



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

WEDNESDAY 29TH JULY 2009
AT 4.00 P.M.

COMMITTEE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BURCOT LANE, BROMSGROVE

AGENDA

MEMBERS: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Chairman), G. N. Denaro (Vice-Chairman), Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP, J. T. Duddy, Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP, R. D. Smith, M. J. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 1st July 2009 (Pages 1 - 6)
4. Audit Board (Pages 7 - 8)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
5. Scrutiny Board (Pages 9 - 12)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
6. Overview Board (Pages 13 - 16)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
7. Performance Management Board (Pages 17 - 20)
8. Equalities and Diversity Forum (Pages 21 - 40)
9. Local Strategic Partnership (Pages 41 - 44)

10. Financial Outturn Report 2008/09 (Pages 45 - 58)
11. Improvement Plan Exception Report May 2009 (Pages 59 - 70)
12. 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
13. 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 following items of business on the grounds that they involve 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.s</u>	<u>Paragraph(s)</u>
14	4
15	3

14. Business Case for Joint and Shared Working between Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council (Pages 71 - 310)
15. Review of Assets Sherwood Road, Aston Fields Industrial Estate (Pages 311 - 320)

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

The Council House
Burcot Lane
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B60 1AA

20th July 2009

Agenda Item 3

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 1ST JULY 2009 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Chairman), G. N. Denaro (Vice-Chairman),
Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP, J. T. Duddy, R. D. Smith and M. J. A. Webb

Observers: Councillor C. B. Taylor

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

20/09 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. J. Dyer M. B. E. and Mrs M. A. Sherrey JP.

21/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor R. D. Smith declared a personal and prejudicial interest during the discussion on Agenda Item 11 (Improvement Plan Exception Report) as a member of the Bromsgrove Arts Centre Operating Trust.

22/09 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 3rd June and 24th June 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record in each case.

23/09 OVERVIEW BOARD

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview Board held on 2nd June 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the recommendations contained at Minute No 7/09 relating to the promotion of the National Older People's Day be approved; and
- (b) that the remainder of the minutes be noted.

24/09 AUDIT BOARD

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Board held on 8th June 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

25/09 **JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 9th June 2009 were submitted.

In relation to Minute 5/09 (Hot Food Takeaways) it was noted that any recommendations from the Board in relation to policy review or development would be considered by the Cabinet.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

26/09 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 15th June 2009 were submitted.

It was noted that as part of its discussion on the Performance Report, the Board had requested that consideration be given as to whether the target for payment of invoices within 10 days was realistic. The Head of Financial Services confirmed that this was a target which she had suggested in accordance with national guidance.

The Leader also referred to Minute No 17/09 which related to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment Report. He stated that whilst the rating of "fair" was a significant achievement, the actions of some Members had impacted negatively upon the Authority's chances of achieving a rating of "good".

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted and the recommendations contained at Minute 15/09 arising from the Performance Report be approved, subject to the discussion referred to above.

27/09 **TOWN CENTRE - UPDATE ON BUS STATION AREA**

As requested at the previous meeting of the Cabinet, the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects gave an update on progress made in relation to work being undertaken to improve the appearance and operation of the Bus Station in Bromsgrove and the re-development of the toilet facilities.

It was reported that the timescale for the work in respect of the toilet facilities had been extended by a week as there had been a problem caused by the recent heavy rain. It was anticipated that the work would be completed by 17th July 2009.

In relation to the Bus Station area, there would be new shelters, benches, paving and improved landscaping and fencing. The work was scheduled to be completed by the proposed opening date of 3rd August 2009.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

28/09 **REVISED JOINT WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Cabinet considered a report on the proposed Revised Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy. It was noted that the original Strategy had been adopted by all County and District Councils within Herefordshire and Worcestershire in 2004. The review of the Strategy had commenced in 2006 and had involved an extensive public consultation process which was now nearing a conclusion. It was reported that there would be a further meeting of the Joint Waste Resource Management Forum which consisted of Members and officers from Authorities within Herefordshire and Worcestershire in July.

The original Strategy had focused on the need to restrict the growth of waste, increase recycling rates and reduce the amount of waste being disposed of in landfill sites. The performance of this Council and others within Herefordshire and Worcestershire had improved significantly in this regard. Government Strategy was now more focused on the contribution made by waste collection, treatment and disposal to climate change and on the need to regard waste as a resource from which a value could be obtained. There was a need for the revised Strategy to reflect the changing priorities and to be in accordance with new statutory guidance issued by Central Government.

Members were generally in favour of the principles and broad aims of the Strategy. There were concerns expressed however, in relation to the Residual Waste Options Appraisal. Of particular concern were the assumptions made in prioritising options for residual waste disposal and the failure to allocate weighting to the selection criteria. In addition it was felt the possibility of achieving waste treatment solutions on a regional basis had not been fully explored. These concerns had been set out fully in the letter to the County Council dated 15th May 2009 which was attached to the report and which formed the Council's response to the Strategy. It was noted that Redditch Borough Council had expressed similar views.

The Head of Street Scene and Community reported that the County Council appeared to have accepted the reservations expressed and were revisiting the issues raised. It was intended that a further report be submitted to Cabinet in September or October when the final outcome of the consultation process would be known.

Members also requested that an Equality Impact Assessment be undertaken and attached to the forthcoming report.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the current position be noted;
- (b) that the broad aims of the Strategy be supported in principle, however, in view of the strong reservations referred to above and in the letter sent to the County Council dated 15th May 2009, the Strategy be not endorsed until further consideration of the residual waste option is undertaken; and
- (c) that the Head of Street Scene and Community be requested to report further on the issue when the consultation process is complete.

29/09 **TRAVEL PLAN**

Consideration was given to a report which detailed the results of a survey into the travel habits of Members and officers.

The survey had been undertaken in the light of the requirement for the Council to reduce its carbon emissions and to measure performance against National Indicator 185.

The Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects reported that it was intended that the Council's Climate Change Group would consider the survey in detail and would produce an action plan to address the issues raised in the report.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the results of the Travel Survey be noted;
- (b) that the targets for travel habits of Members and officers in connection with Council activities be noted; and
- (c) that performance and implementation against the targets be reported to and monitored by the Council's Climate Change Group and that an interim progress report be submitted to the Cabinet after six months followed by a full review of progress in twelve months.

30/09 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT (APRIL 2009)**

Consideration was given to the Improvement Plan Exception Report for April 2009, together with the corrective action being taken.

There was concern regarding the delay in signing a Service Level Agreement in respect of the Artrix. The Deputy Head of Street Scene and Community briefly outlined the current position and the possible courses of action available. It was noted that a further discussion was due to take place with the Operating Trust shortly and that if necessary, following that discussion, the way forward could be reconsidered.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception Report together with the corrective actions being taken be noted and approved; and
- (b) that it be noted that for the 93 actions highlighted for April within the plan, 76.3 percent as on target (green), 5.4 percent was one month behind (amber) and 3.4 percent was over one month behind (red). In addition the actions which had been reprogrammed with approval were listed in the report.

31/09 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2009/2010**

The Cabinet considered a report on a proposed new Improvement Plan for 2009/2010. It was noted that the Improvement Plan was based on the key deliverables and outcome measures contained in the Council Plan 2009/2010.

During the discussion on this matter it was noted that the Performance Management Board would be considering the new Improvement Plan at its next meeting. Reference was also made to the intention to produce revised Terms of Reference for the Board.

RECOMMENDED that the new Improvement Plan 2009/2010 be approved.

The meeting closed at 7.27 p.m.

Chairman

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE AUDIT BOARD

MONDAY, 29TH JUNE 2009

AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors S. R. Peters (Chairman), D. Hancox, C. R. Scurrall and E. C. Tibby

Observers: Ms. J. Hill (Audit Manager, Audit Commission)

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Mrs. S. Moss and Mr. A. C. Stephens

8/09 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms. H. J. Jones and B. Lewis F.CMI.

9/09 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

10/09 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Board held on 8th June 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

11/09 **2008/09 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

Consideration was given to the report relating to the financial information for the year ended 31st March 2009, which included the Financial Outturn Summary 2008/2009, the Statement of Accounts 2008/2009 and the Governance Statement.

The Head of Financial Services responded to several questions from Members in respect of the Annual Review and Statement of Accounts 2008/2009 and, following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Financial Outturn position up to 31st March 2009 be noted;
- (b) that the Annual Governance Statement, as agreed by the Leader of the Council and the Acting Joint Chief Executive, be noted;

- (c) that the unaudited Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2009 be approved in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (amended 2006) and signed by the Chairman; and
- (d) that the thanks of the Board be conveyed to the Head of Financial Services and her officers for the work undertaken in the preparation of the Statement of Accounts.

The meeting closed at 7.00 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY BOARD

TUESDAY, 30TH JUNE 2009

AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors D. L. Pardoe (Chairman), C. B. Taylor (Vice-Chairman),
A. N. Blagg and C. J. Tidmarsh

Invitees: Councillors J. T. Duddy and S. R. Colella, Ms. S. Campkin

Officers: Mr. T. Beirne, Mr. P. Street, Mrs. C. Felton, Mr. M. Bell (during
Minute No.'s 09/09 to 12/09), Mrs. S. Sellers and Ms. P. Ross

9/09 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor R. J. Deeming.

10/09 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest or whipping arrangements were received.

11/09 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Board held on 19th May 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

12/09 **SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION PROPOSAL REGARDING HOT FOOD TAKEAWAYS**

The Chairman reviewed the issues that had been discussed at the previous meeting held on 19th May 2009 with regard to a scrutiny investigation proposal regarding hot food takeaways. Members had agreed that further information and investigation was required in order to make an informed decision before deciding whether to establish a Task Group. The Executive Director - Partnerships and Projects and Senior Solicitor informed Members that, whilst officers had been unsuccessful in securing a guest speaker from another local authority, they had received information from Waltham Forest Council detailing its Supplementary Planning Documentation on Hot Food Takeaways dated March 2009. Furthermore, he added that Waltham Forest Council had given a positive response to the possibility of arranging a visit by Members of this Council.

