliable, kerbside bins and boxes obstruct pavement."

Appendix 5

"Difficulty putting out heavy bins when ill or infirm."

"Grey bins and boxes STINK in warm weather."

"Have not been issued with a wheelie bin, birds frequently getting into black bin bags."

"I am not offered any recycling service, refuse only permitted to be 'household' waste. No definition given. Refuse left without explanation at the time."

"I do not appreciate walking up and down the length of our road looking for our bin."

"I have two people in this house using incontinence pads, so the bins smell awful at the end of two weeks, even if wrapped up."

"I live next to bin cupboards, we have flies and it smells."

"I take all my own waste to the tip - we live too far from the end of the lane where the collection takes place. Bins are now making all areas look scruffy."

"If bin is a little overfilled, not emptied at all, so yet another two weeks to wait."

"If windy, empty boxes and bins being blown I road could cause an accident."

"Insufficient recycling, no cardboard, metal, etc."

"Introduction of green bin fee is disgraceful."

"Lorries block the road and don't pull over so you can pass."

"Losing the green bin collection within Council Tax payment."

"Need back door collection, bins on pavement are a hazard for wheelchairs, pushchairs, blind people, etc."

"Neighbours putting out waste the day before collection and local children spreading it around the area. Also, some neighbours not collecting their bins/boxes for anything from a few days to a week."

"No chance to recycle as there is no collection."

"No consistency with collections."

"No opportunity to recycle."

"Often away meaning bin left out drawing attention to an empty house."

"Operatives sometimes do not return bin. I am registered for assistance."

"Other people's wheelie bins left in my drive."

"Papers left in bottom of red box."

Appendix 5

"Recycle bins for paper, tins and plastic, etc., are not big enough. Also, our driveway is on a slope so when it's windy the bins are blown down the driveway to the road."

"Recycle capable items being left behind!"

"Recycling boxes not big enough."

"Recycling should be weekly."

"Selective operators who decide what to collect and what not to collect."

"The bins advertise that they take textiles, but textiles left behind."

"The recycle bins are inadequate & unwieldy. Our drive is over 50 metres long & because we are conscientious at recycling, we have 8 boxes to manoeuvre. This is ergonomically unsafe, need wheelie bin."

"They leave stuff behind."

"This service is generally very poor, it needs dynamic improvement."

"Too fussy about what is recycled and don't take enough."

"When my bins were not collected I was unable to speak to anyone about it, my phone calls were not returned and rubbish was not collected, which meant 1 month before collection. This is not acceptable."

Extract from SNAP Survey - 2007

9 STREET SCENE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT: REFUSE COLLECTION

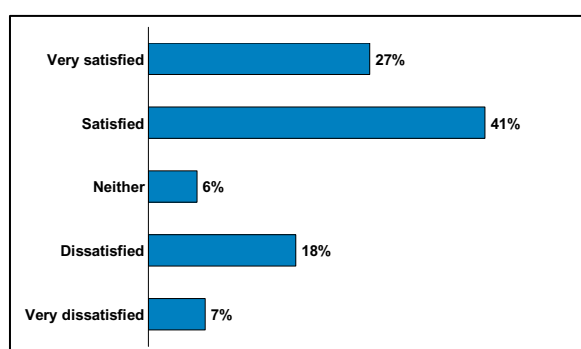
9.1 Introduction

This section of the report looks at residents' satisfaction with the refuse collection service.

9.2 Satisfaction with the refuse collection service

7 out of 10 (69%) were satisfied with the Refuse Collection Service, ranging from half (50%) of under 35s to three quarters (75%) in the 55 or older age group, and from 63% in workers to 75% in non workers.

Satisfaction with the refuse collection service



Base: All respondents (428)

9.3 Reasons for dissatisfaction with the service

Weekly rather than fortnightly collection of domestic refuse, especially during the summer months was a commonly stated reason for dissatisfaction. Residents felt that collection of green waste should be continued throughout the winter, or at least resume earlier in the season and collected weekly in the summer. The service levels of binmen was also raised.

Bin men very careless when collecting refuse, they leave a trail of rubbish behind them, and do not make any attempt to pick any up

Bins are not replaced by my house. Litter is often left. Collections take place too early, so bins have to be put out the night before and are vandalised

Bins full in one week, maggots in food waste bags, smelly in summer!

Excellent scheme ruined by abandonment of year round green bin collection

Fortnightly rubbish collection too long to wait, bring back weekly and green bins earlier. The garden season is longer than the bin collection times

Green bin collection restarted too late into the growing season, needs to be 6 weeks earlier. Grey bins need to be emptied every week.

Green bin collection stopped in the winter, would welcome weekly green collection in summer

I think two weekly collections of household refuse is not enough, particularly in summer.

Below is a selection of extracts of some of the comments made by local residents in response to the Refuse and Recycling Task Group requesting their views:

“We find these services (Refuse and Recycling) very good. Having, in the beginning, doubts about the use of these large wheelie bins we have been won over completely.”

1. Recycling is **THE** major success of BDC and from our UK travels and UK holidays is one of the best in England.
2. We have had **NO** problems with our grey bin – even when we were a family of 5.”

“I would like to say that we are very happy with the fortnightly system and have adjusted to it without any problems.”

