# **Open**

# **Cabinet**

# Agenda

6.00pm
Tuesday, 26th March 2013
Council Chamber
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster

#### Cabinet

The Cabinet Members and their responsibilities:-

Councillor J-P Campion Leader of the Council

Councillor M J Hart Deputy Leader, Environmental Services

Councillor N J Desmond Resources and Transformation

Councillor I Hardiman Community Well-Being

Councillor A Hingley Place-Shaping

## **Scrutiny of Decisions of the Cabinet**

The Council has one Scrutiny Committee that has power to investigate policy issues and question members of the Cabinet who have special responsibility for a particular area of the Council's activities. The Cabinet also considers recommendations from this Committee.

In accordance with Section 10 of the Council's Constitution, Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, and Standing Order 2.4 of Section 7, any item on this agenda may be scrutinised by the Scrutiny Committee if it is "called in" by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and any other three non-Cabinet members.

The deadline for "calling in" Cabinet decisions is 5pm on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

Councillors wishing to "call in" a decision on this agenda should contact Sue Saunders, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster. Telephone: 01562 732733 or email susan.saunders@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

## **Urgent Key Decisions**

If the Cabinet needs to take an urgent key decision, the consent of the Scrutiny Committee Chairman must be obtained. If the Scrutiny Committee Chairman is unable to act the Chairman of the Council or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairman of the Council, must give consent. Such decisions will not be the subject to the call in procedure.

# <u>Declaration of Interests by Members – interests of members in contracts and other matters</u>

Declarations of Interest are a standard item on every Council and Committee agenda and each Member must provide a full record of their interests in the Public Register.

In addition, alongside the Register of Interest, the Members Code of Conduct ("the Code") requires the Declaration of Interests at meetings. Members have to decide first whether or not they have a disclosable interest in the matter under discussion.

Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of this constitution for full details.

## <u>Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) / Other Disclosable Interest (ODI)</u>

DPI's and ODI's are interests defined in the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the District.

If you have a DPI (as defined in the Code) in a matter being considered at a meeting of the Council (as defined in the Code), the Council's Standing Orders require you to leave the room where the meeting is held, for the duration of any discussion or voting on that matter.

If you have an ODI (as defined in the Code) you will need to consider whether you need to leave the room during the consideration of the matter.

### For further information

If you have any queries about this Agenda or require any details of background papers, further documents or information you should contact Sue Saunders, Committee/Scrutiny Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF. Telephone: 01562 732733 or email susan.saunders@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Documents referred to in this agenda may be viewed on the Council's website - www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/council/meetings/main.htm

#### **WEBCASTING NOTICE**

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By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to be filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and or training purposes.

If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should sit in the Stourport and Bewdley Room where they can still view the meeting.

If any attendee is under the age of 18 the written consent of his or her parent or guardian is required before access to the meeting room is permitted. Persons under 18 are welcome to view the meeting from the Stourport and Bewdley Room.

If you have any queries regarding this, please speak with the Council's Legal Officer at the meeting.

## Wyre Forest District Council

## Cabinet

## Tuesday, 26th March 2013

# Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

## Part 1

## Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interests by Members	
	In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's) and / or Other Disclosable Interests (ODI's) in the following agenda items and indicate the action that they will be taking when the item is considered.	
	Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.	
3.	Minutes	
	To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on the 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2013.	7
4.	CALL INS a verbal update will be given on any decisions which have been "called in" since the last meeting of the Cabinet.	
5.	Items Requiring Urgent Attention	
	To consider any item which, in the opinion of the Chairman requires consideration at the meeting as a matter of urgency.	
6.	Public Participation	
	In accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Meetings of Full Council/Cabinet, to allow members of the public to present petitions, ask questions, or make statements, details of which have been received by 12 noon on Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2013. (See front cover for contact details).	

7.		Leader of the Council	
7.1	Leader's Announcements		

8.	Delivering Together with Less		
8.1	Councillor Nathan Desmond Budget Monitoring 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2012/2013	18	
	To consider a report from the Director of Resources that outlines the monitoring of the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003.		

9.	Securing the Economic Prosperity of the District Improving Community Well-Being/Delivering Together with Less			
9.1	Councillor Anne Hingley Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy – Consultation Draft (January 2013)	34		
	To consider a report from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place which asks for approval to submit comments (attached at Appendix 2) to Worcestershire County Council on the latest consultation document. To also consider the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting on 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2013.			
	The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy if available on request. (See front cover for details.)			

10.	Improving Community Well-Being		
10.1	Councillor Anne Hingley Recommissioning the Home Improvement Agency	43	
	To consider a report from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place which asks for Cabinet approval of the process and timetable for recommissioning of the Home Improvement Agency. To also consider the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting on 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2013.		

11.	Recommendations from Committees	
11.1	Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2013	
	Housing Assistance Policy	48
	Recommendations from the Housing Review Panel 7 <sup>th</sup> February 2013	49

12.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Director of Community Assets & Localism before the commencement of the meeting, 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.	Exclusion of the Press and Public				
	To consider passing the following resolution:				
	"That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of "exempt information" as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act".				

Part 2

# Not open to the Press and Public

14.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Director of Community Assets & Localism before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.	
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# WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET

# COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER 19TH FEBRUARY 2013 (6.00PM)

#### Present:

Councillors: J-P Campion, N J Desmond, I Hardiman, M J Hart and A T Hingley.

#### **Observers:**

Councillors: H E Dyke, F M Oborski and J A Shaw.

### CAB.63 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

## CAB.64 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

#### CAB.65 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### CAB.66 Call Ins

No decisions had been called in since the last Cabinet meeting.

## CAB.67 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

#### CAB.68 Leader's Announcements

The Leader of the Council advised Members that a series of Corporate Roadshows were underway with the first one being held in Bewdley that day. Event had been well attended with members of the public from outside the district visiting.

A public State of the Area Debate would be held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2013 at 6pm and this would be webcast preceded by a regeneration fair commencing at 5pm. This would include an update on the public realm in Kidderminster but also in attendance would be the Local Enterprise Partnership, Worcestershire County Council Highways Department, the Chamber of Commerce and the Academy in Kidderminster.

Members were informed that Worcestershire County Council would be making an application to the Government for the second phase of the Hoobrook link Road in Kidderminster which was perceived as being an important piece of infrastructure.

## CAB.69 Financial Strategy 2013-2016

A report was considered from the Director of Resources on the Financial Strategy 2013-2016 and also considered were the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

The Leader of the Council advised Members that he was pleased how well the budget scrutiny process had gone and it had received good member involvement with all parties working together. However, Members would have the opportunity to have a final debate on the proposals at the Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013. An updated summary sheet was tabled which incorporated some of the suggestions from the opposition groups. Some of the highlights were as follows:

- a. To investigate the possibility of Council owned property being used for alternative use such as business starter units or residential use.
- b. Car parking charges were proposed to freeze with a review being undertaken to look at free parking initiatives to bring business back into the three towns of Wyre Forest.
- c. With regard to staff terms and conditions, it was proposed to introduce the living wage.
- d. It was proposed to review the Parish Localism Fund and to establish a fund to support Parish Councils.
- e. The Council's freighter fleet would be investigated to ensure it was used to its optimum.
- f. A review of funding be undertaken for the contribution to the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG).
- g. It was proposed to continue for a further 12 months the Community Leadership Fund of £1,000 per Member.
- h. Further consideration of the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme would be carried out.

Members agreed that the scrutiny process had been conducted well compared to other authorities and the opposition groups had been given opportunity to put forward their ideas to be scrutinised with the opposition groups being thanked for their contributions.

A Member felt that that the £130,000 that had been allocated for the splash pad in Stourport which Stourport Town Council had turned down should be added back into the budget.

#### Decision:

#### **Recommend to Council:**

- 1. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/13 ONWARDS (pages 91-101)
- 1.1 APPROVES the updated Base Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule as presented to the Cabinet on 18th December 2012 and further amended to incorporate the Cabinet Proposals identified in Appendix 2 along with the updated Prudential Indicators presented in the separate report on the agenda.
- 2. FEES AND CHARGES (pages 44-86 as updated)
- 2.1 APPROVES fees and charges as attached in Appendix 1.
- 3. <u>THREE YEAR BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK 2013/16</u> (pages 1-45 as updated)
- 3.1 The contents of the Reports of the Director of Resources on the Three Year Budget and Policy Framework 2013-2016 (pages 1-45 incorporating the Base Budget Variations (pages 27-28) supplemented by the updated report approved by Cabinet on 22nd January 2013, be ENDORSED and in doing so APPROVE the Revised Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2012/13.
- 3.2 APPROVES that any Final Account savings arising from 2012/16 over and above the target allowed for in the Council's Finance Strategy, together with surplus Earmarked Reserves, be allocated to the Working Balance.
- 3.3 The following General Fund Revenue Budget be APPROVED including CABINET PROPOSALS(Appendix 2) and FEES AND CHARGES as proposed by Cabinet on 22nd January 2013 and related amendments (Appendix 1):

	2012/2013 £	2013/2014 £	2014/2015 £	2015/2016 £
Net Expenditure on Services (per Appendix 3 (new appendix 3 updating the position as at 22 <sup>nd</sup> January and now taking into account Social Fund Grant) )	13,076,950	12,691,410	12,410,560	12,055,100
Add/(Less) Cabinet Proposals - (Appendix 2)	-	117,810	(187,780)	(263,570)
Net Expenditure	13,076,950	12,809,220	12,222,780	11,791,530
Contribution from Reserves	(344,150)	(524,300)	(636,070)	(655,860)
Net Budget Requirement	12,732,800	12,284,920	11,586,710	11,125,670
Less Business Rate Grant, Government Grant and Collection Fund Surplus	5,615,730	6,179,120	5,390,570	4,933,200
Council Tax Transitional Grant	-	28,630	-	-
Community Right to Bid/Challenge Homelessness Funding	- 109,270	16,400 108,650	16,400 108,650	-
Council Tax Income	£7,007,800	£5,952,120	£6,071,090	£6,192,470
Wyre Forest District Council Tax Level assuming no change in 2013/14 then a 2% increase	£197.62	£197.62	£201.57	£205.60
2014/15 onwards.				