Following further discussion Members agreed that arranging a fact finding visit to Waltham Forest Council be pursued by officers. The Monitoring Officer

advised that those Members visiting Waltham Forest Council would be representing the Board and that a clear and concise criterion for the visit should be agreed with Members and officers.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor J. T. Duddy, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Town Centre Regeneration and Revenue Generation to the meeting. Councillor Duddy thanked the Board for the invitation to discuss encouraging a wider range of retail shops in Rubery and throughout the District. He highlighted that trade throughout the United Kingdom had been affected by the current economic climate and as shops became empty property owners wanted to let these properties as quickly as possible and it appeared that fast food retailers were taking up these properties relatively quickly. Bromsgrove District Council currently had no policy in place to prevent this happening and he invited Members to consider investigating a policy, not to stop or limit hot food takeaways, but to look at the pros and cons of hot food takeaways in specific areas. Councillor Duddy informed Members that the Economic Development Officer produced an Industrial and Commercial Property Guide every 3 months detailing vacant shops and properties within the District, and he suggested utilising the guide to include any vacant properties on Rubery High Street free of charge. He informed Members of the Valuation Office rates relief incentives for small businesses and that Bromsgrove District Council's Economic Development Unit offered a range of advice to encourage new firms to come into the District and to help existing firms to grow. He also referred to the Area Action Plan due to be reviewed during 2009 to look at the range of shops and businesses the Council wanted to encourage into different areas throughout the District.

At the Chairman's discretion, Councillor S. R. Colella, Chairman of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Board spoke in favour of investigating a policy or guidance looking at any type of business that saturates an area in order to provide officers, and the Planning Committee, with specific guidance to help maintain existing businesses and provide a balance to all economies throughout the District. The Joint Overview and Scrutiny Board had received and considered a petition from residents and shopkeepers within the Rubery area highlighting the issues around late night opening of hot food takeaway establishments during the meeting held on 9th June 2009. The Joint Overview and Scrutiny Board had requested that the Scrutiny Board consider the issues on hot food takeaways, namely: Litter, Enforcement and Crime and Disorder.

The Senior Solicitor informed the Chairman that Sarah Campkin, a shop owner in Rubery High Street who had presented the petition to the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Board, had been invited to attend the meeting. The Monitoring Officer re-iterated the specific areas, Litter, Enforcement and Crime and Disorder and advised that officers had been requested to attend the meeting to provide further information on these areas.

The Head of Street Scene and Community, Mr. M. Bell, explained that all business premises are required to have an appropriate waste disposal contract and this authority would act on any evidence received or concerns raised about litter. He briefly informed Members of the Department for

Environment Food and Rural Affairs (defra) voluntary code of practice for reducing litter caused by 'food on the go'. Mr. Bell informed Members that the recommendation was to go through the voluntary stages first and, if the issues were not resolved, the second stage would be to use legislation and enforcement.

Additional information previously requested by the Board on Enforcement was tabled by the Senior Solicitor.

The Chairman welcomed Ms. Campkin to the meeting. Ms. Campkin raised the issue of whether conditions could be placed on premises licenses regarding litter. The Senior Solicitor briefly explained that the licensing review process dealt with any evidence received and conditions on premises licenses as detailed in the subsequent agenda item.

With regards to Crime and Disorder, as the officer requested to attend the meeting was not present, the Monitoring Officer suggested to Members that this area be discussed along with the results of the Waltham Forest Council visit at a future meeting of the Scrutiny Board.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that Senior Solicitor be requested to provide Members with the link to the Waltham Forest Council Supplementary Planning Document on Hot Food Takeaways;
- (b) that the Senior Solicitor be tasked to liaise with officers at Waltham Forest Council and arrange for the Chairman and Councillor S. R. Colella to visit; and
- (c) that the Deputy Head of Street Scene and Community be invited to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Board with regard to Crime and Disorder issues in relation to hot food takeaways.

13/09 **IMPOSING CONDITIONS ON PREMISES LICENCES - WRITTEN UPDATE FROM THE PRINCIPAL LICENSING OFFICER**

Consideration was given to the written update on Imposing Conditions on Premises Licences from the Principal Licensing Officer.

RESOLVED that the written update be noted.

14/09 **SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION TRACKER**

Members of the Board considered the items contained within the Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker be noted.

15/09 **WORK PROGRAMME**

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

Scrutiny Board
30th June 2009

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board's Work Programme be noted and updated as necessary.

The meeting closed at 6.55 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW BOARD

TUESDAY, 7TH JULY 2009

AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors S. R. Colella (Chairman), Mrs. M. Bunker (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. C. J. Spencer and L. J. Turner

Officers: Mr. T. Beirne, Mrs. C. Felton, Mr. M. Bell, Mrs. S. Sellers and Mr. A. C. Stephens

14/09 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. R. L. Dent and Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths.

15/09 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

No declarations of interests or whipping arrangements were received.

16/09 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview Board held on 2nd June 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

17/09 **VERBAL UPDATE ON PROGRESS OF OLDER PEOPLE TASK GROUP**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Mrs. M. Bunker addressed the meeting and gave an update in respect of the work of the Older People Task Group.

She reported that, as a result of the enforced cancellation of the meeting to be held on 22nd June 2009, the Task Group had been unable to meet since the update given at the last meeting of the Board. However, she stated that an alternative date had been arranged for a Task Group meeting on 21st July 2009.

Councillor Mrs. Bunker added that it was unlikely the work of the Task Group would be completed within the allocated four month period and, therefore, she informed the Board that she would be requesting an extension of time for the Task Group to deal with its subject matter. However, she considered that the Task Group would need to review its anticipated workload in order to determine how much additional time would be needed and, therefore, she

would make a formal request for the extension of time at the meeting of the Board to be held on 1st September 2009.

18/09 **OVERVIEW RECOMMENDATION TRACKER**

Members of the Board considered the items contained within the Overview Recommendation Tracker.

The Executive Director - Services referred Members to the July 2009 updates outlined in the report. With reference to item (d) of the recommendations made jointly by the Overview Board and Scrutiny Board: 2nd December 2008, he reported that a letter had been received from the Divisional Commander of the West Mercia Constabulary on 23rd February 2009 stating that they were unable to offer financial support to the Council's CCTV system due to the fact that funds had already been allocated to other projects, such as the Charford Neighbourhood Services.

RESOLVED that the Overview Recommendation Tracker be noted.

19/09 **DRAFT REPORT ON CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT (TO CONSIDER ANY COMMENTS TO FORWARD TO THE CABINET)**

The Head of Street Scene and Community referred to the draft Cabinet report and stated that the first step in the process of establishing the Civil Parking Enforcement proposals was to enter into negotiations with Worcestershire County Council in respect of the entering into an Agency Agreement. Mr. Bell commented that this agreement would set the scene for the Council to introduce Civil Parking Enforcement, and then enable the Council to manage and enforce parking provision within the district.

He stated that this initial step could take as long as six months and would still not guarantee that the Council would introduce the Civil Parking Enforcement proposals in the event that negotiations with the County Council do not result in an agreement. Therefore, it was considered that to examine the operational aspects of the scheme at such an early stage may not be beneficial until a satisfactory agreement is reached. The report to the Cabinet meeting at the end of July 2009 would merely seek approval at this stage for the Council to formally commence negotiations with the County Council.

Members of the Board considered that it was too early to examine the operational policies and procedures at this stage, and that the Head of Street Scene and Community be requested to report back to a future meeting of the Board upon the conclusion of the Agency Agreement.

RESOLVED that the Head of Street Scene and Community be requested to report back to a future meeting of the Board on the implementation of the Civil Parking Enforcement proposals upon the conclusion of the Agency Agreement with the County Council.

20/09 **FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS - 1ST JULY TO 31ST OCTOBER 2009**

Members of the Board gave consideration to the Forward Plan which referred to the key and non-key decisions which were due to be made by the Cabinet during the period 1st July to 31st October 2009.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan of key and non-key decisions due to be made during the period 1st July to 31st October 2009 be noted.

21/09 **ANTICIPATED REPORTS DUE TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE CABINET BETWEEN NOVEMBER 2009 AND JUNE 2010**

Consideration was given to the list of anticipated reports within each service area that were due to be considered by the Cabinet between November 2009 and June 2010.

Councillor Mrs. Bunker referred to item no. 1 on page 107 of the report (White Paper outcomes) and queried the progress made in respect of Councillor Calls For Action. The Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services responded by stating that the related guidance information had only recently been published and that officers were currently examining what amendments were required to be made to the Council's Constitution. However, she added that the Council had made the necessary changes in the interim so that such issues could be formally dealt with should the need arise.

RESOLVED that the list of anticipated reports to be considered by Cabinet between November 2009 and June 2010 be noted.

22/09 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Members considered the items listed within the Work Programme for the Board.

The Chairman considered that the Board should establish its own programme of work in order to determine performance targets and establish its own recommendations. He referred to a list of items he had already submitted in respect of a number of items (for example, to examine the Council's economic regeneration policy, planning processes and licensing policies) and suggested that other Members of the Board communicate any further proposals to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services.

RESOLVED that the Overview Board's Work Programme be noted and updated as necessary.

The meeting closed at 6.45 p.m.

Chairman

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD

MONDAY, 20TH JULY 2009 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors C. B. Taylor (Chairman), Mrs. M. Bunker (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. A. E. Doyle and Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths

Officers: Mr. H. Bennett and Ms. R. Cole

20/09 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

21/09 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

During discussion on agenda item 6 (Improvement Plan Exception Report (May 2009)) Councillor Mrs J. M. L. A. Griffiths declared a personal interest as a member of the Bromsgrove Arts Centre Operating Trust.

22/09 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 15th June 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

23/09 **ANNUAL COUNCIL REPORT 2008/09**

The Board considered the Annual Council Report 2008/09.

It was noted that the report illustrated the significant improvements which had been achieved over the past twelve months and felt that the work undertaken by all those involved deserved recognition.

During the discussion Members raised the issue of Fear of Crime and queried how this could be measured. The Assistant Chief Executive referred to the Place Survey which would be considered by the Board at its next meeting. It was acknowledged that there appeared to be a discrepancy between figures relating to actual level of crime in the District and public perception. It was also reported that whilst PACT meetings were felt to be effective by those attending, less than 50 percent of the population were aware of the meetings. The Assistant Chief Executive undertook to contact Chief Inspector Shaw to request more detailed information on the crime statistics and any "hotspots" which may be developing.

There was discussion in relation to attendance at the Bonfire event which was significantly below the target.