“We need to review your barmy and disgusting decision to leave festering food rubbish around for up to two weeks.”

“I should like to express my support for and approval of the current waste collection arrangements.”

“As far as I am concerned there are two main areas of concern, namely the insistence that the collection is every fortnight for household rubbish which, to my mind, is unhealthy. The second issue is that, although the Council are prepared to congratulate themselves on the amount that is recycled, there are omissions to the types of material that can be dealt with.”

“Thank you very much for a reliable and regular Rubbish Collection.”

“Please bring back weekly collections. Food waste, no matter how well wrapped, is encouraging rodents.”

“I think it requires a return to the weekly collections...”

“My experience is that the current provision of the boxes for paper and plastic waste for recycling and a large green wheelie bin for garden waste – does not reflect our particular needs and we have to dispose of potentially recyclable material in the black wheelie bin.”

“I’m all for the recycling service – but when are we going to get it??!!”

“I write to applaud the current bin collection service with alternative collections on a weekly basis.”



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Bromsgrove
District Council

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

7TH JANUARY 2009

IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT [OCTOBER 2008]

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mike Webb Portfolio Holder for Customer Care and Service
Responsible Officer	Hugh Bennett Assistant Chief Executive

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To ask Cabinet to consider the Improvement Plan Exception Report for October 2008 (Appendix 1).

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Cabinet considers and approves the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception Report attached as Appendix 1, and the corrective action being taken.
- 2.2 That Cabinet notes that for the 141 actions highlighted for October within the plan 73.8 percent of the Improvement Plan is on target [green], 5.0 percent is one month behind [amber] and 10.6 percent is over one month behind [red]. 10.6 percent of actions have been reprogrammed with approval. [NB reprogrammed actions are those that have been suspended completely and those that have been moved to a later point in the year. Extended actions are listed separately are actions that are anticipated to take longer than had originally been programmed].
- 2.3 This month's performance is shown on the first page of Appendix 1.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 July 2008 Cabinet approved the Improvement Plan 2008/09. The Improvement Plan is directly linked to the five corporate priorities and thirteen enablers identified in the Council Plan 2008/2011.
- 3.2 The Improvement Plan is designed to push the Council through to a rating of Fair during 2008.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 No financial implications.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 No Legal Implications.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

6.1 The Improvement Plan relates to all of the Council's four objectives and five priorities as per the 2008/2011 Council Plan.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1.1 The risks associated with the Improvement Plan are covered in the CCPP departmental risk register. Specific corporate risks are related to the Improvement Plan in the following ways:

Corporate Risk Title	Improvement Plan Reference
KO1: Effective Financial Management and Internal Control	FP2 – Financial Management FP3 – Financial Strategy
KO2: Effective corporate leadership	FP1 – Value for Money FP2 – Financial Management FP3 – Financial Strategy FP4 – Financial and Performance Reporting PR2 –Improved Governance
KO3: Effective Member / Officer relations	PR2 –Improved Governance HROD1 – Learning and Development
KO4: Effective Member / Member relations	PR2 –Improved Governance HROD1 – Learning and Development
KO5*: Full compliance with the Civil Contingencies Act and effective Business Continuity	PR1 – Customer Process
KO6: Maximising the benefits of investment in ICT equipment and training	PR3 – Spatial Business Project
KO7: Effective partnership working	PR4 – Improved Partnership Working
KO8: Effective communications (internal and external)	PR1 – Customer Process FP4 – Financial and Performance Reporting HROD 4– Performance Culture
KO9: Equalities and diversity agenda embedded across the Authority	CP3 – Customer Service CP4 – Sense of Community
KO10: Appropriate investment in employee development and training	HROD1 – Learning and Development HROD2 – Modernisation HROD4 – Performance Culture
KO11: Effective employee recruitment and retention	HROD2 – Modernisation
KO12: Full compliance with all Health	FP3 – Financial Strategy

and Safety legislation	PR1 – Customer Process HROD2 – Modernisation
KO13: Effective two tier working and Community Engagement	CP4 – Sense of Community PR4 – Improved Partnership Working
KO14: Successful implementation of Job Evaluation	HROD2 - Modernisation
KO15: All Council data is accurate and of high quality	FP2 – Financial Management FP4 – Financial and Performance Reporting PR3 – Spatial Business Project HROD4 – Performance culture
KO16: The Council no longer in recovery	FP1 – Value for Money FP4 – Financial and Performance Reporting
KO17: Effective Projects Management	FP1 – Value for Money PR3 – Spatial Business Project
KO19: Effective Business and Performance Management	FP4 – Financial and Performance Reporting
KO20: Effective Customer Focused Authority	CP3 – Customer Service CP4 – Sense of Community PR1 – Customer Process

* KO5 and KO18 have been merged

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Improvement Plan is concerned with the strategic and operational issues that will affect the customer.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Please see sections CP3 and CP4 of the Improvement Plan

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 See section FP1 of the Improvement Plan

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues: See Section FP1 of the Improvement Plan.
Personnel Implications: See Sections HROD1-HROD4 of the Improvement Plan.
Governance/Performance Management: See Sections FP4 and PR2 of the Improvement Plan.
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998: See section CP4 of the Improvement Plan
Policy: All sections of the Improvement Plan relate to this.
Environmental: See sections CP1 and PR5 of the Improvement Plan.