## **Final Government Grant Analysis**

<u>Year</u>	Value of	<u>Decrease</u>		
	Government Support £	£	%	
2012/13	5,391,294			
2013/14	4,884,417	506,877	9.40	
2014/15	4,095,955	788,642	16.14	
2015/16	3,882,440	213,515	5.21	

Note to Government Grant Analysis table: These figures relate to business rates and revenue support grant; they exclude Grants for Homelessness and Council Tax Support, and also Transitional and Freeze Grants (source LG Futures as updated for the final Grant Settlement). The new funding regime for Business Rates greatly increases the significance of the collection of Business Rates, with more emphasis on the actual sums collected rather than collection rates. This change of emphasis may require the Director of Resources to consider deployment of additional

staffing resource to ensure maintenance of the Business Rates baseline, including even closer liaison with the Valuation Office. It is hoped this can be achieved within existing resources.

## 3.4 Reserves available as part of the Three Year Financial Strategy:

Reserves Statement	2012/13 £'000	2013/14 £'000	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000
Reserves as at 1 April	2,511	2,167	1,643	1,007
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	(344)	(524)	(636)	(666)
Reserves as at 31 March	2,167	1,643	1,007	341

- 3.5 AGREES that the decisions on use of the Social Fund Grant including any revision of the provisional distribution reflected in the base budget, should lie outside the normal Financial Regulation requirements for Supplementary Estimates and Virements.
- 3.6 Notes the following updates to the Risk Matrix as published on the 18th December 2012:
  - Since the Financial Strategy was presented to Cabinet in December 2012, the position regarding the Contractors Claim for the construction of the New Headquarters has developed further. The financial impact of finalising the account is unknown at this stage and could vary from zero to a potentially significant sum. This will continue to be managed by the Chief Executive and Director of Community Assets and Localism in close liaison with our specialist project managers.
  - The continued depressed economy and resultant poor property market continues to represent significant risk to the financial strategy in terms of assumed funding from asset disposals and asset transfers. It is hoped that the position will improve, but assumptions made within the budget will continue to be carefully monitored against results achieved and any significant variances included in future reports to Members.

### 4 COUNCIL TAX

- 4.1 RECOMMENDS a Council Tax for Wyre Forest District Council on a Band D Property of £197.62 for 2013/14 (£197.62 2011/12) which represents no increase on Council Tax from 2012/13.
- 4.2 RECOMMENDS a provisional Council Tax on a Band D Property in 2014/15 of £201.57 and £205.60 in 2015/16 an increase of 2 % per annum over 2013/14.

- 4.3 NOTES that the new Council Tax Discount Scheme approved by Council in November 2012 (subject to minor revision due to a removal of the Class L, repossessed properties, Council Tax exemption) will be effective from 1st April 2013, and that there is a risk from the scheme that there will be a greater financial burden on the Council.
- 4.4 NOTES the decision taken to join the Worcestershire Business
  Rates Pool to protect the Council from any business rate reductions
  and help maximise the benefit by retaining more of the business
  rates delivered from economic growth within Worcestershire.
- 4.5 That Cabinet DECIDES to:
- 4.5.1 ACCEPT the delegation from Worcestershire County Council to administer the distribution of the new pass-ported Social Fund Grant and that DELEGATED authority be given to the Director of Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Transformation to agree the distribution of this Grant.
- 4.5.2 APPROVE the proposed arrangements for distributing the parish council support fund as set out in Appendix 4.
- 4.5.3 DELEGATE authority to the Director of Community Well Being and Environment and the Director of Resources in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Members, to agree and set a schedule of rates by January 2014, for commercial charges including trade, garden and bulky waste to be effective from 1st April 2014.

Recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013

Decision: Cabinet noted the recommendations from the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

### **Results of Budget Consultation**

Decision: The results of the budget consultation exercise as detailed within the reports to Cabinet be noted.

Report of the Director of Resources in respect of Sections 25-28 Local Government Act 2003

#### **Decision:**

Recommend to Council: The Director of Resources' opinion on the budget proposals, recommended by the Cabinet on 19th February 2013, as detailed in this report to Cabinet be noted.

## CAB.70 Treasury Management Strategy 2013/14

A report was considered from the Director of Resources which recommended to Council the approval of the restated Prudential Indicators and Limits for the financial years 2013/14 to 2015/16, the updated Treasury Management and Investment Policy and Strategy Statements for the period 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014, the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement that sets out the Council's policy on MRP and the Authorised Limit Prudential Indictor. Cabinet also considered the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

Cabinet noted that the Treasury Management Review Panel had debated the report at their meeting and Members had also received a two hour training session which had been well attended. Moreover, the Council's strategy was working well in the current economic climate. The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee reported that the report had been well received and Members were now more comfortable with the content which had given them more in depth knowledge.

#### **Decision:**

#### **Recommend to Council:**

- 1. The restated Prudential Indicators and Limits for the financial years 2013/14 to 2015/16 included in Appendix 3 of the report to Cabinet be approved and the change in the External Debt Indicator explained in paragraph 16.4 of the report to Cabinet be noted.
- 2. The updated Treasury Management and Investment Policy and Strategy Statements for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 (the associated Prudential Indicators are included in Appendix 3 and the detailed criteria is included in Section 10 and Appendix 5 of the report to Cabinet) be approved.
- 3. The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement that sets out the Council's policy on MRP included in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet be approved.
- 4. The Authorised Limit Prudential Indictor included in Appendix 3 of the report to Cabinet be approved.

Recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013

Decision: Cabinet noted the recommendations from the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

## CAB.71 National Non Domestic Rate (NNDR) Relief

A report was considered from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place which asked for agreement to cease the current award of NNDR relief to all current recipients on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014, giving notice to do so before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013; and to introduce a new scheme of NNDR relief from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 following consultation to be undertaken during 2013 and to consider the recommendations from the Cabinet Review Panel meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2013.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Transformation took Members through the report and advised that the report had been presented to the Cabinet Review Panel and the meeting had been productive. The Panel had felt that the Council needed to make savings in this area and this was the right thing to do. It was perceived that the new proposals gave the Registered Social Landlord (RSL's) sufficient time to plan accordingly before the existing scheme was due to end in March 2014.

A Member understood that the topic could be subject to a scrutiny review panel and the Leader of the Council advised that this could happen if it was felt necessary.

#### **Decision:**

- 1. Notice to all current recipients of NNDR relief that the current award will cease after 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014, such notice to be given before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 be given.
- 2. Consult, via direct notification to all current recipients of NNDR relief and otherwise via the Council's website for a period of 8 weeks, on a proposed scheme for considering new awards of NNDR relief from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and to receive a further report following consultation to agree the final implementation of the new scheme.

Recommendations from Cabinet Review Group - NNDR

Decision: Cabinet noted the recommendations from the meeting of the Cabinet Review Group on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2013.

## CAB.72 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 – Revised Policy

A report was considered from the Director of Community Assets and Localism which asked Cabinet to approve and adopt the Wyre Forest District Council Policy on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

Members were taken through the report and advised that due to legislation the Council needed to adopt a reviewed policy. It was queried whether the Council would use the powers but it was confirmed that, if needed, the policy would ensure that any surveillance was correctly authorised and carried out.

Decision: The Wyre Forest District Council Policy on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 at Appendix A to the report to Cabinet be approved and adopted.

# CAB.73 Wyre Forest District Revised Statement of Community Involvement Adoption

A report was considered from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place that recommended to Council adoption of the Revised Statement of Community Involvement. Cabinet also considered the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee reported that the Committee had expressed concerns that there was a lack of response in some of the consultations and it was difficult to have a view when little input had been given. Questions were asked if the Council were taking every opportunity of getting responses to consultations whether it be via the internet or post and that every member of the public had an opportunity to respond.

#### **Decision:**

Recommend to Council: The Revised Statement of Community Involvement as set out at Appendix 2 to the report to Cabinet be adopted and that the responses to the representations made, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report to Cabinet be endorsed.

Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013

Decision: Cabinet noted the recommendations from the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

# CAB.74 South Worcestershire Development Plan Proposed Submission Document

A report was considered from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place which asked for approval of the comments attached at Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet for submission in response to the consultation on the South Worcestershire Development Plan Proposed Submission Document. Cabinet also considered the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee commented that a long debate had been held on the subject at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting especially on the Roxel site in Kidderminster as it was a cross boundary site with Wychavon District Council.

A Member had concerns that the specific allocation around surrounding areas of Stourport, i.e. Great Witley and Abberley would have an impact on the services in Stourport-on-Severn and felt that the Council needed to stay alert to the potential implications it could have for the Council.

Decision: The comments attached at Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet for submission in response to the consultation on the South Worcestershire Development Plan Proposed Submission Document be approved.

Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013

**South Worcestershire Development Plan – Publication** 

Decision: The representations set out at Appendix 1 of the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be approved for submission in response to the Publication consultation.

### CAB.75 Exclusion of Press and Public

Decision: "Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and 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 paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

## CAB.76 Urgent Works to a building in Bewdley

A report was considered from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place which sought approval for urgent works to be undertaken at a building in Bewdley and to the funding of such works.

Members were taken through the report and commented that they were happy with the proposed works to the building and the purpose for which it could be used.

#### Decision:

- An Urgent Works Notice be served in respect of the building named in the report under S54 of the Planning (Listing Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, subject to first receiving written confirmation from English Heritage of the offer of 80% grant funding towards the cost of such Urgent Works;
- 2. The Council seeks to recover, in full, its expenses in connection with the works carried out under S54 of the Act; in accordance with the provision of S55 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas Act) 1990;
- 3. Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place Shaping, to consider and decide the extent of the works deemed to be urgent and included within an Urgent Works Notice, having considered the schedule of works provided by the consultant.

- 4. Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place Shaping and the Director of Resources to undertake a procurement exercise for the works to be carried out at the building as detailed in the Urgent Works Notice in the event that the owner is unable to undertake them.
- 5. A supplementary estimate of up to £25,000 be established to fund the works, funded from resources currently allocated to the LDF earmarked reserve.

The meeting closed at 7.13 pm.

## WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

## CABINET 26<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2013

## **Budget Monitoring Third Quarter 2012/13**

	OPEN					
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:	Stronger Communities					
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	Delivering Together with Less					
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor N J Desmond					
DIRECTOR:	Director of Resources					
CONTACT OFFICER:	Joanne Wagstaffe Ext. 2100 joanne.wagstaffe@wyreforestdc.gov.uk					
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 - Wyre Forest District Council Revenue Budget Total Requirements - District Council Purposes Appendix 2 - Budgetary Control Report - Revenue Appendix 3 - Capital Programme 2012/13 Appendix 4 - Cabinet Proposal Progress Report Appendix 5 - Budget Risk Matrix  The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)					

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To monitor the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003.
- 1.2 To report the projected Budget outturn and variances at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013, based on the position at the end of December 2012, Quarter 3 of 2012/13 compared to the Revised Budget approved by Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2012.
- 1.3 To inform Members of the Housing Benefit Overpayment debt position as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012.
- 1.4 To inform members of the Sundry/Property debt position as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:-

2.1 That the projected budget variations and comments outlined within this report and appendices 2 to 5 be noted.

## 3. KEY ISSUES - BUDGET MONITORING QUARTER 3 of 2012/13

- 3.1 The projected outturn at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 is an under spend of £263,000. This includes £194,000 in respect of the release of the Housing Benefit Subsidy Claim reserve for potential repayment of errors in 2010/11. This has now been resolved and will be used to increase the Working Balance in accordance with the Council Budget decision paper approved on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013. This gives an adjusted projected under spend of £69,000. The details are in Appendix 2 and the main variances are:
  - £13,500 favourable: Community Right to Bid/Challenge Government Grant funding that is not required for this year so can fall into general balances.
  - £20,000 favourable: Property and Industrial Estates Maintenance
  - £10,000 favourable: Grounds Maintenance parks and green spaces
  - £10,000 favourable: Cemetery additional sale of plots
  - £90,000 adverse: Development Control reduction in Planning Application, advice and enquiries fees for 2012/13
  - £20,000 favourable Homelessness Reduction in temporary accommodation costs
  - £12,000 favourable Treasury Management additional external interest.
  - £15,000 favourable: Corporate Pension Costs reduction for 2012/13 due to reducing pay costs; the impending actuarial review may however increase future pension costs
  - £58,500 favourable: Pay and administrative costs, a small saving is predicted to year end

## 3.2 Net Expenditure

The level of Net Expenditure should represent the level of resource employed by the Council in order to undertake its statutory and discretionary service. This can be assumed because the Councils Commercial activity should be undertaken only if the charges made, cover the costs of the service provided, or beyond that, make a contribution to the Council's overheads.

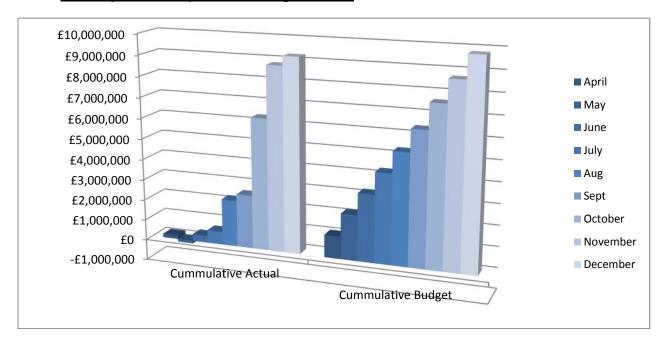
Costs incurred throughout the year do tend to adopt a seasonal profile as activity (and therefore costs) tends to be greater in the summer than at any other season. For this reason we should give more attention to the estimated year end position as this will tend to smooth out all of the fluctuations caused by seasonality. It also takes account of the normal year end processes of accounting for stock, accruals and prepayments.

## Summary of main variances to revised budget

	<b>Annual Budget</b>	YTD Dec 2012	<b>Predicted Outturn</b>	Variance
Negative Variance				
Planning	£460,340	£442,088	£550,340	£90,000
Positive Variance				
Resources	£5,090	£3,874	Cr£9,910	Cr£15,000
Legal	£4,150	Cr£30,026	Cr£9,350	Cr£13,500
Cemeteries	£167,740	£122,008	£157,740	Cr£10,000
Parks	£867,080	£657,753	£857,080	Cr£10,000
Property	£190,070	£17,946	£180,070	Cr£10,000
Industrial	Cr£112,520	Cr£164,841	Cr£122,520	Cr£10,000
Estates				

## Agenda Item No. 8.1

## Net Expenditure profile during 2012-13

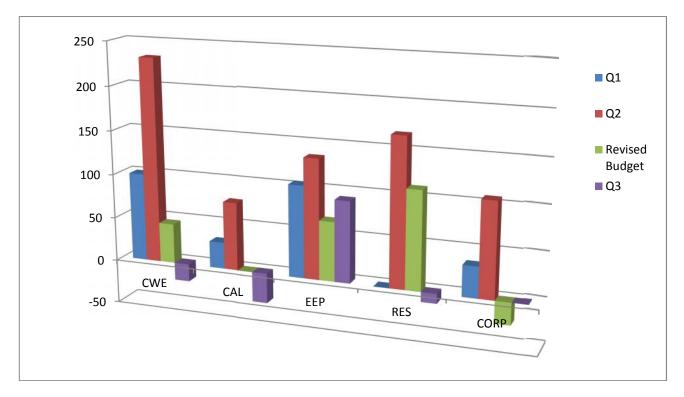


At the start of each financial year the closing entries from the previous financial year are reversed creating a large negative against which the first few months expenditure are offset. This explains the "slow" start to the net expenditure profile, and how the reversal of financial entries such as stock, accruals and earmarked reserves retard the cost profile. This effect can be further compounded by employing Shared Service options that move payroll costs off our expense line, to be substituted by recharges in arrears some months later.

Based upon the quarterly forecast process we are able to review our ability to predict the final outcome at year end, also to monitor our understanding of the many issues that can affect this outcome. So far two quarters of 2012/13 have been predicted and are shown as Quarter 1 and Quarter 2. Since that point a Revised Budget has been produced and an outturn prediction for the year end position as at Quarter 3.

## **Changes in Final year Outturn based on quarterly forecasts**

## **Key:** positive = increased shortfall



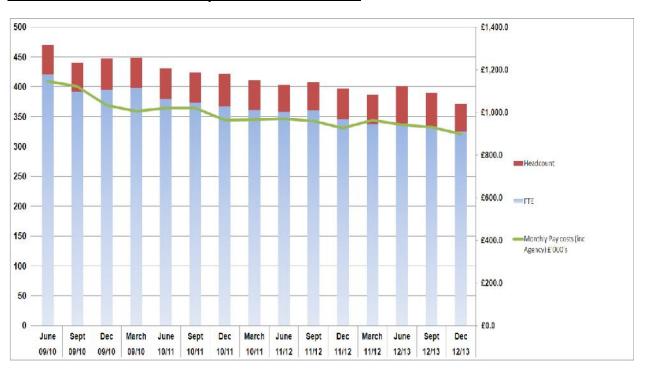
CWE - Community Well Being and Environment, CAL - Community Assets and Localism EEP - Economic Prosperity and Place, RES - Resources, COPR - Corporate, CORP - Corporate

The latest Q3 outturn prediction oscillates around the revised budget figure, as a clearer position of the whole year come into focus. The only large variance against the revised budget revolves around the external income prediction of the Planning Section.

Ordinarily a reduction in external income will have a corresponding effect on the net expenditure position. It is encouraging to note that many sections are able to mitigate some of the income reduction by making corresponding cuts in cost – Waste and Property are two such examples, whilst Planning Control takes the full effect of any reduction in income.

## Agenda Item No. 8.1

## Headcount and FTE with Payroll costs since 2009



	June 2009	Sep 2009	Dec 2009	Mar 2010	Jun 2010	Sep 2010	Dec 2010	Mar 2011	Jun 2011	Sep 2011	Dec 2011	Mar 2012	Jun 2012	Sep 2012	Dec 2012
Headc't	470	440	447	449	431	424	422	411	403	408	397	387	401	390	371
FTE	420	392	394	397	380	373	388	361	358	361	345	337	339	333	325
Payroll cost (inc Agency) £m's	£1,14	£1,12	£1,03	£1,00	£1,02	£1,02	£0.96	£0.96	£0.97	£0.96	£0.93	£0.96	£0.94	£0.93	£0.90

Payroll costs comprise approximately 65% of the total operating costs incurred by the Council. This has significantly reduced in recent times because of the way the Council have commissioned its services, moving more towards different service delivery options. Consequently any significant change in the Councils cost profile must include changes to the headcount (total number of employees) and more importantly a change in the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) (restating headcount by taking in account the portion worked by part time staff). Any reductions in FTE should translate into payroll cost savings – to verify this, the green line working off the right hand axis confirms that costs have reduced in line with successive reductions in FTE over the past 4 years. In order that consistent comparison is possible the cost of redundancy and actuarial strain on pensions have been excluded from the payroll costs.

The highlights over the past 4 years – FTE reduced from 420 to 325. Monthly payroll bill reduced from £1.146m to £0.897.

## 3.3 External Income

Actual

2012/13

£278.571

External Income Report – 9 Months to December 2012

External income is a very important element within the finances of the Council – it affects the level of resources the Council can fund and makes an important contribution to a balanced budget.

The level of external income anticipated at Revised Budget is just over £200k lower than Original Budget – this is largely due to shortfalls in planning income, a reduction in Car Parks enforcement income, and a more realistic estimation of Commercial Trade Waste income.