RESOLVED that the performance achieved in 2008/09 be noted.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that in view of the concerns relating to perception of crime, the Portfolio Holder be requested to work with the Head of Service to examine whether there are any actions which can be taken to address this and whether there are any developing “hotspots”;
- (b) that in view of the low attendance at last year’s Bonfire event, the relevant Portfolio Holder be requested to work closely with the Head of Service to ensure the 2009 target is deliverable and that the appropriate preparations are made.

24/09 **INTEGRATED SICKNESS ABSENCE PERFORMANCE AND HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT**

Consideration was given to the integrated report on Sickness Absence and Health and Safety for the period ended 31st May 2009.

The Assistant Chief Executive undertook to “strip out” from the figures the short term absences which go on to be long term absences as previously requested.

It was reported that a specialist advisor was to review the systems and measures which the Council had in place to address sickness absence and that the outcome of this would be reported to the next meeting of the Board.

It was reported that in relation to possible absences in relation to the H1N1 virus, contingency plans were in place and were being reviewed.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the report be noted;
- (b) that it be noted that contingency plans are in place in relation to possible H1N1 virus related absences; and
- (c) that a further report be considered following the receipt of advice from the National/Regional Employers on the payment of occupational sick pay and any advice on the Council’s sickness absence procedures.

25/09 **PERFORMANCE REPORT (MAY 2009)**

The Board considered a report on the Council’s performance at 31st May 2009.

During the discussion Members referred to the number of missed household waste collections. It was noted that the Head of Street Scene and Community was anticipating that the figures would improve shortly as the public and workforce became fully accustomed to the changes to the green waste service.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that it be noted that 81% of performance indicators were stable or improving;
- (b) that it be noted that 73% of performance indicators which have a target were meeting their target as at the month end and 92% were projected to meet their target at the year end;
- (c) that the performance figures for May 2009 as set out in Appendix 2 be noted;
- (d) that the particular areas of improvement as set out in section 3.4 of the report be noted; and
- (e) that the area of concern set out in section 3.5 be noted.

RECOMMENDED that further to (b) above, Portfolio Holders be requested to work closely with the relevant Head of Service to ensure that the projected outturn figures are appropriate, as the current projection of 92% of performance indicators meeting their targets at year end was considered too optimistic by the Board.

26/09 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT (MAY 2009)**

The Board considered the Improvement Plan Exception Report for May 2009.

During discussion on this item the Assistant Chief Executive updated the Board on the situation regarding the funding for the Train Station, including the historic dimension.

It was reported that it was anticipated that the Local Neighbourhood Partnership (LNP) for Charford would be going ahead, although the District Councillors for the area had declined an offer to attend.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception report together with the corrective action being taken be approved;
- (b) that it be noted that for the 78 actions highlighted for May within the plan 76.9% of the Improvement Plan was on target (green), 3.85% was one month behind (amber) and 3.85% was over one month behind (red). 15.4% of actions had been reprogrammed or suspended with approval.

RECOMMENDED that the arrangements to establish an LNP for the Charford area be proceeded with, notwithstanding the indication that the District Councillors for the area would not be participating.

27/09 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2009/2010**

The Board considered a report on the new Improvement Plan for 2009/2010.

During the discussion Members queried the section relating to Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) and it was felt that it would be useful to include actions which would ensure work was not only undertaken quickly but that the work was of a high standard.

It was noted that within the section on the Reduction in the fear of Crime, reference was made to a Community Safety Partnership (CSP) action plan and it was felt it would be helpful if the Board could receive this in due course.

At the request of Members the Assistant Chief Executive undertook to circulate any existing Council HR Drugs and Alcohol Awareness Policy.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Improvement Plan 2009/2010 be approved subject to the recommendation set out below; and
- (b) that the Deputy Head of Street Scene and Community be invited to attend the next meeting of the Board in connection with the CSP action plan.

RECOMMENDED that additional actions be included within the Improvement Plan to ensure that work undertaken in relation to DFGs is carried out to a high standard.

28/09 **QUARTERLY RECOMMENDATION TRACKER**

Consideration was given to a report on the progress of decisions made by the Board since April 2008.

RESOLVED that the information contained in the recommendation tracker be noted.

29/09 **WORK PROGRAMME 2009/2010**

Consideration was given to a report on the Board's proposed work programme for 2009/2010. As there would not be a meeting in August, the Assistant Chief Executive undertook to circulate to Members information on two Councils who had moved from a weak to an excellent rating as referred to at the previous meeting.

RESOLVED that the work programme be approved, subject to the inclusion of the Housing Inspection Report and Updated Action Plan on the agenda for the October meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.40 p.m.

Chairman



Bromsgrove
District Council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

The Equality and Diversity Forum

Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 11th June 2009

In attendance	
Stuart Bray	Pinke.biz
Councillor Mrs Maddy Bunker	Older People's Task Group, elected Member for Bromsgrove District Council and Worcestershire County Council
Mr B K Chaudhari	Bromsgrove Indian Community Forum
Victoria Coley	Bromsgrove resident
Mary Collett	Bromsgrove Disabled Access Group and Worcestershire Association of Service Users
Councillor Geoff Denaro	Elected Member and Executive Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Kevin Dicks	Acting Joint Chief Executive Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council
Rebecca Dunne	Senior Policy and Performance Officer (Community Engagement) Bromsgrove District Council
Jeff Edwards	Bromsgrove Older People's Forum
Claire Felton	Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, Bromsgrove District Council
Mandy Geens	Pertemps Disability Consultancy
Patricia Hackett	Mencap and Bromsgrove resident
Joan King	The Gender Trust
Malcolm Johnson	Sexual Health Counsellor, Worcestershire Primary Care Trust
Elaine Mortimore	Bromsgrove Youth Homelessness Forum
Eileen Mulhall	Worcestershire Association of Service Users
Debra Newton	Primary Care Trust and Community/ Sexual Health Service and Bromsgrove resident
Councillor David Pardoe	Elected Member for Bromsgrove District Council

In attendance	
Councillor Stephen Peters	Elected Member for Bromsgrove District Council and Worcestershire County Council, Diversity Champion for elected Members, Bromsgrove District Council
Trevor Rigg	Bromsgrove Resident and Forum Chair, Chair of Bromsgrove Black History Society
Fiona Scott	Equality Officer, Bromsgrove District Council
Jim Smith	North Worcestershire Disability Information and Advice Line
Phil Street	Executive Director - Partnerships & Projects, Bromsgrove District Council
Bal Kular-Taylor	Senior Positive Action Adviser, West Mercia Constabulary Head Quarters
Carole Tipping	Secretary, Bromsgrove Older People's Forum
Lynn Ward	Pertemps Disability Consultancy
Jo Wright	Bromsgrove resident
Julie Wright	Community Support Officer, West Mercia Police
P C Mark Townsend	West Mercia Police

Apologies	
Sat Aggarwal	Bromsgrove Indian Community Forum
Hugh Bennett	Assistant Chief Executive, Bromsgrove District Council
Tony Beirne	Executive Director - Services, Bromsgrove District Council
Nigel Godwin	Bromsgrove resident
Kathleen Roche-Nagi	Approachable Coaching and Bromsgrove resident
John Tempest	Worcestershire Mental Health Network

1. Introductions and apologies

Trevor welcomed everyone to this meeting, the fourth anniversary of the inception of the Forum.

The Forum has been successful, there are members here who have been attending for most of the four years of our existence.

We have a Chief Executive who has two jobs who has made a point of joining us tonight to celebrate our fourth anniversary and the success of the council in achieving Level 3 through the Diversity Peer Challenge.

Kevin thanked **Trevor** for his perseverance and his hard work on behalf of the Forum.

Trevor thanked **Claire** without whose efforts in the early stages we wouldn't be here tonight.

Apologies – noted as above.

2. Minutes of meeting held on 12th February 2009

2.1 Page 5 – referring to **Changing Places**, **Mencap** does not manage the national website. The national network of **Changing Places** is a consortium of which **Mencap** is a member.

The minutes were proposed by **Patricia Hackett** and seconded by **Eileen Mulhall**.

Agreed.

3. Matters arising if not included on main agenda

3.1 Eileen reported that at the Sidemoor recreation ground a brand new motorbike had been set on fire. There have been two fires in recent weeks. **Mark Townsend** was already aware of this and agreed to take this issue back to **West Mercia Police**.

3.2 Page 3, under item 3 – referring to the **Primary Care Trust**, **Jackie Threshie** will be coming to the December meeting to discuss the issues of Trips and Falls.

Trevor and **Jim Smith** have recently met the Diversity lead officer for the **Primary Care Trust, Kulvinder Hira**. She is setting up a system to consult with community groups in a similar way. **Trevor** suggested this could be done through this Forum. We have also contact from **Sonia Spurr**, the Community Engagement Manager who was hoping to attend this meeting but had to send her apologies.

Trevor noted that we also need to encourage involvement of Hereford and Worcestershire Fire and Rescue. They will be attending a meeting of the Town Centre group the following Monday.

3.3 Page 6 – item 5.8 e-Equalities website

We still 3 community members signed up. **Trevor** suggested that 4-5 volunteers come forward to be briefed on how to access it the website. They will then form a core group of people who can be emailed to say that there is something on the site. This came from the request to see items they are published. Agreed.

3.3 Page 9 Item 8 - Queuing system at the Customer Service Centre

Fiona has taken this up with the Head of Service responsible for the Bromsgrove Customer Service Centre and the Disability Equality Adviser for the County Council. It was agreed that there is a training need for staff to identify when someone needs assistance and then to provide that assistance. In this case this would mean helping someone to a seat and telling them that they would be called when it was their turn.

An alternative would be for the person to phone ahead so that arrangements could be made to meet and greet the person on arrival.

It was acknowledged that some people might have difficulty using the phone.

Kevin suggested that this be taken up to the Customer Service Centre Advisory Group at County Level. Agreed.

3.4 Page 5 – reference to Disabled toilet and Changing Places

The paragraph is unclear about the access mechanism – Fiona will reword this.

4. Items from the Forum Chair

In discussions outside of the Forum meetings, **Trevor** and **Fiona** have highlighted that some of the six strands of diversity have not yet been actively pursued. In particular, LGB (Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual) and older adults. For this reason, it is a pleasure to see Councillor Maddy Bunker at this meeting to talk about the Older People's Task Group.

Age is also about younger people. Although traditionally we don't see many young people at these meetings, it's good to see **Elaine Mortimore** of the Bromsgrove Youth Homelessness Forum. Elaine reported that a Youth Forum has been set up and this can be used to feed issues into this Forum.