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	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	Yes
Head of Legal & Democratic Services	Yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	No

13. WARDS AFFECTED

13.1 All wards

14. APPENDICES

14.1 Appendix 1 Improvement Plan Exception Report October 2008

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

15.1 The full Improvement Plan for October can be found at www.bromsgrove.gov.uk under meetings Minutes and Agendas. A hard copy is also left in the Members' Room each month.

CONTACT OFFICER

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Tel: (01527) 881631

Exception Report for October 2008 Improvement Plan

Appendix 1

PROGRESS IN 2008

Overall performance as at the end of October 2008, in comparison with the previous year, is as follows: -

July 2007			August 2007			September 2007			October 2007			November 2007			December 2007		
RED	1	0.6%	RED	1	0.7%	RED	4	2.4%	RED	3	1.8%	RED	5	3.1%	RED	3	2.0%
AMBER	5	3.2%	AMBER	13	9.2%	AMBER	11	6.6%	AMBER	16	9.6%	AMBER	11	7.0%	AMBER	17	11.6%
GREEN	152	95.6%	GREEN	126	88.7%	GREEN	149	89.2%	GREEN	142	85.0%	GREEN	138	86.9%	GREEN	121	82.3%
REPRO	1	0.6%	REPRO	2	1.4%	REPRO	3	1.8%	REPRO	6	3.6%	REPRO	5	3.1%	REPRO	6	4.1%

January 2008			February 2008			March 2008			April 2008			May 2008			June 2008		
RED	2	1.4%	RED	2	1.4%	RED	2	1.5%	RED	3	2.7%	RED	8	7.55%	RED	6	6.3%
AMBER	16	11.4%	AMBER	10	7.3%	AMBER	10	7.4%	AMBER	11	9.9%	AMBER	4	3.8%	AMBER	4	4.2%
GREEN	118	84.3%	GREEN	122	88.4%	GREEN	117	86.7%	GREEN	92	82.9%	GREEN	86	81.1%	GREEN	74	77.0%
REPRO	4	2.9%	REPRO	4	2.9%	REPRO	6	4.4%	REPRO	5	4.5%	REPRO	8	7.55%	REPRO	12	12.5%

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July 2008			August 2008			September 2008			October 2008			November 2008			December 2008		
RED	11	8.6%	RED	17	14.4%	RED	16	11.9%	RED	15	10.6%	RED			RED		
AMBER	3	2.3%	AMBER	4	3.4%	AMBER	8	6.0%	AMBER	7	5.0%	AMBER			AMBER		
GREEN	114	89.1%	GREEN	96	81.4%	GREEN	99	73.9%	GREEN	104	73.8%	GREEN			GREEN		
REPRO	0	0%	REPRO	1	0.8%	REPRO*	11	8.2%	REPRO	15	10.6%	REPRO			REPRO		

January 2009			February 2009			March 2009			April 2009			May 2009			June 2009		
RED			RED			RED			RED			RED			RED		
AMBER			AMBER			AMBER			AMBER			AMBER			AMBER		
GREEN			GREEN			GREEN			GREEN			GREEN			GREEN		
REPRO			REPRO			REPRO			REPRO			REPRO			REPRO		

Exception Report for October 2008 Improvement Plan

Appendix 1

Where: -

	On Target or completed		One month behind target or less		Over one month behind target		Original date of planned action	Re-programmed date.*
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** NB. Reprogrammed actions are both those that have been suspended completely and those that have been moved to a later point in the year. They are not actions that have been extended and they do not appear on the exception report.*

Out of the total of 141 actions for October 2008, 5 actions have been extended with approval. This amounts to 3.5 percent of the original actions scheduled for this month. Extended actions are shown with hatched marking and extend the timescale of a current or ongoing action on the Improvement Plan. The actions that have been extended this month are: Agree sites for relocation of public sector partners x 2 (1.3); Agreed plans for Longbridge (14.1); and Rolling vision of the District x 2 (14.3)

An Exception Report detailing corrective actions follows:

CP1: Town Centre																	
Ref	October 2008 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
1.2.2	Identify commercial support				Issues and options consultation ended in September. Advice sought on OJEU process from commercial advisors regarding Market Hall site, but decision on appointing a preferred developer for wider developments delayed until appraisal of all sites is completed.										PS	Jul-08	Nov-08
1.2.	Work Commenced (see 1.4)																
1.2.2	Identify commercial support	PS														Commercial pressures and economic climate are likely to impact on current project timescales. Report to go to Cabinet in November regarding recommendations for action.	