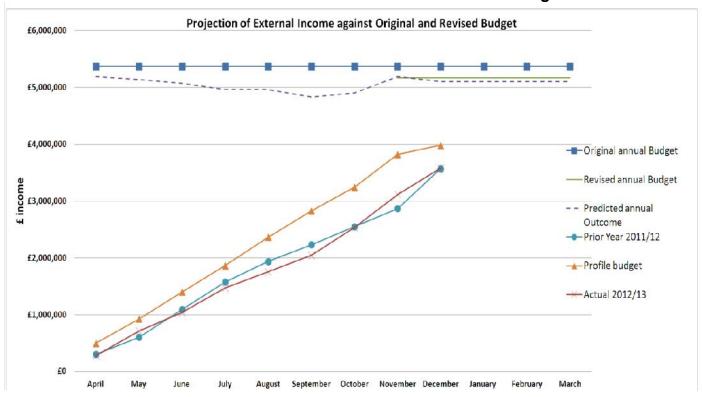
# Summary of Income performance against Budget throughout the year 2012/13 Note: All figures are cumulative

	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March
Original annual Budget	£5,373,150	£5,373,150	£5,373,150	£5,373,150	£5,373,150	£5,373,150	£5,373,150	£5,373,150	£5,373,150	£5,373,150	£5,373,150	£5,373,150
Revised annual Budget								£5,168,770	£5,163,770	£5,168,770	£5,168,770	£5,168,770
Predicted annual Outcome	£5,199,700	£5,148,080	£5,088,000	£4,974,220	£4,974,220	£4,842,000	£4,948,120	£5,201,844	£5,105,330			
Prior Year 2011/12	£304,748	£603,265	£1,094,936	£1,574,197	£1,938,462	£2,232,930	£2,551,481	£2,869,720	£3,573,983			
Profile budget	£496,236	£923,691	£1,400,350	£1,863,724	£2,366,896	£2,833,850	£3,247,376	£3,822,842	£3,983,909			
	£496,236	£923,691	£1,400,350	£1,863,724	£2,366,896	£2,833,850	£3,247,376	£3,822,842	£3,983,909		4	

As in previous years, the actual income generated lags behind the profiled budget – this is mainly due to recharges made in arrears, often annual contract arrangements with County or other Local Government bodies.

£713,397 |£1,042,728 |£1,469,006 |£1,756.590 |£2,046,709 |£2,537,017 |£3,117,115 |£3,583,497

## Agenda Item No. 8.1



At this stage of the year, and in a perfect world, we would expect to have generated 75% of the annual income target. The relative performance by income type is shown below – to date the shortfall is just 5.7%, but is consistent with prior year's experience.

## Summary of income performance by Category – December 2012

Category	Original Budget 2012/13	Revised Budget 2012/13	Projection as at Dec 2013	Actual Jan YTD	% achieved of Revised Budget	Projected Year End Variance
Fees and Charges	-£3,400,230	-£3,023,930	-£2,935,772	-£2,111,127	69.81%	-£88,158
Grant or Subsidies	-£285,760	-£348,140	-£352,140	-£310,332	89.14%	£4,000
Interest	-£166,600	-£211,540	-£221,540	-£166,155	78.55%	£10,000
Other	-£216,140	-£159,190	-£158,325	-£108,602	68.22%	-£865
Rental Income	-£621,040	-£594,480	-£596,070	-£437,152	73.54%	£1,590
SSI	-£683,380	-£831,490	-£841,483	-£450,128	54.14%	£9,993
Total	-£5,373,150	£5,168,770	-£5,105,330	£3,583,497	69.33%	-£63,440

Note: target 75.00%

Based upon the income projection completed each month – the following variances to revised budget were identified and help to account for most of the variations to expected income for the year.

It is important to note that there are a few large planning applications in the pipeline that could fully close this income shortfall – but we have decided to take a cautious approach to this potential income.

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Cost Centre description	Cost Centre	Account Code	Account Code Description	2012/13 Budget	2012/13 Profiled Budget	2012/13 Actual To Date	Projection to Year End (To be completed)	Variance Projection Less Budget
Sections predicting a shortfall in Income				111111111111111111	· Annierten	- 1/02/11 MPG	777 - 1000	
Development Control	R605	86200	PLANNING APPLICATION FEES	-£325,600	-£244,233	-£188,488	-£235,600	-£90,000
Building Control Fee Earning	R625	86060	BUILDING CONTROL FULL PLANS APPLICATION	-£100,000	-£81,510	-£65,900	-£85,000	-£15,000
Building Control Fee Earning	R625	86010	BUILDING NOTICE FEES	-£50,000	-£38,690	-£34,310	-£41,000	-£9,000
Sections predicting an increase in Income	1			1				
NW Water Management Shared Service	R676	84150	COUNTY COUNCIL PAYMENTS	£55,000	-£41,256	-£65,000	-£65,000	£10,000
Interest Received	R805	88600	INTERNAL (& OTHER) INTEREST RECEIVED	-£66,000	-£49,507	£57,000	-£76,000	£10,000
Grounds Maintenance	R236	88100	INCOME - EXTERNAL WORKS	-£56,820	-£37,507	£38,798	-£66,890	£10,070

## 3.4 **Capital Programme**

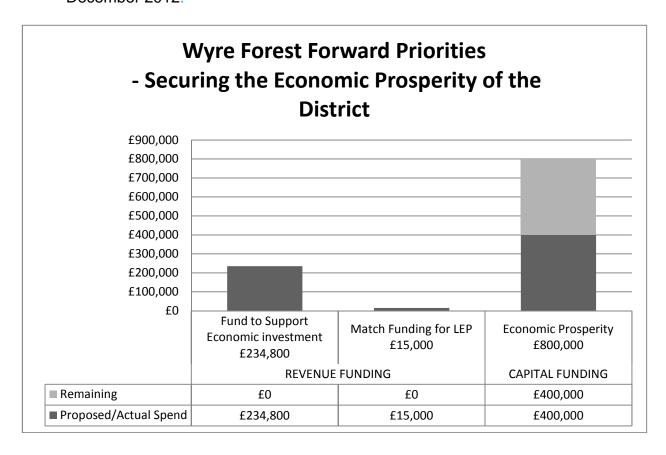
The updated Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule for 2012/13, is enclosed as **Appendix 3.** Spending for the third quarter was lower than budgeted. Some slippage into 2013/14 is anticipated as detailed in the appendix.

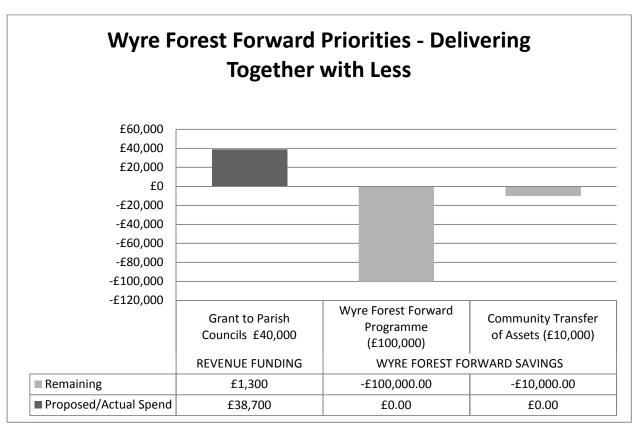
## 3.5 Cabinet Proposals

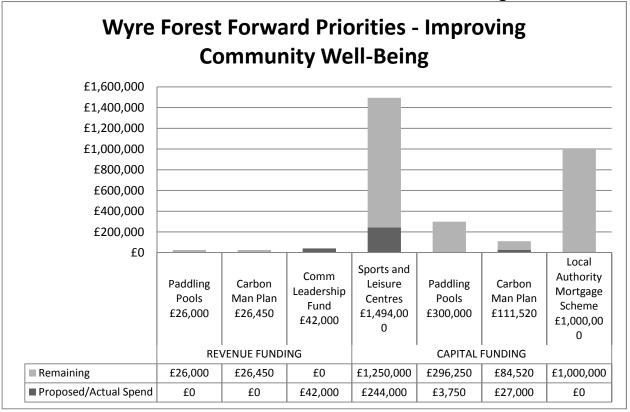
A Progress Report of Cabinet Proposals approved at Council on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2012 for 2012/13, cross referenced to the Wyre Forest Forward Programme, is shown in **Appendix 4**. Wyre Forest Forward is a review of all aspects of the Council. It is a comprehensive programme of transformation, through changing our ways of working and culture to ensure we can deliver services of real value to our residents, within a reduced budget. The Financial Strategy 2013/16 sets out how the Council will achieve its corporate priorities of:

- Securing Economic Prosperity of the District
- Delivering Together, with Less
- Improving Community Well-Being

The following Graphs show the funding/savings approved and the progress to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012.







The main variances for:

## **Securing the Economic Prosperity of the District:**

- The Review Panel agreed to £400,000 Economic Development and Regeneration Capital funding being rolled forward in to the next financial year to support the incubator unit project.

#### **Delivering together for less:**

 Wyre Forest Forward and Community Asset Transfer savings have been rephased to 2013/14 to allow full consideration of all options measured against our purposes to be undertaken.

## **Improving Community Well-Being:**

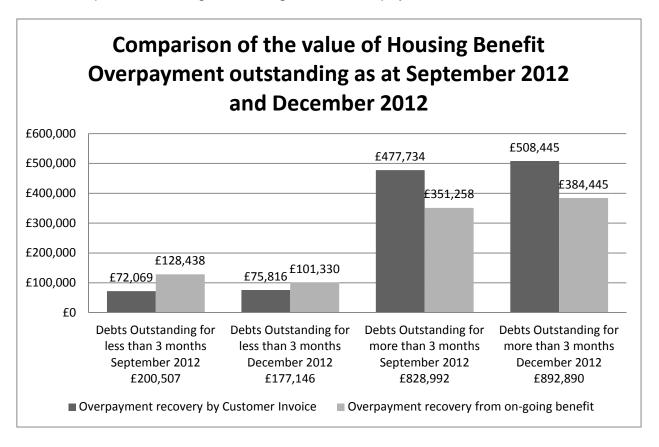
- Capital projects are progressing with the Future Leisure Provision and the Splash Park; site clearance work of the existing Brinton Park facility is complete, with work on the facility due to start early in the new financial year.
- The Local Authority Mortgage Scheme launch has been deferred due to the reduced differential between the Commercial/broker rate available from Lloyds bank on our deposit and the PWLB 5 year borrowing rate currently available. This increases the risk of insufficient funds being available to cover any defaults, however, market rates remain volatile and the position will continue to be monitored.