A success that we should celebrate is the group of young people who succeeded with a bid for £80,000 from Worcestershire County Council for projects in Bromsgrove which includes a multi use games area in Sanders park. This means that many young people are actively involved for their own and other people's benefit.

We are responding to Forum members' requests and the issues raised at the February and April 2009 meetings, hence we have **Malcolm Johnson** here to talk about LGBT issues and the way that these issues are reflected across all the other strands of diversity.

For all these issues we will have a chance to discuss them in more detail at the 18 monthly Consultation conference on 26th September 2009.

5. **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans-sexual community issues – Malcolm Johnson, Sexual Health Counsellor, Worcestershire Primary Care Trust**

Malcolm introduced his presentation with information about the world famous Housman family from Bromsgrove. AE Housman was gay, Lawrence Housman (brother) was gay and Clemence Housman (sister) was a lesbian. There are many websites about the Housmans, not all of them accurate and some denying the facts of the private lives of the family members.

LGBT – the definitions are as follows :-

L is Lesbian
G is Gay
B is Bisexual
T is for trans-issues – this refers to gender, not sexuality

Focusing on AE Housman – when he died his brother released some unknown poems one of which was written about Oscar Wilde's trials (see slide number 5).

LGBT issues are not new, but **Malcolm** would rather live now than in previous times.

LGBT identities apply to any age group, both genders, all cultural and ethnic backgrounds, disabled people.

We need to raise awareness of LGBT hate crime and how to report it whether as witnesses or victims. We need to make it know what services there are for victims. It is the case, especially for older LGBT people that there is a fear of discrimination.

Malcolm's various roles include staff training around sexual health issues and relationships – this is mainly aimed at young people.

This work encompasses various concepts in relation to sexuality and sexual behaviour as follows :-

- **Gender** - being masculine or feminine, as they are understood within society.
- **Sexuality** - everyone has a sexuality, it is made up of many facets of our personality, sensitivities and preferences. Our gender and sexual orientation are part of our sexuality.
- **Sexual Orientation** - we can be sexually attracted to people of the opposite gender; i.e. Heterosexual (straight), attracted to people of the same gender; i.e. Homosexual (Gay / Lesbian).
Attracted to people of both genders; i.e Bisexual - For some people their Sexual Orientation can change at different stages in their life:
- **Sexism** - when a person believes that one gender is naturally superior to the other and believes that this justifies the right to dominance. The term sexism usually applies to men imposing their gender prejudices onto women but can also be vice-versa.
- **Heterosexism** - when a person believes that heterosexuals and bisexuals are naturally superior to homosexuals and bisexuals and believes that this justifies the right to dominance and the imposition of assumed power and / or discrimination.
- **Homophobia** - an irrational fear and dislike for individuals who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual. This fear usually results in judgemental, discriminatory and verbal or physical acts of hatred or aggression.

Sexual orientation defines who you are in the light of who you are attracted to. Sexuality changes often for young people and for older people. There are LBG issues in nursing and care homes and staff often don't know how to handle this.

- **Transgender**
Transgender is generally used as a catch-all umbrella term for a variety of individuals, behaviours, and groups centered around the full or partial reversal of gender roles; however, broadly speaking, transgender people are individuals whose gender expression and /or gender identity differs from 'conventional expectations' based on the physical sex / gender they were born into.

- **Transsexual**
An individual whose gender identity does not match the sex that was assigned to them at birth. Usually, transsexual people will seek hormonal and/or surgical treatment in order to bring their body into alignment with their gender identity.
- **Transvestite or Cross-dresser**
Transvestite: someone who adopts the dress or manner or sexual role of the opposite sex.

Other definitions of Gender or Sexuality: -

- **Gender Identity Disorder**
(G.I.D): A condition identified by psychologists and medical doctors wherein a person who has been assigned one gender at birth identifies as belonging to another gender
- **Gender Dysphoria (also known as Body Dysphoria)**
(G.D) The state of discomfort felt by transsexuals and some transgender people caused by the incongruity between one's physical sex and one's gender-identity.

What is prejudice and discrimination?

- Prejudice is an opinion or attitude, formed before hand without evidence, thought or reason.
- Influencing factors towards prejudices are: -
- Cultural, Environment, Religion, Family & Education and others.

The Four Main Components are: -

- Negative attitudes and beliefs
- Pre-judgements
- Judgements based on stereotypical assumptions
- Judgements based on individual behaviour

Malcolm explained “**Allport’s Scale of Prejudice**” (see slides 17-20)

Level 1 – anti-locution or “bad mouthing”

Level 2 – avoidance

Level 3 – power to discriminate

Level 4 – physical attacks

Level 5 – extermination including genocide and murder

Recent examples include Rees Jones, Stephen Lawrence; genocides based on persecution include Rwanda, Yugoslavia, Ireland, Iraq. The scale of prejudice is still there and can start at any point including Level 4, murder. Or it can start with the milder forms and progress up the levels.

Within Worcestershire, Bromsgrove has LGBT issues and there is hate crime based on LGBT issues. This is so even where the victim is not necessarily a member of the LGBT community, it may be that it is assumed that they are when they are targeted.

There is a Worcestershire LGBT (Police) Forum who meet once a month – the venues alternate between Worcester and other venues in Worcestershire. Each meeting looks at the previous four weeks of LGBT hate crimes reported to the police. Then we look at all the agencies involved and what services they are providing. West Mercia are one of the best forces in dealing with this issue. Individuals can come and bring their issues to the meeting.

Worcestershire has four hate incident partnerships which have had a degree of success. A lot of areas outside of Worcestershire don’t have these structures.

Schools and colleges need support to help them deal with hate crime issues.

Mr Chaudhari asked whether different groups within the community attend these meetings?

There are two Detective Inspectors involved one each representing the North and South of Worcestershire. There are sections of the community that are not friendly, in fact very hostile and help is needed break down these barriers through these meetings with the support of various agencies.

Mr Chaudhari asked whether any Muslims attend the meetings? At least one Muslim individual has attended. It was agreed that efforts should be made to encourage a wide range of people to come that would help remove some of the misunderstanding.

Mr Chaudhari agreed that there is homophobia in Bromsgrove but not as far as the Asian community. **Malcolm** explained that the level of homophobic reports has been as high for Bromsgrove as for Redditch. A lot of the time the incident relate to neighbours.

The influx of East European migrants has made a difference to the numbers of hate incidents.

It was agreed that the Forum would ask someone from the Bromsgrove Hate Incident Partnership to come to a future meetings and share the facts and figures about Bromsgrove incidents. It is important to know about the statistics as this establishes the need for the reporting system.

Jo Wright said that she would feel supported if she had to report a hate crime. This is about promoting a sense of belonging and inclusion. “Bad mouthing” and avoidance happens a lot of the time.

Jo asked what strategies do the County Council have for dealing with this sort low level “harassment”/ intolerance?

Malcolm has been involved in five events which focused on young people looking at all forms of bullying. Various agencies present the morning session and the afternoon is for people on the ground, to help them get to know what services are available.

Some success are that Kidderminster ran a gay pride event for the first time this year and Worcester are planning an event for next year.

This is not the end – this is just the start of getting to know more about other agencies and activities.

6. Older People's Task Group – Councillor Mrs M Bunker

Trevor welcomed this item on the Agenda as the Equality and Diversity Forum had already identified that other equality strands have had attention and specific initiatives but that “age” as a subject has not yet been specifically addressed.

Mrs Bunker explained the rationale behind the establishment of a Task Group specifically to look at the needs and requirement of the older age groups in the Bromsgrove District taking into account the mental and physical well being and the ageing profile of the population.

People are living longer but more likely to be living with poor health as they age.

The Terms of Reference of the Task Group are to include Health and Wellbeing, Community Facilities and Activities, Housing and Cost of Living.

Other areas such as transport have already been looked at taking into account the needs of older people, so will not be looked at again.

The possible key outcomes are to develop and strategic plan for older people in the Bromsgrove District to ensure that the services provided by the Council and its partners are responsive to the emerging challenges of the changing demographics.

This is because all Councils need to understand their older communities and shape both universal and targeted services accordingly. Increase awareness, better engagement and innovation could help many older people without significant expenditure.

The Task Group is made up of six elected Members

- Councillor Mrs M Bunker
- Councillor Mr D McGrath
- Councillor Mr D Pardoe
- Councillor Mr J Tidmarsh
- Councillor Mr L Turner
- Councillor Mr S Colella

and one co-opted external member

- Ann Sowton from Bromsgrove and Redditch Network

In addition there will be senior officer support from the Assistant Chief Executive's team, the Council's Strategic Housing team and the Health Improvement Practitioner (Primary Care Trust member of staff based at the Council House).

External witnesses who will be asked to give evidence include Age Concern, Worcestershire County Council, the Primary Care Trust, the Bromsgrove Older People's Forum and, of course, this Equality and Diversity Forum.

The Task Group are interested in using the opportunity of the International Day of Older Person on 1st October. The United Nations has designated the 1st of October as an annual day in recognition of the world's rapidly ageing population and the growing importance of older people in society.

The members of the Forum expressed a view that they would like to know more about national and international equality and diversity event enable campaigns and activities to be focused around recognised dates to give and extra impetus to local campaigns.

Fiona will investigate what information is available for use by the Forum and various subgroups and interest groups.

Trevor thanked **Councillor Bunker** for her input and on behalf of the Forum expressed the hope that the findings of the Task Group will be presented back to the Forum at an appropriate point in the future. Agreed

7. Questions from floor for the Chief Executive – Kevin Dicks, Acting Chief Executive for Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council

There were no specific questions from the floor for Kevin.

Kevin acknowledged the role of the Equality and Diversity Forum in the Diversity Peer Challenge and their contribution to the successful result. This means that we are classed as an “Achieving” authority but it doesn’t mean that we’ve done everything yet.

Regarding questions that have been asked as to where we go from here, this is not the end of the process, it merely established Bromsgrove at the middle of the journey towards “Excellent” in Equality and Diversity.

The assessment is valid for two years and at the end of that time we either have to be re-assessed at the same level, which is “Achieving” to prove that we have maintained the work, or we have to have moved up to the next level which is “Excellent”. This is what we are going to aspire to.