CP1: Town Centre																	
Ref	October 2008 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
1.3.1	Consultation on Parkside		[Red Hatched]		Consultation delayed by discussions with Church Commissioners regarding covenant on site. The planning application for the new surgery goes to Planning Committee on 1 st December. Discussions taking place with police and fire and rescue service about new facilities, but no date set at present on when a planning application will come forward.										PS	Aug-08	Dec-08
1.3	Agree sites for relocation of public sector partners																
1.3.1	Consultation on Parkside	PS		[Red]	[Red Hatched]	[Red Hatched]	[Diagonal Hatched]	[Diagonal Hatched]							Extended to December to allow for further negotiations		

CP1: Town Centre																			
Ref	October 2008 Action		Colour	Corrective Action											Who	Original Date	Revised Date		
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action				
1.4.2	Seek commercial advice		[Red Hatched]			Issues and options consultation ended. Advice sought on OJEU process from commercial advisors regarding market hall site. Report going to Cabinet proposing market hall site be redeveloped and only when decisions have been taken on how other sites are to be used will further consideration be given to tendering for a preferred developer for wider developments.											PS	Jul-08	Nov-08
1.4	Reach agreement on redevelopment of the market hall site																		
1.4.2	Seek commercial advice	PS	[Red]	[Red]	[Red Hatched]	[Red Hatched]	[Diagonal Hatched]									Commercial pressures and economic climate are likely to impact on current project timescales. Report to go to Cabinet in November regarding recommendations for action			

Exception Report for October 2008 Improvement Plan

Appendix 1

CP1: Town Centre																	
Ref	October 2008 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
1.6.2	Meet with AWM				Efforts made to arrange meeting, but AWM have not yet confirmed a date.										PS	Sept-08	Nov-08
1.6	High street enhancement and improved high street events																
1.6.2	Meet with AWM	PS														Extended to November.	

CP1: Town Centre																	
Ref	October 2008 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
1.7.1	Network Rail to agree business case and funding for station.				Network Rail still working on business case and multiple funding of station project. There is not much the District Council can do here, but wait for the funding package to be agreed. AWM /Network Rail meeting not successful.										HB	Jul-08	Nov-08
1.7	Agree funding and planning permission for train station redevelopment, with transport links to town centre																
1.7.1	Network Rail to agree business case and funding for station.	HB														Network Rail still working on business case and multiple funding of station project. A meeting of the project team will take place in November after which more should be known. Extended again to November	

CP1: Town Centre																	
Ref	October 2008 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
1.7.2	Agree historic dimension to new build.				There have been discussions with Network Rail and BRUG, but until the station funding package is agreed this cannot be finalised. Timescales may be extended further. AWM /Network Rail meeting not successful.										HB	Jul-08	Nov-08
1.7	Agree funding and planning permission for train station redevelopment, with transport links to town centre																
1.7.2	Agree historic dimension to new build.	HB														Network Rail still working on business case and multiple funding of station project. On hold pending funding resolution.	

Exception Report for October 2008 Improvement Plan

Appendix 1

CP1: Town Centre																	
Ref	October 2008 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
1.7.3	Obtain planning permission.				The planning application process cannot commence until funding is approved.										HB	Jul-08	Dec-08
1.7	Agree funding and planning permission for train station redevelopment, with transport links to town centre																
1.7.3	Obtain planning permission.	HB														Network Rail still working on business case and multiple funding of station project. On hold pending funding resolution.	

CP4: Sense of Community																	
Ref	October 2008 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
4.1.6	Develop action plans and submit to LSP and Cabinet (if Budget Bids)				Currently out to consultation with two stakeholder groups.										HB	Jul-08	Oct-08
4.1	Neighbourhood management																
4.1.6	Develop action plans and submit to LSP and Cabinet (if Budget Bids)	HB														Have developed plan for Rubery, but need to develop for Alvechurch. HB to meet with the Leader in November to develop this.	

CP4: Sense of Community																	
Ref	October 2008 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
4.3.1 3	Establish monitoring & meeting arrangements set out in the SLA with the Artrix.				Work in this area is ongoing due to concern raised by the Operating Trust of the Artrix over some of the phrasing in the agreement document. Extended to December.										JG	Jul-08	Dec-08
4.3	Popularity of events programme																
4.3.13	Establish monitoring & meeting arrangements set out in the SLA with the Artrix.	JG														Officers have forwarded the revised SLA to the Operating Trust and are awaiting feedback before commencing formal discussions. Officers have yet to receive feedback and are at present chasing this issue up and requesting completion pre Christmas.	

Exception Report for October 2008 Improvement Plan

Appendix 1

CP4: Sense of Community																	
Ref	October 2008 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
4.3.1 4	Agree service improvement plan and targets based on SLA, previous years performance and BDC user feedback out turns.		Work in this area is ongoing due to concern raised by the Operating Trust of the Artrix over some of the phrasing in the agreement document. Extended to December.												JG	Jul-08	Dec-08
4.3	Popularity of events programme																
4.3.14	Agree service improvement plan and targets based on SLA, previous years performance and BDC user feedback out turns.	JG														Officers have forwarded the revised SLA to the Operating Trust and are awaiting feedback before commencing formal discussions.	

CP4: Sense of Community																	
Ref	October 2008 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
4.3.1 5	Agree service improvement plan and targets based on SLA, previous years performance and BDC user feedback out turns.		Due to delays in the acceptance of the SLA work in this area has not yet been progressed. Extended to January.												JG	Sep-08	Jan-09
4.3	Popularity of events programme																
4.3.15	Agree service improvement plan and targets based on SLA, previous years performance and BDC user feedback out turns.	JG														Officers have forwarded the revised SLA to the Operating Trust and are awaiting feedback before commencing formal discussions.	