### 3.6 Budget Risk

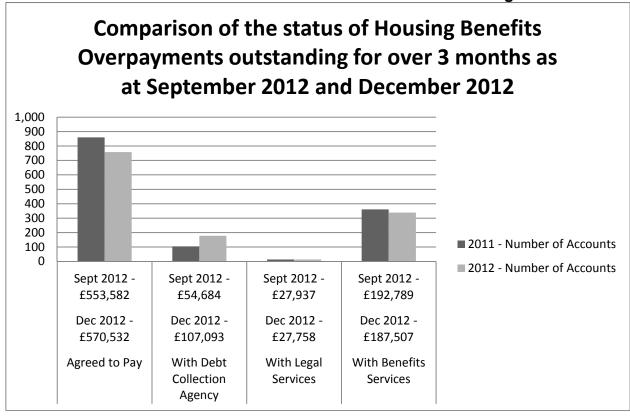
The Budget Risk Matrix has been reviewed to reflect the current assessment of risk. A copy is enclosed for information as **Appendix 5**. This has been supplemented by the additional comments in 6.2.

## 3.7 Income and Outstanding Debt

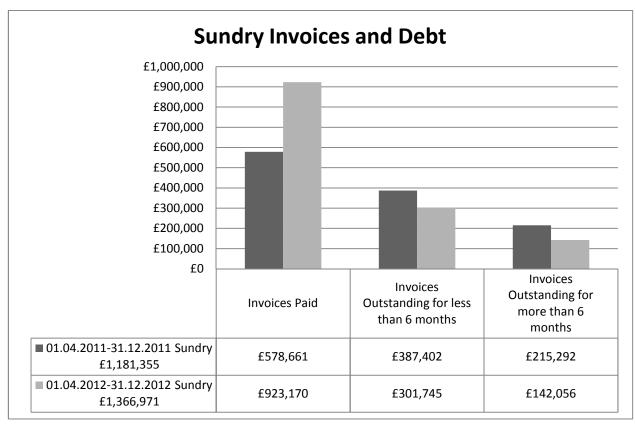
The position relating to Housing Benefit Overpayments is as follows:



Debts over 3 months old have agreements in place to pay, have been referred to a Debt Collection Agency or the Council's Legal Services, or remain with the Benefit Services to pursue.

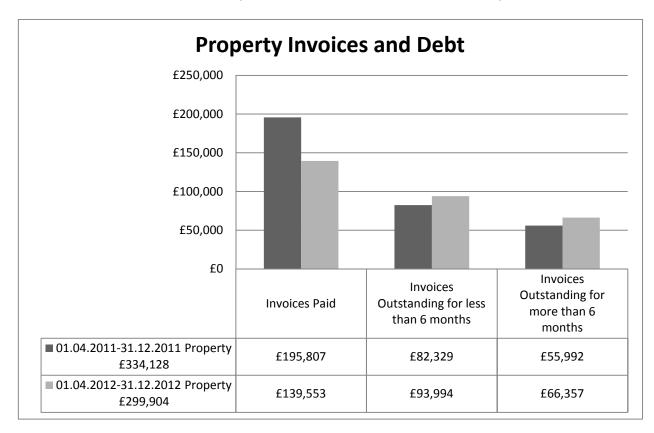


- 3.8 The position relating to Sundry/Property Customer Invoices are as follows: Sundry Customer Invoices
  - The Council raised £1.37 million in Sundry Customer invoices during the period to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 (£1.18 million to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011)
  - The additional income in invoices paid is attributable to the Shared Services



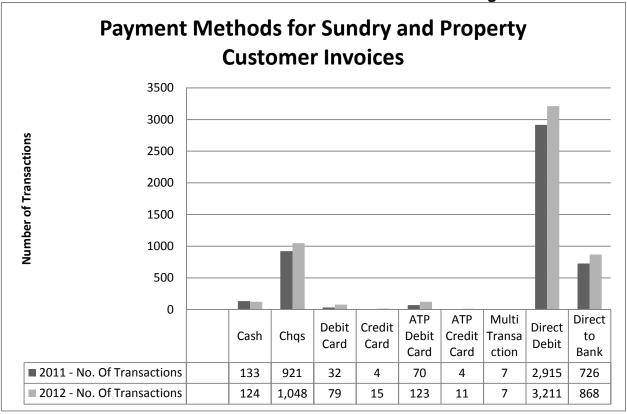
## **Property Customer Invoices**

- The Council raised £0.33 million in Property Customer invoices during the period to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 (£0.30 million to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011)



3.9 Comparison of payment methods for all Customer Invoices raised as at December 2011 and December 2012

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3.10 Investment interest is currently projected to achieve a favourable variance of £12,000 above the revised estimate. This is largely due to the beneficial rates that the Council has been able to achieve on its Notice Accounts along with slippage in the Capital Programme. In February 2013 Moody's Investors Service (Moody's) downgraded the Sovereign Rating of the United Kingdom (UK) by one notch from Aaa to Aa1. The main driver underpinning Moody's decision to downgrade the UK's Government bond rating to Aa1 is the increasing clarity that, despite considerable structural economic strengths, the UK's economic growth will remain sluggish over the next few years. Moody's has said it "...does not consider this rating change has any implications for the standalone strength of UK financial institutions, or for the systemic support uplift factored into certain UK financial institutions' unguaranteed debt ratings." The Council's Treasury Advisers, Sector, have advised that they do not expect any consequent action on UK entities in the near term.

### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS - BUDGET MONITORING QUARTER 3 of 2012/2013

- 4.1 A copy of the Council's base Revenue Budget from the Financial Strategy, including the approved Revised Budget for 2012-13 is enclosed as **Appendix 1** for Members' information.
- 4.2 The continuing effects of the economic recession and the decline of the global economy and the Eurozone may have an overall adverse impact on the budget, although this should be offset by savings in pay and administrative costs. While the report suggests a small under-spend, overall, close monitoring by the Director of Resources and all Directorates will continue.
- 4.3 Housing Benefits overpayments the Council needs to monitor performance as it receives from the Department of Work and Pensions benefit subsidy on those payments which are identified as overpayments. The rate of subsidy varies

dependent on the classification of the overpayment. In addition should the Council recover the full or any part of an overpayment then those recovered monies can be retained by the Council.

4.4 Sundry/Property Debt – we will continue to monitor and report on the financial implications.

## 5. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Local Government Act 2003 (sections 25–29) placed duties on Local Authorities on how they set and prioritise budgets.
- 5.2 Section 28 places a statutory duty on an authority to review its budget from time to time during the year. If the Budget Monitoring Report shows that there has been deterioration in the Authority's financial position, the Authority must take such action as it concludes necessary. The Cabinet currently reviews the Budget on a quarterly basis.
- 5.3 The Council's external auditors Grant Thornton will make an assessment based on the annual programme of external audit work. The focus is on ensuring there are proper arrangements in place for securing financial reliance and that the organisation has proper arrangements for challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

## 6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The Budget Risk Matrix in Appendix 5 is regularly reviewed and updated. Regular monitoring of expenditure and other financial information mitigates risk for the Council.
- 6.2 The position regarding the Contractors Claim for the construction of the New Headquarters has developed further. The financial impact of finalising the account is unknown at this stage and could vary from zero to a potentially significant sum. This will continue to be managed by the Chief Executive and Director of Community Assets and Localism in close liaison with our specialist project managers.
- 6.3 The continued depressed economy and resultant poor property market continues to represent significant risk to the financial strategy in terms of assumed funding from asset disposals and asset transfers. It is hoped that the position will improve, but assumptions made within the budget will continue to be carefully monitored against results achieved and any significant variances included in future reports to Members.

## 7. <u>EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT</u>

7.1 This is a financial report and there is no requirement to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment.

## 8. **CONCLUSIONS/ACTION**

8.1 The information contained within Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5 provides Members with an overview of financial trends within the period to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012.

## 9. CONSULTEES

- 9.1 Corporate Management Team.
- 9.2 Cabinet.

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Council 29<sup>th</sup> February 2012. Cabinet Report on Final Accounts 2011/12 19<sup>th</sup> June 2012. Cabinet 17<sup>th</sup> April 2012. Cabinet 18<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

## WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

## REVENUE BUDGET TOTAL REQUIREMENTS - DISTRICT COUNCIL PURPOSES

	2012/13 2013/14		2013/14	2014/15					2015/16		
SERVICE	Original	Revised	At Nov.12		TOTAL	At Nov.12		TOTAL	At Nov.12		TOTAL
SERVICE	Estimate	Estimate	Prices	Inflation		Prices	Inflation		Prices	Inflation	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	1,132,640	1,107,440	1,108,210	14,210	1,122,420	1,114,120	28,730	1,142,850	1,092,450	43,410	1,135,860
COMMUNITY ASSETS AND LOCALISM	1,515,960	1,514,100	1,319,950	21,850	1,341,800	1,408,710	45,850	1,454,560	1,388,570	69,410	1,457,980
COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AND ENVIRONMENT	6,098,890	6,143,730	6,223,820	111,460	6,335,280	6,223,650	233,980	6,457,630	5,341,490	316,960	5,658,450
ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND PLACE	2,851,330	2,918,440	2,432,930	46,830	2,479,760	1,919,490	95,380	2,014,870	1,563,190	144,930	1,708,120
RESOURCES	2,774,030	2,931,820	2,914,490	(1,600)	2,912,890	2,659,550	53,960	2,713,510	2,632,750	111,660	2,744,410
LESS: CAPITAL ACCOUNT INTEREST RECEIVED INCREASES IN FEES AND CHARGES	14,372,850 (1,151,050) (166,600)	14,615,530 (1,327,040) (211,540)	13,999,400 (1,201,780) (134,320) (74,240)	192,750 730 0	14,192,150 (1,201,050) (134,320) (74,240)	(122,590)	457,900 1,490 0	13,783,420 (988,860) (122,590) (176,570)	(124,420)	686,370 2,220 0	12,704,820 (263,070) (124,420) (279,390)
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES	13,055,200	13,076,950	12,589,060	193,480	12,782,540		459,390	12,495,400		688,590	
LESS: GOVERNMENT SUPPORT GRANTS HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION GRANT COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID/CHALLENGE COLLECTION FUND SURPLUS COUNCIL TAX TRANSITIONAL GRANT	(5,564,730) (109,270) 0 (51,000)	(5,564,730) (109,270) 0 (51,000)			(6,179,210) (108,650) (16,400) 0 (28,630)			(5,389,510) (109,000) (16,400) 0			(4,933,200) 0 0 0 0
GENERAL EXPENSES - COUNCIL TAX INCOME	(7,007,800)	(7,007,800)			(5,952,120)			(6,071,090)			(6,192,470)
(SURPLUS) / DEFICIT FOR YEAR	322,400	344,150			497,530			909,400			912,270
COUNCIL TAX LEVY COUNCIL TAX BASE		197.62 35,461			197.62 30,119			201.57 30,119			205.60 30,119