This means that we will be looking to be assessed as “Excellent” in April-June 2011. This will co-incide with the republication of the Inclusive Equalities Scheme – we agreed with the Forum members that we would extend the lifetime of our existing scheme by a further 18 months to line up our 3 three cycles with the County Council’s Single Equality Scheme.

This will also co-incide with the implementation of the Equality Bill currently going through Parliament and the next 18th monthly Community Consultation Conference. This is a very big commitment and it will be a lot of work to get that the level of Excellence and we can’t do this without the support and involvement of the Forum.

8. Future agenda items

Diversity Peer Challenge Results – feedback and proposed way forward – August meeting

Arrangements for the September Community Consultation Conference – August meeting

Speaker from the Primary Care Trust to talk about “trips and falls” – December meeting

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm

Time, date and place of next meeting –

6.30 pm Thursday 13th August 2009

The Committee Room





Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

The Equality and Diversity Forum – 11th June 2009

Equality Highlight Report

1. The Gender Equality Scheme

There has been no specific response to the publishing of the Gender Equality Scheme in March 2009. The Forum needs to decide whether to reconvene the Gender Equality Working Group and if so, with what remit?

2. The Equality and Diversity Forum

The 2009 programme of meetings and the operating Protocols have both been amended to show the new closing time of 8.30 pm. These have been published on the Internet.

Two members of the Forum recently took part in a Communications Focus Group organised by the Street Scene and Community Department. Another two members of the Forum (and one member of the Disabled Users Group took part in a hastily organised consultation on new wooden signs for Sanders Park.

3. The 2009 Consultation Conference – 26th September 2009

Invitations will go out in early August and the invitation list is currently being drawn up.

A list of County Council representatives has been submitted to Rukhsana Koser who will arrange for appropriate people to attend. These are

- Rukhsana Koser and/ or Sandy Bannister
- Jon Fraser from Highways department
- Public Transport
- Customer Services
- Supporting People

The Conference will be advertised in the next edition of Together Bromsgrove and we invite people to make friends and colleagues aware. An online enrolment facility is not proposed this time. A limit of 100 delegates is proposed.

The discussion workshop facilitators have not yet been identified.

4. The Disabled Users Group

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd April have been circulated.

The minutes of the Bromsgrove Disabled Access Group meeting held on 6th April and the reply from the council dated 21st May have also been circulated.

The meeting on the 3rd April had a very productive discussion with Jon Fraser who took away a list of items that need attention including pot holes and dropped kerbs.

The group has a list of topics and guest speakers that it wants to cover in the next 6 to 12 months. It has been agreed that there will be an open meeting in June 2010 for any disabled people, organisations and support networks to attend to discuss and review the achievements of the Disabled Users Group.

5. Bromsgrove Black History Society

The write up of events for 2008 was issued with the papers at the meeting of the Society in April. A draft action plan was adopted at that meeting. An update on progress will be given verbally at the meeting on 11th June.

6. Diwali

Diwali falls on Saturday 17th October 2009. The celebratory event will take place in the Spadesbourne Suite on Sunday 18th October. The working group overseeing the arrangements has yet to meet. A write up of 2008 was provided in the Equality Highlight report for 12th February 2009.

A draft item for Together Bromsgrove was posted by Fiona on 27th May. This item was about the success of the Diversity Peer Challenge and announcement of the Conference.

7. Being Different Together

The report about Worcestershire communities was accepted by all seven partner Councils in March and they are currently considering the recommendations. These will go through each council's Corporate Management Team and Executive Cabinet for approval and, when everyone is in agreement about which recommendations to take forward, the full report will be published. This is likely to be in the Autumn of this year at the earliest.

8. Diversity Peer Challenge

In accordance with the objectives of Being Different Together, Bromsgrove District Council invited a "Peer Challenge" to the claim to have reached Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government. The Challenge took place on 23rd and 24th April at the end of which the result was that Bromsgrove was approved Level 3.

This means that Bromsgrove is the only District in Worcestershire to have achieved this level and one of only approximately 23 District Councils (out of 238)* in England (*it should be noted that numbers of Councils have changed since these figures were published. It also should be noted that there were two District Councils at Level 4, the rest being at Levels 1 or 2 with a few at Level 0).

This means that Bromsgrove has proved the following :-

- That we have implemented a strategy for participation of designated community, staff and stakeholder groups in setting objectives of employment and service delivery
- That we have set equality objectives across the authority for race, gender and disability for employment, pay and service delivery
- That by March 2009 we have set equality objectives across the authority for sexual orientation, age, religion or belief for employment, pay and service delivery based on impact assessment and participation strategy
- That equality objectives have been translated into action plans with specific targets
- That we are developing information and monitoring systems that will allow us to assess progress in achieving targets
- That action on achieving targets has started
- Progress has been verified through self-assessment and scrutiny and has been validated externally through an accredited assessor

The Equality and Standard for Local Government was replaced by the Equality Framework for Local Government at the beginning of April 2009. The five level system for which Bromsgrove has achieved Level 3, has been replaced by a three level system – Emerging (Level 1), Achieving (Level 2) and Excellent (Level 3).

Bromsgrove automatically transfers across to the new Level 2, Achieving which confers the right to use the Achieving logo on all publications.

The Peer Team assessed our work in the four main areas of the Equality Standard for Local Government which are :-

- Leadership and Corporate Commitment
- Community Engagement and Accountability
- Service Delivery and Customer Care
- Employment and Training

They found overwhelmingly on the strengths side in each of these four areas although they also saw the need for some improvement in each. Their draft report is attached at the end of this section – they will issue a final version of their report in due course and the Council will incorporate their recommendations into the review of the Inclusive Equalities Scheme.

9. Review of the Inclusive Equalities Scheme

Now that the Diversity Peer Challenge this can be progressed into a written report including the Peer Challenge recommendations and an action plan to achieve Excellent under Equality Framework for Local Government.

The review will be published and issued with the papers for the September Conference. The discussion topics on the six strands of diversity will be based on the content of the Review.

10. Community Bids

The monies have been issued to

- Finding a Voice
- Support Network for Disabled People
- Padstone/ Greenscope allotment project

The community members leading on those projects will be asked to report back on their achievements at a later date. Further details to be provided to those individuals in due course.

The Community bids meeting for 2009 is planned for 10th September. The date for submission of bids is yet to be agreed.

11. Community Transport

Four members of the Equality and Diversity Forum have been co-opted onto the working group – Mary Collett, Ann Crossland, Jeff Edwards and John Tempest. It is expected that a service will start running in September 2009.

12. Refurbishment of Town Centre Toilet Block including “Changing Places”

The building works have started and temporary toilet facilities are available. Patricia and Fiona are involved in a short term working group to agree the details of the application, assessment and training process. Meetings with key partners have been held on 30th April and 3rd June to agree the application for access process.

Various issues have been routinely brought to the Disabled Users Group for their input and ad hoc consultations have been carried out with some of the members of the Group between meetings. There will be an event in the town centre to mark the opening of the refurbished followed by a Key Stakeholders meeting at the Council House on 22nd July.

13. Interpreting and Translation services

Bromsgrove District Council has agreed to join with Worcestershire County Council in an interpreting and translation service provision agreement. We have also agreed to adopt an Interpreting and Translation policy devised by the County Council. This policy is currently still under development.

There is a temporary Interpreting and Translation service in operation for all front line service provided through the Hub. However, there is currently no agreed service provider for Bromsgrove District Council “back office” services although this does not affect the Council’s ability to meet an individual’s language needs.

It does however mean that currently the access information sheet which should go out with all letters, and the statement that goes on the back of all our publications is suspended at the moment.

We can still provide alternative formats (such as large print, Braille, audio CD or tape) on request.





Bromsgrove Partnership Board

22 June 2009

MINUTES

Present:

Cllr Roger John	Hollingworth	Bromsgrove District Council (Chair)
Hugh	Morgan	Small and Medium Businesses (Vice-Chair)
Mike	Bennett	Bromsgrove District Council
Maggie	Brown	Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT)
Angela	Bryan	Worcestershire County Council
Kevin	Burnet	West Mercia Police
Marie	Dicks	Bromsgrove District Council
Rachel	Green	Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT)
Della	Jones	Act on Energy (formerly WEEAC)
Cllr Ed	McCarthy	Bromsgrove District Council
Elaine	Moore	Worcestershire County Council
Hazel	Mortimore	Bromsgrove Youth Homelessness Forum
David	Robinson	Worcestershire County Council
Ann	Shaw	West Mercia Police
Phil	Sowton	Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (BARN)
	Street	Bromsgrove District Council

Item 1 APOLOGIES

Liz	Altay	NHS Worcestershire
John	Cypher	Parish Councils (CALC)
Mike	Dunphy	Bromsgrove District Council
Cllr Jill	Dyer	Bromsgrove District Council
Mike	McCarthy	NEW College

ACTION

Item 2 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

RH welcomed everyone to the meeting and each person introduced themselves in turn.

MB introduced Hazel Robinson who had joined the Community Engagement team at Worcestershire County Council. It was explained that HR would cover Bromsgrove District and therefore was present at the meeting as an observer.

Under this item RH informed the Board that LA had a Swine Flu update and this would be circulated after the meeting.

DM

Item 3 **MINUTES OF MEETING 7 DECEMBER 2009 & MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes were approved as a true record.

Matters Arising

Review of Community Strategy – It was stated at the last meeting that David Galliers from Learning to Deliver would be attending the Away Day on Friday. However, since that time, it had been confirmed that it would be his colleague, Chris Allen, who would be present as a ‘critical friend’.

Item 4 **‘THE TRUNK’ BUSINESS CASE**

The Board was reminded that the former ‘MARC’ centre in Charford had closed at the end of 2008. However, due to concerns over the loss of services, the District Council took the lead to restore activities. It was reported that there had been a quick response from partners to assist and it became an LSP initiative, leading to the establishment of the Successful Neighbourhoods Theme Group.

PS presented the draft business case covering the objectives and the Board was given an update on progress so far which included information on funding contributions. It was explained that the LAA high deprivation reward grant would be essential in delivering the necessary services and it was anticipated that there would be a section 10 agreement so that resources could be pooled in a formalised way. It was confirmed that Debbie Roberts from EPIC, who had been involved in the MARC, was also involved with the Bromsgrove Trunk.