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FP1: Value For Money																	
Ref	October 2008 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
6.2.3	Transfer Dolphin Centre to Leisure Trust		Trust withdrew from transfer negotiations on 4 th September. Service review undertaken in pursuit of efficiencies and these will be included in report to Cabinet on 4 th December.												PS	Jul-08	Dec-08
6.2	Alternative methods of service delivery, to include revisiting the shared services/ joint working agenda																
6.2.3	Transfer Dolphin Centre to Leisure Trust	PS														Report to Cabinet on 4 th December.	

FP1: Value For Money																		
Ref	October 2008 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date	
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action			
6.5.5	Comparable costing information for benchmarking to be analysed using other councils information															JLP	Oct-08	Nov-08
6.5	VFM ratings																	
6.5.5	Comparable costing information for benchmarking to be analysed using other councils information	JLP																To be undertaken in November

FP4: Financial and Performance Reporting																		
Ref	October 2008 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date	
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action			
9.2.4	'Glossy' Annual Report published															HB	Sept-08	Nov-08
9.2	Integrated Annual Report																	
9.2.4	'Glossy' Annual Report published	HB																Published in November.

Exception Report for October 2008 Improvement Plan

Appendix 1

FP4: Financial and Performance Reporting																		
Ref	October 2008 Action	Colour	Corrective Action													Who	Original Date	Revised Date
9.3.1	Monthly reporting to Portfolio Holders		Running but need to check on how these are working. Need to re-activate this.													HB	Oct-08	Dec-08
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action			
9.3	Performance and Project Management																	
9.3.1	Monthly reporting to Portfolio Holders	HB														Running but need to check on how these are working. Need to re-activate this.		

PR1: Customer Process																		
Ref	October 2008 Action	Colour	Corrective Action													Who	Original Date	Revised Date
10.3.2	Ordered functions by tolerance		Work progressing on business continuity plan. However, the preparation of the plan has take longer than anticipated and the plan will now not be completed before mid November. Report will go to Leaders Group in January 2009.													PS	Aug-08	Jan-09
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action			
10.3	Business Continuity																	
10.3.2	Ordered functions by tolerance	PS														Extended again to January.		

Exception Report for October 2008 Improvement Plan

Appendix 1

PR3: Spatial Business Project

Ref	October 2008 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date	
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action			
12.2.3	Review results and revise standards															HB	Sept-08	Nov-08
12.2	Speed of processing customer queries																	
12.2.3	Review results and revise standards	HB																Extended to November when draft CA Strategy will have been developed.

HR&OD2: Modernisation

Ref	October 2008 Action	Colour	Corrective Action												Who	Original Date	Revised Date	
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action			
16.1.3	Establish Workforce Planning Champions for each Service area															JP	Sept-08	Nov-08
16.1	Workforce Planning																	
16.1.3	Establish Workforce Planning Champions for each Service area	JP																Project plan on workforce planning is being revised to align with Redditch's work in this area. HOS to update Improvement Plan with new project plan dates

HR&OD2: Modernisation																
Ref	October 2008 Action	Colour	Corrective Action											Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action	
16.1.4	Data Collection		Timeline adjusted to take account of joint working with RBC.											JP	Sept-08	Nov-08
16.1	Workforce Planning															
16.1.4	Data Collection	JP														Project plan on workforce planning is being revised to align with Redditch's work in this area. HOS to update Improvement Plan with new project plan dates

HR&OD2: Modernisation																				
Ref	October 2008 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date			
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action					
16.2.2	Implementation															Special Cabinet meeting held on 22 nd October to consider how to proceed	JP	Aug-08	Nov-08	
16.2	Single Status																			
16.2.2	Implementation	JP															Cabinet resolved to begin statutory 90 day period of consultation with the trade unions and BERR with a view to potentially moving to dismissal and re-engagement			
HR&OD2: Modernisation																				
Ref	October 2008 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date			
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action					
16.2.3	Appeals																Special Cabinet meeting held on 22 nd October to consider how to proceed	JP	Oct-08	Dec-08
16.2	Single Status																			
16.2.3	Appeals	JP															Cabinet resolved to begin statutory 90 day period of consultation with the trade unions and BERR with a view to potentially moving to dismissal and re-engagement			

Exception Report for October 2008 Improvement Plan

Appendix 1

HR&OD2: Modernisation																
Ref	October 2008 Action	Colour	Corrective Action											Who	Original Date	Revised Date
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action	
16.4.3	Produce quick guide to recruitment process		Delayed by 2 months due to workload arising from payroll transfer.											JP	Sept-08	Nov-08
16.4	Recruitment and retention															
16.4.3	Produce quick guide to recruitment process	JP														In the process of drawing up guide together with flowchart

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Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

Equality and Diversity Forum

Meeting held on Thursday 16th October 2008

In attendance	
Sat Aggarawal	Bromsgrove Indian Community Forum
Emma Barton	Health Improvement Manager, Worcestershire Primary Care Trust
Tony Beirne	Director, Bromsgrove District Council
Mr B K Chaudhari	Bromsgrove Indian Community Forum
Mary Collett	Disabled Users Group
Nuala Dalton	Bromsgrove Resident
Jeff Edwards	Bromsgrove Older People's Forum, Bromsgrove and District NHS Retirement Fellowship
Nigel Godwin	Bromsgrove Resident
Patricia Hackett	Mencap
Tracey Hodges	Padstone, Worcestershire County Council
Eileen Mulhall	Worcestershire Association of Service Users
Sharon Murphy	Benefits Welfare Officer, Bromsgrove District Council
Trevor Rigg	Bromsgrove Resident and Forum Chair
Mark Townsend	West Mercia Police
Ian Roberts	Supervisor, Street Scene and Community, Bromsgrove District Council
Fiona Scott	Equality Officer, Bromsgrove District Council
Joe Scott	Bromsgrove Resident
Phil Street	Director, Bromsgrove District Council
	Worcestershire Mental Health Network
John Tempest	
Jo Wright	Bromsgrove Resident
Fozia Yamin	Malvern Hills District Council