Source: Financial Strategy 2013/2016, Cabinet Paper 18th December 2012

## **BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT MAJOR REVENUE VARIATIONS QUARTER THREE (TO 31st DECEMBER 2012)**

**Total Revised Budget 2012/13** Additional Expenditure/(Projected Saving) on Revisedl Budget Less £194,000 as per Council decision of 27th February 2013 - favourable settlement

13,076,950

(263,000)

of Housing Benefit final overpayments subsidy claim 2010/11

194,000 (69,000)

**SUBTOTAL** 

Total Quarter Three Projection to Year End 2012/13	SUBTUTAL	13,007,950
Description of Estimated Major Variances	Extra Costs/ Reduced Income £	Savings/ Additional Income £
Chief Executive		
No major variance		
Community Assets and Localism		
Community Right to Bid Challenge Government Funding to fall into general balances		(13,500)
Propery and Industrial Estates Maintenance savings		(20,000)
Community Well Being and Environment		
Ground Maintenance - additional external income		(10,000)
2 Cemetery - addtional sale of plots		(10,000)
Economic Prosperity and Place		
Development Control - Reduction in Planning application, advice and enquiries fees projected	90,000	
to year-end		
Homelessness - Reduction in temporary accommodation costs		(20,000)
Resources		
No major variances can be confirmed at this point in time		
Capital Account		
External Interest - beneficial rates achieved on notice accounts and Capital Programme		(12,000)
slippage resulting in additional interest income		
2. External Borrowing - Capital Programme slippage and improved cashflow has resulted in a		0
reprofiling of borrowing costs to be funded from a Financing Reserve required now we have formally entered into External Borrowing		
Company Naviations		
Corporate Variations  1. Corporate Pensions - reduction in costs		(15,000)
<ol> <li>Corporate Pensions - reduction in costs</li> <li>Pay and General Administration Costs - due to a more austere approach taken in the revised</li> </ol>		(58,500)
budget the year end position is predicted to be close to neutral		(55,555)
	90,000	(159,000)
	30,000	(100,000)
Increase/(Decrease) on Revised Budget (based on Quarter Three 2012/2013		
Projection) to Year End made up as follows:		(69,000)
		1

## BUDGET MONITORING 2012/13 Q3 (TO DECEMBER 2012) CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/13

	Davisasi	Manth	0	1
CAPITAL PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION	Revised Capital	Month 9	Current Year	
CAPITAL PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION	Programme	Expenditure	Scheme	Comments
	2012/13	2012/13	Balance	Comments
	£	£	£	
COMMITTED EXPENDITURE				
1. COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AND ENVIRONMENT				
Future Leisure Provision	1,244,000	11,274	1,232,726	Site acquisition, surveys, consultants fees - Q4 2012/13 & Q1 2013/14
Improvements to Paddling Pools	1,250	0	1,250	To be linked into Strategic Review Scheme below. Preparatory work to commence in Q4.
Paddling Pools - Strategic Review	300,000	0	300,000	Preparatory work to commence in Q4. £296,250 to slip into 2013/14.
St Mary's Churchyard Boundary Wall	2,840	0	2,840	Anticipate to spend in Q4.
Liveability Scheme: Brinton Park	2,240	0	2,240	Anticipate to spend in Q4.
Wyre Hill Play Area	310	302	8	Scheme complete.
Stourport Sports Village	529,860	71,276	458,584	Projects have been delayed due to bad
				weather. Works may re-commence before end
				of financial year but highly likely to slip into
				2013/14.
Franchise Street S106 - Brinton Park	53,370	0		Scheme to slip to 2013/14.
Franchise Street S106 - Arts Development	9,330	0		Re-submit application to HLF 2013/14.
Franchise Street S106 - Countryside / Rangers	7,260	0	7,260	Fencing/water for a new area grazing infrastructure. Anticipated to spend in Q4.
Improvements to Coronation Gardens	550	0	EE0	Scheme to slip to 2013/14.
Load Street Public Conveniences Refurbishment	20,530	0		Pending Dog Lane development. To slip into
Load Street Fubile Conveniences Relaibistiment	20,330	U	20,330	2013/14.
Parking Facilities: Payment under Contractual Agreement	159,280	0	159 280	Currently investigating options for renewal of
and and a contract an	100,200	· ·	100,200	parking meters. To slip into 2013/14.
Parking Facilities: Improvements to Car Parks	19,860	0	19,860	To slip into 2013/14.
2. COMMUNITY ASSETS AND LOCALISM				
New Headquarters - Office Accommodation	3,854,760	3,191,263	663,497	New HQ final account currently progressing
				towards completion within budget.
Contribution towards replacement of Civic Facilities in Stourport-on-	450,000	0	450,000	Current indications are that the Community
Severn				Asset Transfer may be completed by the end
				of the financial year.
Boundary Wall at 49 Worcester Street	10,000	0	10,000	Still subject to an on-going insurance dispute.
				Scheme to slip into 2013/14.

### BUDGET MONITORING 2012/13 Q3 (TO DECEMBER 2012) CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/13

CAPITAL PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION	Revised Capital Programme 2012/13	Month 9 Expenditure 2012/13	Current Year Scheme Balance	Comments
	£	£	£	
3. ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND PLACE				
Housing Strategy:				
Disabled Facilities Grants	800,000	,		Anticipated to spend in Q4.
Affordable Housing Grants to Registered Social Landlords	265,000	0	265,000	Anticipated spend in Q4 is £200k. Awaiting legal agreement for grant from WM Housing Group. Balance to slip into 2013/14.
Housing Assistance (including Decent Homes Grant)	156,650	32,285		Schemes adjusted due to national schemes providing greater than anticipated funding. A further £70,000 is expected to be spent in Q4, remainder to slip into 2013/14.
Community Alarm Equipment Grant	10,380	10,362		Scheme complete.
Planning Delivery Grant Capital Projects	26,240	0		There is no requirement for this to be spent within the financial year and it will therefore be carried forward into next year as a source of funding for resources if required.
Flood Relief	5,000	0	5,000	Awaiting outcome of investigations and bid submission to national funding in June 2013 for scheme that would require Council capital contribution. Scheme to slip into 2013/14.
WETT Programme - Regulatory Services	126,690	0		This funding is set aside for the new IT system which is currently being procured, it will be installed in the next financial year.
Regeneration of Economic Development	800,000	0	800,000	This is funding for the State of the Area projects and has been set aside for as number of projects that will come forward during the next financial year. At its meeting in December 2012 the Cabinet Review Panel agreed to set aside £400,000 to be rolled into the next financial year to support the incubator units project.
Carbon Management Plan	21,520	0	21,520	Documents being prepared for lighting scheme tender exercise. Likely to slip into 2013/14.

### BUDGET MONITORING 2012/13 Q3 (TO DECEMBER 2012) CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/13

CAPITAL PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION	Revised Capital Programme 2012/13	Month 9 Expenditure 2012/13	Current Year Scheme Balance	Comments
	£	£	£	
4. RESOURCES				
ICT Strategy	768,030	408,269	•	Further expenditure expected on new HQ and Self Service call centre in Q4. Remaining balance to slip into 2013/14.
Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS)	1,000,000	0	, ,	The scheme launch has been deferred due to the diminished differential between the broker/commercial rate Lloyds Bank are currently able to offer and the costs of borrowing currently available.
5. VEHICLE, EQUIPMENT & SYSTEMS RENEWAL SCHEDULE				
Vehicles & Equipment	726,000	0		See separate Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule. No expenditure to date but vehicles in various stages of the specification and tendering process.
Financial Management System Replacement	77,470	0		Post implementation consultancy work for system improvements continues. This work complements other system thinking reviews to streamline processes and achieve further efficiencies. Will slip into 2013/14.
Total Operational Management System	4,810	2,600	2,210	Slip into 2013/14.
	11,453,230	4,146,578	7,306,652	

## BUDGET MONITORING 2012/13 Q3 (TO DECEMBER 2012) VEHICLE, EQUIPMENT AND SYSTEMS RENEWAL SCHEDULE 2012/13

Detail	Revised	Month 9	Old Vehicle Fleet Number	COST	ASSIGNED FLEET	Comments
Detail	Capital Programme	9 Expenditure	to be replaced	CENTRE	NUMBER	
	2012/13	2012/13	to be replaced		Nomber	
	£	£				
1. <u>VEHICLES</u>						
Refuse Freighter	140,000	0	34	R002		Vehicle has been ordered and is expected before the end of March.
Refuse Freighter	140,000	0	38	R002		Vehicle has been ordered and is expected before the end of March.
Refuse Freighter	70,000	0	24	R002		Vehicle has been ordered and is expected before the end of March.
Ford Connect	25,000	0	65	R900	AV218	Vehicle has been ordered and is expected before the end of March.
Blitz Vehicle	30,000	0	47	R200	AV255	Vehicle has been ordered and is expected before the end of March.
Blitz Vehicle	30,000	0	48	R200	AV256	Vehicle has been ordered and is expected before the end of March.
Mechanical Sweeper (Medium)	100,000	0	166	R200		Tender has fallen through. To slip into 2013/14.
Mechanical Sweeper (Schmit)	75,000	0	169	R200		Awaiting contract to be drawn up, not yet ordered but are
				D.000		expecting this to be spent before the end of March.
Garage Equipment - Replacement (slippage) Transit Tipper - Iveco Daily	5,000 30,000	0	- 64	R229 R236		To slip into 2013/14.
The state of the s		0				To slip into 2013/14.
Tractor	54,000		17 & 172	R236		Vehicle has been ordered and is expected before the end of March.
CMP Engine Management Systems	13,500	0	34 & 38	R002		This has been ordered and is expected before the end of March.
CMP Electrical Bin Lifts	13,500	0	34 & 38	R002		This has been ordered and is expected before the end of March.
2. OTHER						
(a) Financial Management System replacement	77,470	0	-	R430		Post implementation consultancy work for system improvements continues. This work complements other system thinking reviews to streamline processes and achieve further efficiencies. Will slip into 2013/14.
						achieve futitiet eniciencies. Will SID IIILO 2013/14.
(b) Total Operational Management System	4,810	2,600	-	-	-	Balance to slip into 2013/14.
	000 000	0.000				
	808,280	2,600				