It was agreed that PS would reformat the document in a tabular form and incorporate detailed costings. PS

Item 5 **PERFORMANCE UPDATES**

At the request of the Chair, this item was not covered at the meeting and instead, performance to date would be covered at the Away Day later in the week. HB

Item 6 **ARRANGEMENTS FOR AWAY DAY**

LSP Members were reminded that the Away Day was scheduled to be held on Friday 26 June 2009 at Sunfield in Clent and a location map would be circulated as well as a finalised agenda for the day. DM

HB stated there would be tea and coffee on arrival at 9.15am and the day would start at 9.30am prompt, lasting until approximately 4.30pm. HB briefly stated what would be covered during the day and also reiterated that Chris Allen from Learning to Deliver would be attending in the morning and would take the role of critical friend.

Following the Away Day, it was explained that the next step would be for Theme Group Chairs to complete the High Level Action Plans which DM would circulate. The Draft Sustainable Community Strategy would then be considered and challenged at the next half away day on Tuesday 22 September 2009, together with governance arrangements.

Item 7 **CHILDREN'S TRUST JOINT COMMISSIONING BOARD**

It was explained that the background to the Children's Trust had stemmed from the Victoria Columbie case. Due to the breakdown in communication between partner agencies in this case, the Children's Act 2004 required all 'relevant' partners to co-operate under the strategic leadership of the local authority. In late 2008, guidance was issued stating it would strengthen the duty to co-operate by requiring the establishment of Trust Boards and increasing the number of relevant partners.

Due to the move to a Joint Commissioning Board to ensure an integrated approach, LSPs were being consulted on the Children's Trust Arrangement Options for Worcestershire. As the deadline for responses was 14 July, it was agreed that, with the assistance of PS and DM, the Chair of the Children and Young People's Theme Group and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board would respond to the consultation on behalf of Bromsgrove Partnership. It was agreed that information would be circulated to Members of the Board and Children and Young People's Theme Group and their responses would be collated by EM and DM to inform the final response.

DM/EM/RH/JM/PS

Item 8 **TRANSPORT THEME GROUP PRESENTATION**

HB gave a presentation on the background to and the work of the Transport Theme Group.

It was explained that a more strategic approach had been taken and the Theme Group had been established to focus on: the new Bromsgrove train station and interchange; cross city line electrification; the community transport scheme; review of shopmobility hours; and improved bus routes and infrastructure.

An overview on the work to date on each of the areas above was presented to the Board and all questions raised were answered.

Item 9 **WORCESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

KD provided a brief update relating to the Worcestershire Partnership which covered two-tier working and LAA Reward Grant Allocation.

Item 10 **COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE**

There was no communications update.

Item 11 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

2006-09 LAA Reward Grant

It was stated that £2.7 million of a total of £7.7 million (which was calculated based on estimated reward grant) would be allocated for 'other 2008/11 LAA activity' through a commissioning approach and bids. The funding would be managed by Theme Groups at a County level but details on the process were vague. HB suggested he would contact Worcestershire Partnership to find out more. He would then contact the Bromsgrove Partnership Theme Group Chairs.

HB

Warmer Worcestershire Project

RJ gave a brief update on the Warmer Worcestershire Project. It was confirmed that information from the thermal imaging flyover would be made available to residents via an online map. From 3 July 2009, residents would be able to type in their postcode and access information about their home's energy efficiency. They would then be signposted to information enabling them to take up improvement measures, including loft and cavity wall insulation. It was anticipated that the launch date for Bromsgrove would be mid September.

Next Theme Group presentation

EM agreed to give a presentation on the work of the Children and Young People's Theme Group at the next Board Meeting.

Item 12 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting, originally scheduled to be held in August, should be moved to a date in September 2009. Therefore, it was agreed that the next meeting would be held on **Monday 14 September 2009 at 2pm.**

Meeting closed at 3.30pm.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

29 JULY 2009

FINANCIAL OUTTURN REPORT 2008/09

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro Cabinet Member for Finance
Responsible Head of Service	Jayne Pickering, Head of Financial Services

1. SUMMARY

To report to Cabinet on the Council's financial position at 31ST March 2009.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet recommends to Council the approval of the increase to the Capital Programme in 2009/10 of £1.143m and reduction of the same amount in 2010/11 as included in this report (Street Scene and Community).
- 2.2 That Cabinet recommend to Council the increase in the 2009/10 Capital Programme of £1.009m in relation to the carry forward requests as identified at Appendix 2.
- 2.3 That Cabinet note the outturn position on revenue and capital as detailed in this report.
- 2.4 That Cabinet recommends to Council the approval of the net transfer to earmarked reserves of £0.854m as detailed in section 7.2 of this report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The financial year 2008/09 has been reported on a quarterly basis through the integrated finance and performance report. Members have already received quarter 4 performance information at an earlier meeting; therefore the information presented in this report is purely financial.

4. FINANCIAL POSITION FOR THE YEAR

4.1 The Council Summary plus individual department financial statements are detailed below:

Revenue Budget summary – Overall Council 2008/09

Service Head	Revised Budget 2008/09 £'000	Actual spend 2008/09 £'000	Variance 2008/09 £'000
Street Scene & Community	8,041	8,308	267
Planning & Environment Services	4,345	4,237	-108
E-Government & Customer Services	243	44	-199
Financial Services	1,518	1,519	1
Corporate Services	764	937	173
Legal & Democratic	885	836	-49
Human Resources & Organisational Development	-20	48	68
TOTAL	15,776	15,929	153

Financial Commentary

The outturn shows the major pressures arise mainly in Street Scene and Community. This is due in part to the decision to not transfer the sports centres to the Leisure Trust together with increased costs relating to the improved travel concessions scheme. Further information relating to current year pressures may be found in the Street Scene and Community tables.

The Corporate Services overspend relates to reserves set aside for future expenditure, as detailed in the relevant section.

Ongoing pressures relating to travel concessions were considered as part of the Medium Term Financial plan approved by Council in January 2009.

To offset the net expenditure on services there has been a significant increase in income generated from investments, as previously reported. This equates to £977k more than originally estimated. This is due to the return that the Council achieved on the sale of gilts and bonds together with the favourable market conditions in the early part of 2008/09 and the revisions to the Capital Programme which released additional funds to be invested.

The net impact of the overspend on services offset by the additional income is a surplus of £824k which results in a reduced requirement to transfer any funds from balances to meet financial resources. The transfer from balances is £231k in 2008/09 which leaves the remaining £1.792m available for one off items of expenditure (minimum approved level £850k).

Capital Budget summary 2008/09

Department	Revised Budget 2008/09 £'000	Actual spend 2008/09 £'000	Variance £'000
Street Scene and Community	2,643	2,452	-191
Planning & Environment (inc Housing)	2,338	1,735	-603
E-Government & Customer Services	4,984	4,799	-185
Financial Services	34	28	-6
Legal, Equality & Democratic Services	120	14	-106
TOTAL	10,119	9,028	-1,091

Financial Commentary

The Capital Programme is monitored monthly by the Asset Management Group along with the Heads of Service and Service Accountants to ensure projects are delivered within budget and timescale. The first phase of the Spatial Project has been completed within project timescales, a few issues are to be addressed, with the final invoice due for payment when all outstanding issues have been resolved.

There is one issue that needs addressing in relation to the Capital Programme.

- The new co-mingle recycling system is to be implemented from April 2010. To enable the Council to meet the requirements of this new service, additional bins will have to be purchased to replace the current green bins that are used for green waste. The budget to fund the cost of the new bins (£473k) was approved in January 2009 to be utilised in 2010/11 budget. However, the bins will have to be ordered and purchased in 2009/10 to enable the council to commence the service in April 2010.
- In addition, the new vehicles that have been planned to be purchased in 2010/11 to deliver the service will also have to be ordered and purchased in 2009/10 to meet the April deadline for commencement. (£670k).
- The additional funds will be required from Capital receipts in 2009/10 rather than 2010/11.

4.2 Revenue Budget summary – Street Scene & Community 2008/09

Service Head	Revised Budget 2008/09 £'000	Actual spend 2008/09 £'000	Variance 2008/09 £'000
Community Safety	711	667	-44
Parks & Recreation	632	644	12
Promotions	401	445	44
Sports Centres	939	1,012	73
Sports Development	211	177	-34
Streets & Grounds	2,405	2,334	-71
Car Parks	-842	-796	46
Depot Misc	165	-9	-174
SS&C Mgt/admin	-53	0	53
Transport & Waste	3,040	3,309	269
Travel Concessions	432	512	80
Waste Policy	0	13	13
TOTAL	8,041	8,308	267

Financial Commentary

- The overspend for Parks and Open Spaces are due to additional staffing costs required to cover maternity leave and to meet the operational needs of the service. These costs relate to the service restructure and enhancement plans which will realise savings/enhanced services as from April 2009.
- Overspend on Promotions relates to the poor attendance of the Civic Bonfire, additional arts marketing to promote the extended programme and operational and redundancy costs of the TIC.
- Sports Centres overspend relates to non achievement of the savings as a result of the decision to not continue with the Trust transfer and redundancy costs following the Dolphin Centre service restructure and the closure of Haybridge Sports Centre. Members will be aware that officers have now realigned the services at the Dolphin Centre to realise the financial savings required and completed the surrendering of our interest at the Haybridge site.
- Sports Development projected under spend relates to the new Sports Development Offices being in post for only 10 months in this financial year and additional revenue generated by the team
- Transport and Waste overspends relate mainly to
 - increased hire costs – two vehicles have been permanently hired

during recent months due to the continuing unreliability of the side arm vehicles. Members have already agreed a replacement programme for refuse vehicles and new vehicles are anticipated in April 2009. When breakdowns have caused delays, an additional round has been utilised to empty all the bulk bins servicing the flats.

- Increased use of diesel – Due to vehicle breakdowns an increasing number of vehicles are being diverted to Redditch or Pershore to unload. This is because the Bromsgrove transfer station cannot accept waste other than in containers.
- Increased Agency costs are due to an increase in sickness levels particularly long term sickness. Posts have to be replaced with agency staff. Regular sickness reviews are undertaken and there are a number of cases now at stage 2 of the process due to continuing absence of some individuals.
- The Overspend on travel concessions is due to the additional use of the scheme by customers that was not reflected in the grant transferred to the District from the Government
- Ticket sales were down on expected due to economic conditions. Other operators experienced a 6.5% to 10% drop due to these conditions. To achieve an increase of 3.7% on the previous year in ticket sales in such conditions when other operators are experiencing decreases is a relatively good performance.