Apologies	
Hugh Bennett	Assistant Chief Executive, Bromsgrove District Council
Kevin Dicks	Chief Executive, Bromsgrove District Council and Acting Chief Executive Redditch Borough Council
Claire Felton	Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, BDC
Joan King	The Gender Trust
Wayne Knighton	Bromsgrove resident
Tony Love	West Mercia Constabulary
Tony Lowry	Bromsgrove District Housing Trust
Logan Mailvaganam	North Worcestershire Mental Health Partnership
Superna Makwana	Bromsgrove resident
Joanne Pitman	Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development, Bromsgrove District Council
Julie Wright	West Mercia Constabulary

1. Introductions and apologies

Apologies as above.

2. Minutes of meeting 14th August 2008

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by **Mr B K Chaudhari** and seconded by **Mary Collett**.

3. Minutes of meeting 18th September 2008

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by **Joe Scott** and seconded by **Tracey Hodges**.

Matters arising from both previous meetings are covered by items on the Main Agenda.

Jo Wright asked about the next steps for the community bids. **Hugh Bennett** has proposed a meeting for all the new bidders this year round to discuss the next steps. **Fiona Scott** will liaise with **Hugh** and establish the timescale for this.

4. Items from the Forum Chair

None.

5. Items from the Chief Executive

Phil Street took this item on behalf of **Kevin Dicks**.

It was clarified that any question from the group relating to the community would be accepted. If the question couldn't be answered immediately a written response would be issued in due course.

Mary Collett asked about the parking for the newly refurbished toilet block in the Town Centre as it had been made clear at the Disabled Users Group meeting that the only parking available will be on the car park in front of Asda. **Mary** asked whether the Disabled Parking Space that used to be by Iceland could be re-instated. There is little Disable Parking available in the Town Centre. **Phil Street** will take this back for further consideration.

Patricia Hackett asked that if parking is provided for Disabled People by the toilet block that there will be a sign indicating this and this will be kept under surveillance.

Joe Scott asked whether the last space at the end of the taxi rank could be designated for use by Disabled People.

Phil Street outlined other recent developments.

- 5.1** The Choice Based Lettings Scheme has now been introduced for public housing tenants. This Scheme gives people more choice and replaces the old points and list system.
- 5.2** The Budget for the next financial year is occupying a lot a time for managers and priorities have to be agreed. These will be finalised in February 2009.
- 5.3** Disability Facilities Grants – a number of changes have been made to improve the speed at which the system works.
- 5.4** The plans to provide improved toilet facilities including better disabled toilets and a Personal Care Suite are making good progress
- 5.5** A proposal to provide free swimming for older people was the subject of debate at the recent Full Council Meeting

- 5.6** All Departments in the Council are looking at their Equality Impact Assessment processes to ensure that the services meet the needs of all sections of the community.
- 5.7** The project to improve the railway station has been delayed because of a £6m gap in the funding.
- 5.8** Kevin Dicks is continuing his joint role as Chief Executive for Bromsgrove District Council and Acting Chief Executive for Redditch Borough Council. This is part of a general move to provide shared services which means better services for the same or less money.

Joe Wright asked why the Council approved free swimming for older people but not for younger people – this is an equality issue particularly given the demise of the facilities in Charford.

Phil explained that the way this initiative is being funded and the period of funding means that the Council might find itself in a years time with more costs. The difficulty is in trying to get the balance between providing services and not putting more strain on Council tax.

Tony Beirne explained that Central Government have a history of starting initiatives with some funding and then leaving Local Government with the responsibility for the longer term financial consequences.

A number of councils have agreed to do this and those councils will have an influx of non local people which could be a disadvantage to other users. It could have left Bromsgrove District Council with a shortfall of £100,000 to £180,000.

Jo Wright asked where this fits in with the aims and objectives of the 2012 Olympics as there is a need to train youngsters for this event? This doesn't seem to fit with the objective of encouraging more young people into sport. Is Bromsgrove District Council going to give further consideration to other ways of helping young people get involved in sport in other, more cost effective ways?

Tony Beirne is currently looking into various options for future service provision.

The Council is trying to balance the reasonableness of the provision of service and balance the books.

Trevor Rigg, as Chair stated that the Forum is a critical friend of the Council and this feels as if the Council is off the mark in this case.

Tony Beirne has checked with other nearby councils and we are in line with what they are doing. Central Government is sending mixed messages by not cutting back on new initiatives whilst not providing sufficient funding to grow those initiatives.

Tracey Hodges raised the issue that adults with learning difficulty can go free but their supporters/ enablers still get charged and without this support the adults concerned cannot access the services.

A future next meeting of the Disabled Users Group will be having a full discussion item on access to leisure services with someone from Sports and Leisure.