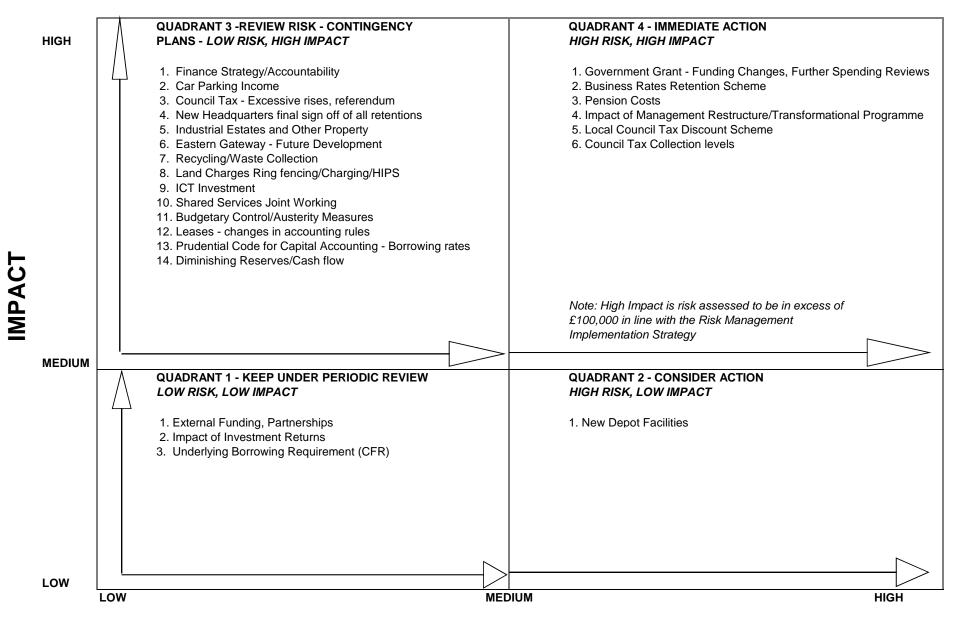
### WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

### CABINET PROPOSALS 2012/2013 ONWARDS PROGRESS REPORT

		<u>PROGRESS REPORT</u>							
				CHAN	GES IN RESO	URCES		Q3 2012/13 Budget	Comments re Achievement
Cost Centre	ACTIVITY AND DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE OPTION	KEY	2012/13 £	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	After 31/03/2016 £	Monitoring Forecast Achievement	
SECU	RING THE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY OF THE D	ISTR	ICT						
R705	Regeneration of Economic Development								
	Establishment of a generic fund to support economic investment and regeneration initiatives to deliver the Corporate Plan priority 'To Secure The Economic Prosperity of the District' through ReWyre led initiatives. To include consideration of Enterprise Units from the Capital Funding.	С	800,000	-	-	-	-	400,000	This is funding for the State of the Area projects and has bee set aside for as number of projects that will come forward during the next financial year. At its meeting in December 2012 the Cabinet Review Panagreed to set aside £400,000 to be rolled into the next financial year to support the incubator units project.
		R S	234,800	169,600	169,600	169,600	169,600	234,800	Full spend will be achieved
	Regeneration of Economic Development Match Funding to support the work of the Worcestershire and Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership and the West Midlands' Councils European Service.	C R S	- 15,000 -	- 15,000 -	- 15,000 -	- 15,000 -	- 15,000 -	15,000	Full spend will be achieved
DELIV	ERING TOGETHER, WITH LESS								
	Reduction in Council Members	С	-	-	-	-	-		
	Reduction in Council Members in line with the	R	-	-	-	50,000 CR	60,000 CR	-	Anticipated Review in 2014
	Boundary Commission review.  Community Transfer of Assets and Services	S	-	-	-	-	-		Savingsnow rephased into
	High level target for savings to be achieved through a series of strategic initiatives to transfer assets and services to local community groups and parish councils.	C R S	- 10,000 CR	30,000 CR	50,000 CR	- 50,000 CR	- 50,000 CR	-	2013/14
R335	Wyre Forest Forward Programme Savings from the introduction from roll-out of Wyre Forest Forward Programme across the Council	C R S	- 100,000 CR 4 CR	- 250,000 CR 10 CR	- 500,000 CR 20 CR	- 500,000 CR 20 CR	- 500,000 CR 20 CR	-	Savings rephased across future budget years to allow for full consideration of all options
R335	Grant Aid to Parish Council's Support provided for Parish Councils at the level of 10% of the parish/town precept.	C R S	40,000	-	-	-	-	37,800	Full spend for 2013-14 £38,700 Budget reduced at Revised Estimates
IMPD	· · ·			I .	ı	I .	I		
	OVING COMMUNITY WELL-BEING			ı	1	ı	Г	T	Ion
R085 R140	Sports and Leisure Centres  New leisure centre to meet the future needs of the District including a swimming pool, fitness suite and 5 aside football provision.	C R	1,494,000 -	130,000 50,000	8,511,000 300,000	- 38,000 CR	- 38,000 CR	244,000	Site acquisition, surveys, consultants fees - Q4 2012/13 & Q1 2013/14. £1,250,000 slipped into next financial year.
	Paddling Pools	S	-	-	-	-	-		Scheme approved by Cabinet.
	To undertake a strategic review of the current facilities and consider options in relation to splash parks.	C R	300,000 26,000	- 26,000	26,000	- 26,000	- 26,000	3,750 -	Capital new build work to start in April 2013 (Revenue costs are for associated Borrowing
	Carbon Management Plan	S	-	-	-	-	-		costs) Engine Management System
	Participation in the Carbon Trust Public Sector Carbon Management initiative in 2011 with the aim of producing a 5 year Carbon Management Plan for 2012 onwards.	C R S	111,520 26,450 -	154,250 21,800 -	8,640 47,680 CR -	21,950 73,520 CR -	1,010 74,860 CR -	27,000 -	and Electric Bin Lifts Ordered. Remaining budget re-profiled over Financial Strategy
	Reinstate Community Leadership Fund Reinstate a fund of £1,000 per Member for 2012/13.	C R S	- 42,000 -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	42,000	Full spend will be achieved
	Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS) Introduction of Local Authority Mortgage Scheme in line with recent report considered by Cabinet, exact detail to be determined. Costs of Borrowing to be funded by Commercial deposit rate plus premium rate received (early indications are that potential defaults should also be covered by premium rate)	C R S	1,000,000						The scheme launch has been deferred due to the diminished differential between the broker/commercial rate Lloyds Bank are currently able to offe and the costs of borrowing currently available.
	TOTALS	C R	3,705,520 274,250	284,250 2,400	8,519,640 87,080 CR	21,950 500,920 CR	1,010 512,260 CR	674,750 329,600	
								,	
		S	4.00 CR	10.00 CR	20.00 CR	20.00 CR	20.00 CR	-	i