Capital Budget summary 2008/09

Service	Revised Budget 2008/09 £'000	Actual spend 2008/09 £'000	Variance 2008/09 £'000
Cemeteries	7	0	-7
Community Safety	166	131	-35
Parks, Play areas & Open Spaces	409	367	-42
Leisure Centres	956	919	-37
Culture and Community General	129	156	27
Replacement Vehicles	911	828	-83
Site works	65	51	-14
TOTAL	2,643	2,452	-191

Financial Commentary

- The 10 year rolling programme for vehicles continues with new vehicles and equipment now being received for the street cleansing, garage, highways and ground maintenance services. Many vehicles have already been delivered, including new vans / tipper trucks for cleansing, garage, highways, and grounds, and new mowers and equipment for grounds.
- Community safety CCTV scheme has been completed and has come in £35k under budget.
- Work has continued on the Youth Schemes for Bromsgrove and Alvechurch and also on several play area sites within the District.
- Phase II work at the Dolphin centre was completed March 2009, a request has been made to carry forward £16k for retention payments. All equipment for the new fitness suite has been purchased and it is now fully operational.

4.3 Revenue Budget summary – Planning & Environment 2008/09

Service Head	Revised Budget 2008/09 £'000	Actual spend 2008/09 £'000	Variance 2008/09 £'000
Building Control	9	30	21
Development Control	1,101	971	-130
Environmental Health	961	875	-86
Licensing	-5	-44	-39
Planning Administration	-132	-13	119
Strategic Housing	1,926	1,945	19
Strategic Planning	315	273	-42
Economic Development	118	111	-7
Retail Market	52	89	37
TOTAL	4,345	4,237	-108

Financial Commentary

- The current under-spends are due to a number of vacancies within the department of which some have recently been filled resulting in a reduced underspend by the year end. The remainder of vacant posts have been reviewed as part of a wider Departmental Review that is looking into efficiencies and savings as part of the three year financial plan.
- Overspends in relation to planning administration is due to the shortfall on income generated for land charges and search fees due to the current economic climate and the provision of the service by private companies.

Capital Budget summary 2008/09

Service	Revised Budget 2008/09 £'000	Actual spend 2008/09 £'000	Variance £'000
Strategic Housing	2,215	1,680	-535
Town Centre	123	55	-68
TOTAL	2,338	1,735	-603

Financial Commentary

- Grants to RSL's – Various schemes are now being funded to ensure the provision of affordable housing for rent within the District. £254k is also committed with the RSL to continue this provision of accommodation.
- Town Centre – Work continues on this on-going project with Worcestershire County Council to redevelop the town centre.
- Disabled Facilities Grants – Revised procurement procedures have been adopted to speed up the grant application process, 108k has been committed for grants that are awaiting completion.
- Work has commenced on the refurbishment of the Town Centre Toilet with completion planned for August 2009.

4.4 Revenue Budget summary – E-Government & Customer Services 2008/09

Service Head	Revised Budget 2008/09 £'000	Actual spend 2008/09 £'000	Variance £'000
E-Government	149	1	-148
Customer Service Centre	113	44	-51
TOTAL	244	45	-199

Financial Commentary

- The underspends are mainly due to renegotiated contracts for software and the impact of a number of vacancies within E-Government and the CSC.

Capital Budget summary 2008/09

Service	Revised Budget 2008/09 £'000	Actual spend 2008/09 £'000	Variance 2008/09 £'000
E-Government	4,984	4,799	-185
TOTAL	4,984	4,799	-185

Financial Commentary

Phase I of the Spatial Project is now completed on target with only a few minor issues to be addressed the final invoice will be paid when these outstanding issues have been resolved.

4.5 Revenue Budget summary – Financial Services 2008/09

Service Head	Revised Budget 2008/09 £'000	Actual spend 2008/09 £'000	Variance £'000
Central Overheads	117	140	23
Accountancy	30	73	43
Internal Audit	10	0	-10
Grants & Donations	91	88	-3
Revenues & Benefits	1,217	1,218	-53
TOTAL	1,518	1,519	0

Financial Commentary

The overspend within Accountancy is due additional costs in relation to bank charges from debit and credit cards. The Head of Financial Services has received a report on comparable bank charges across the district and is reviewing these charges with HSBC.

The savings within Revenues and Benefits are as a result of the net effect of agency staff costs offset by additional income received from the recovery of housing benefit overpayments.

Capital Budget summary 2008/09

Service	Revised Budget 2008/09 £'000	Actual spend 2008/09 £'000	Variance 2008/09 £'000
Finance	34	28	-6
TOTAL	34	28	-6

Financial Commentary

- The Purchase Order Processing (POP) system was rolled out corporately throughout the

Council in January 2009 after being trialled within the Finance and IT Sections. Development has also been carried out on the Agresso accounting system for the collection of Direct Debits by the Finance Section, this went live on the 1st April 2009 with collections now being taken on behalf of the Dolphin Centre.

4.6 Revenue Budget summary – Corporate Services Department 2008/09

Service Head	Revised Budget 2008/09 £'000	Actual spend 2008/09 £'000	Variance 2008/09 £'000
Policy & Performance	34	40	6
Corporate Management	638	801	163
Corporate Projects	92	96	4
TOTAL	764	937	173

Financial Commentary

As a result of the Council's overall revenue outturn it has been possible to set aside funds in anticipation of costs relating to the shared services agenda. The required charge to revenue has been made corporately and is reflected in the Corporate Management overspend.

4.7 Revenue Budget summary – Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services 2008/09

Service Head	Revised Budget 2008/09 £'000	Actual spend 2008/09 £'000	Variance 2008/09 £'000
Administration Services	2	0	-2
Committee & Member Services	775	781	6
Elections & Registration	159	154	-5
Facilities Management	-50	-99	-49
Legal Services	-1	0	1
TOTAL	885	836	-49

Financial Commentary

The under spend for the year due mainly to savings in Facilities Management budgets for insurance and business rates together with income received for small areas of land.

Capital Budget Summary 2008/09

Service	Revised Budget 2008/09 £'000	Actual spend 2008/09 £'000	Variance 2008/09 £'000
Facilities Management	120	14	-106
TOTAL	120	14	-106

Financial Commentary

- The budget includes funding for a number of alterations at the Council House. The Asset Management Group is currently considering the use of the council house and the appropriate alterations will be made following this review.

4.8 Revenue Budget summary – HR & OD 2008/09

Service Head	Revised Budget 2008/09 £'000	Actual spend 2008/09 £'000	Variance 2008/09 £'000
Human Resources & Organisational Development	-20	48	68
TOTAL	-20	48	68

Financial Commentary

- The overall out-turn for the financial year is £68k over-spent. This is partly due to the vacancy management provision as the department is fully staffed, combined with retention of a member of staff in payroll to assist Redditch in the payroll transfer. Costs associated with employment tribunals have also been incurred.

4.9 Sundry Debtors

4.9.1 Sundry Debt is raised by the Council to ensure effective recovery of debts owing. The outstanding balance at 31/03/09 was £396k which includes:-

- £36k of car parking fines
- £43k lifeline debts
- £50k rents/ hire charges
- £21k building regulations
- £19k trade waste and cesspool emptying
- £21k Cemeteries

- £8k Developer contributions
- £32k Other external contributions
- £18k External grants
- £59k Housing schemes
- £19k CCTV
- And £70k in respect of other services provided by the Council to other organisations (e.g. contracts with BDHT for legal work)

The age of the debt is represented as follows:

Under 30 days £310k
 Up to 1 month £21k
 1-2 months £3k
 3 – 6 months £27k
 Over 6 months £35k

Debts over 2 months are currently with the legal department for consideration and further recovery and include £28k of car parking fines.

5.0 TREASURY MANAGEMENT

5.1 Investment Interest

- 5.1.1 For the period to 31 March 2009 the Council received net investment income amounting to £1,434k against predicted year receipts of £457k. This income is a combination of interest earned on in-house managed funds (cash currently surplus to cash flow requirements that is placed on short-term deposit) and the investment income arising on the externally managed funds (HSBC fund managers). The increased interest has arisen due to slippage on the capital programme which has made additional surplus cash available for deposit, combined with enhanced interest rates achieved as a result of the market conditions earlier in the year.

Following discussions with our treasury advisors the Council withdrew its funds from the HSBC managed portfolio in March 2009, crystallising gains on the underlying investments in gilts and bonds. Within the current climate it was deemed advisable for the Council to ensure investments were both low risk and subject to minimal volatility.

Due to advice received the Council is maintaining its stance of depositing in ultra low risk investments. In our recent Investment Updates we have been advised to use named UK incorporated institutions as investment counterparties where the institutions can participate in the government's Scheme AND whose long-term ratings are currently in the 'double-A' category.

- 5.1.2 All funds are now managed internally within the Finance department with support from our advisors Arlingclose.

6.0 EFFICIENCY SAVINGS

As part of the budget round for 2008/09 a number of efficiency savings were approved. These challenging targets were allocated across all services as detailed in Appendix 1 totalling £629k. The initial efficiency target for 2008/09 was estimated at £694k. This included £25k sponsorship which has not been achieved due to the current economic climate and £40k of payroll savings which have been offset by the costs arising from the delays in implementing the transfer due to job evaluation.

7.0 REVENUE BALANCES AND EARMARKED RESERVES

7.1 Revenue Balances

The revenue balances brought forward at 1 April 2008 were £2.023m. The revised budget requirement for use of balances in 2008/09 was £1.074m. The reduced level of deficit as detailed in this report has meant a limited transfer from balances of £231k. The new level of balances is £1.792m. , which can be utilised to fund one off items to deliver the priorities of the Council.