We are building on our first Children and Young People's event by holding a second event in partnership with Worcestershire County Council. This will involve the participants deciding how to spend money that they have been allocated.

The District Council does not have a statutory duty for young people but contributes to the theme group on the Local Strategic Partnership which is one of the best in the County.

It was agreed that as there are high feelings about this item it will be brought back to a future meeting.

6. Sharon Murphy – Benefits Welfare Officer

This was a new post when **Sharon** took it up. She visits people and provides them with help to make claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit claim forms. She helps people to complete forms and where necessary refers them to other agencies.

She gets some requests for help from the Customer Service Centre.

She also works jointly with the County Council, for example assessing circumstances under Fairer Charging for Home Care. Part of the initiative is to try to reduce repetition of providing information for claims. She will also be involved in benefit take-up campaigns to make people more aware of what they can claim.

Nigel Godwin said that he had recently experienced deterioration in his health but during contact with various agencies had not been told that there was anyone like Sharon who could help him.

Nigel felt that he had been discriminated against, it wasn't that they were not interested but that they didn't know that this service exists. He can no longer he can't fill in any forms on his own.

It was accepted that **Nigel** should have been informed about this service by the Customer Service Centre.

Tony Beirne apologised for this but pointed out that the in the Customer Service Centre in the main has excellent satisfaction scores but even one poor experience is not acceptable.

7. Emma Barton – Health Improvement Manager

Emma started with Worcestershire Primary Care Trust in July. Emmas predecessor was previously based in the Princess Community Hospital and is now based with the District Council. This is now in common with the other Districts in Worcestershire.

Emma works with statutory and non statutory organisations and sits on most of the Local Strategic Partnership Themes Groups.

There is a Health and Wellbeing Theme Group with 2 sub groups – smoking and BECAN Bromsgrove Extended Community Activity Network

They are due to set up an alcohol sub group to work on issues around hospital admissions and anti social behaviour.

The minutes of the meetings held on 14th August mention an Activity Referral Scheme which is being launched in December this year. The Primary Care Trust has commissioned the Dolphin Centre to provide this service.

Emma will be trying to get General Practitioners involved – previously they weren't willing to be involved. Practice nurses will also be targeted.

Emma is willing to come back to a future meeting to discuss progress on this project and others.

The Activity Referral Scheme involves evaluation and assessment by Dolphin Centre staff who monitor progress. After the 12 week programme they can signpost people to do other things.

This is not a free a service and is based on needs but also based on the participant taking some responsibility for themselves. There is a concessionary rate of £12.50 – it is £25 for the full course

Tony Beirne asked how differently would things look in 2 years time? What would **Emma** see as being successful?

Emma said that a key aim is to reduce smoking, increase active participation in life, in particular to target deprived areas and reduce alcohol consumption.

Sat Aggarawal asked what happens at end of the 12 weeks?

Emma explained that a variety of activities and different options are available. There is a directory of places where a participant can continue their activities.

Jeff Edwards asked who it is who decides what is needed ?

A medical assessment is undertaken first at the GP's surgery. Then it is up to person to discuss suitable activities. It is not just about physical activity. It can be about exercise or mental health.

Mr B K Chaudhari asked whether initiatives about anti-social behaviour are in relation to alcohol? The concern seems to be about the physical rather than mental. What about people who commit acts of vandalism.

The Local Strategic Partnership have an action plan for mental health which includes Wellness at Work with employers in Bromsgrove. **Emma** is also having discussions about mental health with Age Concern.

The sports development activity previous held in the Spadesbourne Suite has now moved to the Dolphin Centre.

There is a £1 million bid for health improvement fund which communities can bid up to £75, 000 per project to improve health.

Emma is also doing outreach by going into schools – initiatives around some of these problems have to slot in with the curriculum.

8. Equality Officer's Highlight Report – 16th October 2008

8.1 The Equality and Diversity Forum

The regular meetings continue and next year's programme including the Conference needs to be agreed.

The annual meeting to take community bids was held in September and all the bids put forward were supported. It was agreed that the Forum would get reports and feedback from the initiatives undertaken in due course subject to final approval by the Full Council.

Trevor Rigg pointed out that the Equality and Diversity Forum has always sought to involve partners – the Police, BDHT, Hereford and Worcestershire Fire and Rescue and we want them to hear our points of view. However, we have not succeeded so far in getting the Primary Care Trust involved. We have tried numerous ways which haven't worked. The message this sends is not good. It seems as if the Primary Care Trust is telling us what they are doing from the top down. What we would like is to put our views forward and see them being taken on board. Anyone can sit on the Local Strategic Partnership as a member of the Health and Well Being Theme group. **Trevor** would like a representative from the Primary Care Trust at the equivalent level of Tony Love, Area Commander, West Mercia Police. **Emma** will take this back to her line manager.

In terms of continuously seeking to recruit new members to the Forum, **Fiona** reported that part of the work of the Equality Impact Assessment Working Group is looking at a logo for the Forum and developing a recruitment leaflet which can be displayed in any areas of public contact.

8.2 The Disabled Users Group

The Disabled Users Group has now agreed their Terms of Reference and the minutes of their minutes are now circulated to the Equality and Diversity Forum. A report will be taken at the Forum meetings from a member of the Disabled Users Group.