7.2 Earmarked Reserves

The Council maintains a number of reserves which have been set up voluntarily to earmark resources for future spending plans. The balance on these reserves is shown below:

Earmarked Reserve	Balance 1 April 2008	Net Movement in Year	Balance 31 March 2009	Purpose
	£000	£000	£000	
Building Control Partnership	6	4	10	Funds associated with partnership arrangements on Building Control
Neighbourhood Office/Committees	0	54	54	Devolved budgets for area committees together with neighbourhood partnership office
Economic regeneration	0	49	49	Includes Town Centre and regenerative small business grants.
Organisational Development	0	101	101	Organisational training & development
Shared Services	0	262	262	To fund shared services work
Single Status/Job Evaluation		309	309	To fund costs associated with the implementation of Single Status
Local Development Framework	0	143	143	Development of Regional Core Strategy – potential costs of public examination
Housing Schemes	0	14	14	To fund survey work and

				expected upturn in homelessness cases due to recession.
Planning Delivery Grant	397	-57	340	Accumulation of unused Planning Delivery Grant
Replacement Reserve	536	0	536	Sums set aside to fund future replacement of vehicles and ICT equipment
Other	0	28	28	Planned expenditure on other equipment and maintenance
Litigation Reserve	140	-90	50	Funds set aside based on potential litigation at 31 March 2009.
Leisure/Community Safety Reserve	43	37	80	Unspent funding to be used for ring fenced leisure/safety programmes
Total	1,122	854	1,976	

Included in the reserves statement are a number of new funds established to ensure sufficient funds are available to deliver key projects across the Council. The material new reserves are to support the shared service agenda and the implementation and future costs associated with Job Evaluation.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None other than those covered in the report

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None

10. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

11. RISK MANAGEMENT

Covered in the report.

12. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

13. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

14. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Please include the following table and spell out any particular implications in the relevant box. If there are no implications under a particular heading, please state 'None':-

Procurement Issues	None
Personnel Implications	None

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

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

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Efficiency Savings 2008/09
Appendix 2 Capital Carry Forward Requests 2008/09

CONTACT OFFICERS

Hugh Bennett, Assistant Chief Executive
Jayne Pickering, Head of Financial services
John Outhwaite, Senior Policy & Performance Officer

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

29 JULY 2009

CABINET

IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT [MAY 2009]

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Cllr. Roger Hollingworth, Portfolio Holder for the Improvement Plan
Responsible Officer	Hugh Bennett Assistant Chief Executive

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To ask Cabinet to consider the Improvement Plan Exception Report for May 2009 (Appendix 1).

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Cabinet consider and approve the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception Report attached as Appendix 1, and the corrective action being taken.
- 2.2 That Cabinet note that for the 78 actions highlighted for May within the plan 76.9% of the Improvement Plan is on target [green], 2.6% is one month behind [amber] and 5.1% is over one month behind [red]. 15.4% of actions have been reprogrammed or suspended with approval¹, these include the town centre actions (as a result of Parkside & Network Rail), the core strategy and workforce planning.
- 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 was designed to push the Council through to a rating of Fair during 2008.
- 3.3 There were 2 amber and 4 red activities this month for the following areas of the Improvement Plan:-

¹ 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

Ref.	Council Plan Balanced Scorecard Reference	Number
CP1	Town Centre	3
CP4	Sense of Community	2
PR5	Planning	1

3.4 The re-programmed actions i.e. those that have been suspended or moved to a much later date in the Plan are:-

	Ref.	Action	Reason
1	1.2.2	Market Hall redevelopment	Suspended. Credit Crunch
2	1.4.2, 1.4.3, 1.4.4, 1.4.5, 1.4.6, 1.4.7, 1.4.8	Market Hall negotiations.	Suspended. Credit Crunch.
3	2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.5	Affordable housing SPD.	Suspended. RSS2.
4	3.3.1	Service data monitoring	Suspended. Expected to be introduced Spring 2009
5	4.1.5, 4.1.13	Consultation for LSP neighbourhoods.	Re-programmed. Different approach agreed for 2009/2010.
6	4.3.11, 4.3.12, 4.3.14, 4.3.15, 4.3.17	Review of promotional materials / Artrix	Suspended. Budget constraints / SLA delays
7	14.3.5, 14.3.6, 14.4.2, 14.4.5, 16.1.9, 16.3.6, 18.2.3	Submission Core Strategy	Reprogrammed. Delays with RSS review.
8	15.2.4	Review and consult on the "Bromsgrove Way".	Suspended. Existing approach acceptable. Other HR&OD priorities.
9	15.3.1, 15.3.2, 15.3.3	"Bromsgrove Way" and competency framework for non-managers.	See above.
10	16.1.5, 16.1.9	Gap analysis	Suspended. Pending shared service business case.
11	16.3.3	Review of harassment and bullying policy	Suspended. Pending JE implementation
12	16.4.5	Parental rights guide	Re-programmed. Pending JE implementation
13	18.1.2, 18.1.3, 18.1.4	PDR process review.	Suspended. Pending JE implementation
14	18.3.1, 18.3.2, 18.3.3, 18.3.4, 18.3.5	Core competencies for all staff.	Suspended. Pending JE implementation

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 and Safety legislation	FP3 – Financial Strategy PR1 – Customer Process HROD2 – Modernisation
KO13: Effective two tier working and	CP4 – Sense of Community

Community Engagement	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	No
Chief Executive	At CMT
Executive Director (Partnerships and Projects)	At CMT
Executive Director (Services)	At CMT
Assistant Chief Executive	Yes
Head of Service	At CMT
Head of Financial Services	At CMT
Head of Legal & Democratic Services	At CMT
Head of Organisational Development & HR	At CMT
Corporate Procurement Team	No

13. WARDS AFFECTED

13.1 All wards

14. APPENDICES

14.1 Appendix 1 Improvement Plan Exception Report May 2009

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

15.1 The full Improvement Plan for May 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.

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Exception Report for May 2009 Improvement Plan

Appendix 1

PROGRESS IN 2008/09

Overall performance as at the end of May 2009, 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	12	8.7%	RED	13	9.9%
AMBER	3	2.3%	AMBER	4	3.4%	AMBER	8	6.0%	AMBER	7	5.0%	AMBER	8	5.8%	AMBER	5	3.9%
GREEN	114	89.1%	GREEN	96	81.4%	GREEN	99	73.9%	GREEN	104	73.8%	GREEN	106	76.8%	GREEN	100	76.3%
REPRO	0	0%	REPRO	1	0.8%	REPRO*	11	8.2%	REPRO	15	10.6%	REPRO	12	8.7%	REPRO	13	9.9%

January 2009			February 2009			March 2009			April 2009			May 2009			June 2009		
RED	0	0%	RED	2	1.5%	RED	3	2.9%	RED	3	3.2%	RED	4	5.1%	RED		
AMBER	4	3.6%	AMBER	3	2.3%	AMBER	5	4.9%	AMBER	5	5.4%	AMBER	2	2.6%	AMBER		
GREEN	95	86.4%	GREEN	112	86.2%	GREEN	80	78.5%	GREEN	71	76.3%	GREEN	60	76.9%	GREEN		
REPRO	11	10.0%	REPRO	13	10.0%	REPRO	14	13.7%	REPRO	14	15.1%	REPRO	12	15.4%	REPRO		

Exception Report for May 2009 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 78 actions for May 2009, 12 actions have been extended or suspended with approval. This amounts to 15.4% 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.

An Exception Report detailing corrective actions follows:

CP1: Town Centre																	
Ref	May 2009 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.		The funding gap is now £2.5m. The funders are in discussions about phasing the build of the station, so, for example, the number of car parking spaces may be 140 to start, rising to over 300 in the longer term. The Assistant Chief Executive is due to meet with the County Council in the first week of July to discuss these proposals.												HB	Apr 09	TBC
1.7	Agree funding and planning permission for train station redevelopment, with transport links to the town centre																
1.7.1	Network Rail to agree business case and funding for station.	HB														<p>The Regional Transport Partnership's has submitted its Regional Funding Advice to the Department of Transport. This includes an allocation of £7.5m for the railway station. This appears to close the gap. Formal approval is now required by the Secretary of State and is expected in July 2009. This route now looks more difficult and could take up to a year. Discussions with the County Council indicate that £5m is available from the Secretary of State, but that the other £2.5m will need to be found from other sources. The County Council is currently working with the funding partners, including Network Rail to find alternative funding streams and reduce the cost of the design. It is difficult to put a date on when this will be resolved.</p>	

CP1: Town Centre																	
Ref	May 2009 Action			Colour		Corrective Action									Who	Original Date	Revised Date
1.7.2	Agree historic dimension to new build.					Because the funding of the scheme is still undecided the Council has not started discussions with BRUG on this aspect of the station.									HB	Apr 09	TBC
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
1.7	Agree funding and planning permission for train station redevelopment, with transport links to the town centre																
1.7.2	Agree historic dimension to new build.	HB													See 1.7.1 above. This will now need to be agreed with Network Rail once we have approval for the scheme.		

CP1: Town Centre																	
Ref	May 2009 Action			Colour		Corrective Action									Who	Original Date	Revised Date
1.7.3	Obtain planning permission.					Currently awaiting response from Network Rail to the planning advice provided by the Council.									HB	Apr 09	TBC
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
1.7	Agree funding and planning permission for train station redevelopment, with transport links to the town centre																
1.7.3	Obtain planning permission.	HB													See 1.7.1 above. Network Rail require the scheme to be a permitted development. QC advice has been provided to the Council (and onto Network Rail) that this may not be possible. Meeting held with Network		

CP4: Sense of Community																	
Ref	April 2009 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		
4.3.13	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 July.											JG	Jul-08	Jul-09
4.3	Popularity of events programme																
4.3.13	Establish monitoring & meeting arrangements set out in the SLA with the Artrix.	JG														At its February 2009 meeting the Artrix operating trust rejected the SLA proposed by BDC and have proposed a revised SLA. Officers have now completed the review of the documents to identify discrepancy, a meeting as held portfolio holder in May to agree our position in the relation to the proposed changes, the SLA is currently being redrafted and will be forward to the operating trust for comment in the near future. We expect the SLA to be signed off in July (i.e. 2009/10 Improvement Plan), at this point we will be able to commence the required monitoring from quarter 2 onwards.	

PR5: Planning																	
Ref	April 2009 Action		Colour		Corrective Action										Who	Original Date	Revised Date
14.5.1	Maintain training programme every 12 weeks		Orange		Recruitment of Principal Planner to this role will enable this area to be addressed.										DH	Dec 08	July 09
Ref.	Action	Lead	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Corrective Action		
14.5	Maintain Greenbelt through enforcement and upheld appeals																
14.5.1	Maintain training programme every 12 weeks	DH		Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Next training event to cover enforcement. Recruitment of Principal Planner to this role will enable this area to be addressed – Interviews have taken place and appointment made. Start date 6 th July 2009. Members training being undertaken in conjunction with Legal services in June/July. Part 1 undertaken with external consultant in May with mock planning committee meeting scheduled as part 2 for June.

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