There was a discussion about the exclusive membership of the Group which has been raised as an issue by members of the Equality and Diversity Forum at the August meeting.

Fiona has consulted **Sandy Bannister** at the County Council about the arrangements for the Disabled Users Group at County level. There is no agreement on the lifetime of their group. The feeling amongst members of the Bromsgrove Disabled Users Group is that if the Group gets any bigger it will be difficult for people to get their views heard - they favour staying with the membership of the group as it is.

Fiona said that at some time this will have to be reviewed, perhaps when the Equalities Bill becomes law which is likely to establish a similar “involvement” requirement for all strands of equality that currently only applies to disability.

8.3 The Gender Equality Working Group

The Revised Draft Gender Equality Scheme is ready to go back to the Gender Equality Working Group who is meeting on 13th October. Subject to their comments and any further amendments, the revised Scheme will then need to go back to the Trade Union Liaison Group at the District Council.

The Gender Equality Working Group will be looking at a new training video and discussing the next steps of promoting the revised Scheme and developing a Gender Equality training module for employees.

Jo Wright asked whether the Council had carried out an Equal Pay audit?

Tony Beirne replied that a detailed audit of pay had been done through a Job Evaluation exercise which is due to be implemented in agreement with the recognised Trade Unions. There has been some delay because of a recent court case and discussions on implementation are continuing. Management are confident that the process was thorough and full upholds the principle of Equal Pay.

The Council has purchased a new training DVD which focuses on Gender Equality in relation to the culture of organisations. It was agreed that a selection of case studies from this video would be shown at a future meeting of the Forum.

This training DVD will be used as part of a new training module to promote Gender Equality.

8.4 The Equality Impact Assessment Working Group

The group reconvenes on 29th October to examine the selected Equality Impact Assessments. The managers from the relevant service departments will be attending to discuss the assessments which were completed for their services.

The group will select the next set of Equality Impact Assessments and agree the time and date for the next meeting.

They will also review the completed Assessment on the Equality and Diversity Forum and monitor the progress of the action plan at the end of the assessment.

8.5 The Inclusive Equalities Scheme

The review is still in progress and will be ready for the next meeting of the Forum on 18th December.

8.6 Bromsgrove Black History Society

The Society has met every month this year and has planned a detailed programme of activities for October. The leaflet and posters have been circulated.

In support of the programme, Bromsgrove District Council and Bromsgrove District Housing Trust are organising events for employees to increase interest in and understanding of Black History.

This is the best year so far and all those who have been involved in getting the programme organised have been invited to a celebratory event in December.

8.7 Diwali

A celebratory event is being organised by the Bromsgrove Indian Community Forum with the support of the District Council for Sunday 26th October. All members of the Forum are *cordially* invited.

8.8 Equalities e-consultation website

The Council's website designer is working on this and it should be ready for demonstration at the December meeting of the Forum.

8.9 "Being Different Together"

This is a County Wide project involving all the Councils in Worcestershire to promote equality and improve delivery of services. A detailed report has been prepared of the perceptions of the community of the services that they receive. This report is still being finalised and a summary will be made available for the December meeting of the Forum.

It was agreed that when this item has been clarified **Fiona** will bring it to the attention of the Forum.

8.10 The Equalities Bill

The Bill was published in June 2008. It sets out the Government's intentions to bring in further legislation which will

- create a new Equality Duty covering all six strands – race, disability, gender (including gender re-assignment) age, sexual orientation and religion or belief which will replace the current duties on race, disability and gender
- require Public Bodies in their role as employers to report on
 - gender pay
 - ethnic minority employment
 - disability employment
- require public bodies to tackle discrimination and promote equality through their purchasing functions
- outlaw unjustified age discrimination in the provision of services against over 18 year olds – this will not affect the differential provision of products or services for older people where this is justified
- extend positive action so that employers can take into account when selecting between two equally qualified candidates under-representation of disadvantaged groups
- strengthen enforcement by allowing Employment Tribunals to make wider recommendations in discrimination cases so that there are benefits for the rest of the workforce of the employer found to have discriminated

Jo Wright asked about the procurement policy of the Council in relation to the requirements of the Equalities Bill which places an increased emphasis on the behaviour of suppliers that from whom public bodies purchase goods and services?

Fiona replied that there is a detailed Procurement Strategy in place which gives guidance to suppliers about the expectations of the Council as a public authority. Seminars are held for suppliers on a regular basis but the District Council does not have the resources to check the actions of supplier organisations.

Mr B K Chaudhari commented that selecting people for jobs because of their race or gender has not worked at all well in India. **Fiona** clarified that the proposed change to the definition of Positive Action in the Bill makes it clear that a person can only be selected if they are able to do the job. They still can't be selected just because of their race or gender.

9. Future Agenda Items

Tony Love had agreed to come to a meeting to discuss how safe Bromsgrove is in the evenings, particularly the High Street and particularly for older people. This may have to be dealt with by **Tony's** successor as **Tony** is leaving the Bromsgrove District at the end of December.

Joe Scott asked whether the Highway Code for the users of mobility scooters had been acquired. **Fiona** will report back to the next meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.00 pm

Time, date and place of next meeting -

6.30 pm Thursday 18th December

The Committee Room



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