KEY - Changes in Resources
C Capital
R Revenue
S Staffing - Stated in FTEs

#### **BUDGET RISK MATRIX QTR3 - 2012/2015**



**RISK** 

### BUDGETARY RESPONE TO EACH RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUE IN ORDER OF QUADRANT

ISSUE	BUDGETARY RESPONSE
Quadrant 1 - Low Risk, Low Impact	Keep under periodic review
External Funding, Partnerships	Continue to evaluate sustainability of each scheme as part of project appraisal.
2. Impact of Investment Returns	Continue to monitor and report as appropriate. Rate remaining at 0.50%. Balances available for investment are reducing over the MTFP and this together with the lower returns has been taken into account in the base budget.
Underlying Borrowing Requirement (CFR)	We continue to work with Sector in this area. The rising CFR over the term of the Budget Strategy will be carefully monitored in close liaison with Sector to gauge both the timing and type of external
Quadrant 2 - High Risk, Low Impact	borrowing. Consider Action
New Depot Facilities	Under consideration as part of longer term Budget Process
Quadrant 3 - Low Risk, High Impact	Review Risk - Contingency Plans
Finance Strategy/Accountability     Car Parking Income	Council are required to adopt a three year Balanced Budget Strategy.  Usages/Income level closely monitored, have been adversely affected during current economic downturn, this, together with alternative usage of car parking
3. Council Tax - Excessive rises, referendum	Low risk due to political prudence/Key Commitments.
New Headquarters final sign off of all retentions	Managed closely by RLB and Project Steering Group
5. Industrial Estates and Other Property	Managed through Property Disposal Strategy
6. Eastern Gateway - Future Development	Development opportunities continue to be explored.
7. Recycling/Waste Collection	Review of revised working patterns in progress and further efficiencies planned for 2013/14
Land Charges Ring fencing /Charging/HIPs	Reduced income allowed for within Base Budget reduces the scale of any challenge.
9. ICT Investment	ICT Strategy nearly fully rolled out, post benefits review in progress
10. Shared Services Joint working	New Shared Services for 2012/13 include Emergency Planning, these partnerships continue to contribute to collaborative efficiencies but will be monitored to ensure risk is managed and mitigated.
11. Budgetary Control/Austerity Measures	Expenditure Controls in place should reduce non essential expenditure, monthly budget monitoring reports also well in progress to provide more management information
12. Leases – changes in accounting rules	Planned changes for the future accounting for leases could impact on the revenue budget, this will be assessed as the timescale for potential introduction in 2014 approaches
13. Prudential Code for Capital Accounting – Borrowing rates	External borrowing is now imminent, rates remain low but the economy is still volatile and future rates difficult to predict; Sector continue to provide technical
14. Diminishing Reserves/Cash flow	advice Cash flow management will be tighter given reduction in capital and revenue reserves and use of the Sector Cash flow model is being trialled to improve management information to help mitigate any risk in this area
Quadrant 4 - High Risk, High Impact	Immediate Action
Government Grant –Funding Changes, further Spending Reviews	Significant issue given the scale of the Spending deficit, Wyre Forest Forward coordinating Councils future Plans
2. Business Rates Retention Scheme	New Funding arrangements introduce uncertainty and risk, the decision to join the Worcestershire Pool should mitigate this, together with our robust
3. Pension Costs	The impact of the Triannuall revaluation as at 1 April 2013 will be carefully assessed in liaison with Worcestershire County Council, the pension authority
4. Impact of Management Restructure/Transformational Programme	Wyre Forest Forward is managing the Transformation Process including the Management Restructure to align with the Budget process.
5. Local Council Tax Discount Scheme	The impact of the Local Scheme will be kept under review by the Director of Resources
6. Council Tax Collection levels	Assumptions in relation to decreased collection rates have been made in the Council Tax Base calculations as a result of the Local Council Tax Discount
Quadrant 4 - High Risk, High Impact	Scheme and these will be carefully managed and reported on.  Immediate Action
Capital Receipts - Realisation of to fund expenditure	Capital Programme funding reflects realistic timescale for the realisation of
9. Environment and Economic Regeneration including STC4	asset disposal receipts. Temporary borrowing will be used when necessary.  The Council continues to be proactive in this area and this is closely monitored by Cobinet CMT.
10. Assumptions on Pay inflation	by Cabinet/CMT 1% assumed for 2013/14 and 1.5% thereafter. This will be kept under review
11. Changes to Housing Benefit Scheme – universal credit/localisation of support for Council Tax from 2013	The major overhaul of the benefits systems from 2013 will be carefully managed and monitored
12. Recovery of Icelandic Investments	The confirmation of the Council's preferential status in late Oct 2011 means the majority of the investments should now be recovered.
Wyre Forest Forward Efficiency savings     Leisure Future Service Provision	Progress continues to be monitored and reported regularly to members Project Group meets every 2 weeks, site acquisition well underway and
15. Homelessness	appropriate use of external consultants The impending Welfare Reform, Universal Credit and Council Tax Benefit Reform could all increase the number of Homelessness cases within the district. This will be carefully monitored and managed by the Housing Team

### WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

### CABINET 26<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2013

### Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy – Consultation Draft (January 2013)

	OPEN
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY	All
STRATEGY THEME:	
CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITY:	All
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Anne Hingley
DIRECTOR:	Mike Parker
CONTACT OFFICER:	Jonathan Elmer
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1: Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy – Consultation Draft (January 2013) Appendix 2: Officer responses to Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy – Consultation Draft (January 2013)
	The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details)

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide an update on the latest version of Worcestershire County Council's Infrastructure Strategy (attached at Appendix 1) and to seek Cabinet's approval to submit comments (attached at Appendix 2) to Worcestershire County Council on the latest consultation document.

### 2. **RECOMMENDATION**

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE that:

2.1 The Director of Economic Prosperity & Place be given delegated authority to submit representations, the principles of which are set out in Appendix 2 of the report, to Worcestershire County Council following feedback from a working group of members to ensure a response in the strongest possible terms.

### 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Members may recall that a report introducing the County Council's Infrastructure Planning work was presented to Cabinet in July 2012. At this time the County had produced a "strategic options consultation document" which the District Council submitted a number of representations on. This latest version of the document begins to put the options that were considered in July into a more formal Strategy. As identified in the previous report, Infrastructure is of critical crosscutting importance

- across Worcestershire as it provides the support services that are necessary to ensure sustainable and long term economic and social growth, as well as creating quality places where people want to live and work.
- 3.2 The strategy references a number of key infrastructure areas, which are important to the future sustainable development of the District. Whilst a number of these are managed by the County Council (e.g. Highways, Waste and Education) many of the other areas are managed by separate service providers (e.g. Energy and Health). Therefore, although these other infrastructure areas are referenced within the document it is important to note that there are separate mechanisms by which the future of these services is governed. The decision making by these organisations will have a direct impact on the future development of the District and although this document will have limited impact on those decisions, it is felt that they are rightfully referenced within the Strategy due to their strategic importance and impact.
- 3.3 Given the potential importance and influence of this Strategy in terms of future decision making on infrastructure, it is felt that a number of comments should be submitted to the County Council for their consideration. These proposed comments are discussed in greater detail within the main body of this report.

### Infrastructure and the Development Plan Process

3.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies the importance of ensuring infrastructure is considered through the plan making process. Paragraph 162 identifies that:

"Local planning authorities should work with other authorities and providers to:

- Assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure for transport, water supply, wastewater and its treatment, energy (including heat), telecommunications, utilities, waste, health, social care, education, flood risk, and its ability to meet forecast demands; and
- Take account of the need for strategic infrastructure including nationally significant infrastructure within their areas."
- 3.5 The County Council's document has been produced in order to ensure that the strategic infrastructure issues that exist within the County are understood and properly managed, as required by the NPPF. The more detailed District specific issues have been covered by the District Council's own Infrastructure Planning work, as set out below.

### **Wyre Forest District Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)**

3.6 Members may recall that a District specific Infrastructure Delivery Plan was presented to Cabinet in December 2012. This plan provided an in depth look at all the different types of infrastructure that exist within the District and identified where there were concerns and issues in relation to future provision. This document is a 'living document' and requires review and redrafting periodically. Officers are currently in the process of updating the plan, which picks up on new information since the last version was drafted. The update will also include a number of key points that were discussed when the document was presented in December 2012. This includes

further information in relation to transport, emergency services, schools, libraries and water management. However, as identified at paragraph 3.2 of this report, it should be noted that the information included within the District's IDP will be by way of a reference to the decisions made by other service providers and not an endorsement of their proposals.

3.7 The ongoing work on the District wide Infrastructure Plan will ensure that there is a clear synergy with the County Council's work and will also provide clear evidence for the Council to be able to bring forward the Community Infrastructure Levy.

### 4. KEY ISSUES

### **North Worcestershire Co-operation**

4.1 It should be noted from the outset that the response to the County Council's consultation document has been prepared in conjunction with the other North Worcestershire authorities (Bromsgrove and Redditch). This is because there are shared concerns with the current format and content of the document which has implications across the whole of North Worcestershire. The response has also been prepared in conjunction with the North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWEDR) team, given the importance the strategy could have on the economic fortunes of the North Worcestershire Area.

### **The Consultation Document**

- 4.2 The County Council's current consultation document is the latest version of the Worcestershire wide Infrastructure Strategy. The consultation document begins to identify the strategy for considering new infrastructure provision within the whole of the County.
- 4.3 The consultation document, attached at Appendix 1, is structured as follows:
  - Introduction Setting the context
  - Part A: Worcestershire's Infrastructure Needs
  - Part B: Our Challenge and Proposed Strategic Approach
  - Part C: Delivering the Strategy via four Economic Growth Areas
- 4.4 A number of comments have been made on each of these sections and this is discussed further in the next section of the report.

### Proposed responses to be submitted to the County Council

- 4.5 As identified above, the proposed responses to the consultation document have been prepared in conjunction with the other two North Worcestershire Authorities and the NWEDR team. The comments are therefore split into two. The first set of comments related to concerns of a shared nature about the document and its content with the second set of comments being specific to Wyre Forest District.
- 4.6 A summary of the main issues arising from the consultation document are identified below with the full comments proposed to be submitted to the County Council included at appendix 2 to this report.

### General

- 4.7 Officers are concerned that at present the document does not provide a clear and coherent strategy which will help to guide future investment decisions in infrastructure. Furthermore, it is concerning that the document does not currently identify some of the main strategic infrastructure priorities for North Worcestershire. It is felt that the strategy is attempting to cover too many areas and it is considered that it should be more focussed in its approach, picking up on key strategic projects within the County.
- 4.8 Linked to the above comment, it is also felt that the strategy should focus more on prioritising projects and delivery. This would then provide a clearer indication for public and private stakeholders to understand the constraints and opportunities that exist within the County in relation to infrastructure. This would also enable a more targeted approach to funding these infrastructure priorities to be realised. One way it is suggested that this could be achieved is by utilising the background paper titled 'Establishing Priorities' and including this as a key chapter in the main Strategy. Given the importance of prioritisation, it is felt that this should not be left as a background piece of work but instead be a central chapter within the main strategy.

### Content of the Document

4.9 In terms of the content of the document it is concerning that a number of key projects for the North of the County are absent from the Strategy. For example, there is no mention of the infrastructure required for Stourport Relief Road or Churchfields Masterplan Transport Improvements. These are considered to be strategic items of infrastructure that need referencing within the document. Furthermore, there is a concern that a number of the objectives included within the consultation document are not strategic in their nature, for example references to using SUDs in highways drainage; promoting the increased uptake of low emission vehicles; and encouraging the uptake of farm-based energy generation. Whilst a number of these topics are important considerations for the future of the County it is felt that this particular document should focus on the key strategic issues rather than some of these other, more detailed areas of work. Furthermore, it is felt that may of these objectives could easily be brought forward without the need for inclusion within this particular document.

### Transport

- 4.10 Improving the existing transport network is the major infrastructure issue for the North Worcestershire Authorities, so there is concern that this section within the Strategy is brief and lacking in detail. This is compounded by the fact that other sections (Green Infrastructure / Water Management) are far more detailed and provided many more objectives for delivering improvements. It is also concerning that the section on transport infrastructure does not include clear objectives in relation to road improvements, which are considered to be vital to delivering the future economic growth and success of development within the area. Transport is the key infrastructure priority for the North Worcestershire area and therefore this should be expressly reflected within the Worcestershire wide Infrastructure Strategy. In addition to the schemes currently identified for the Wyre Forest, it is considered that the following should also be referenced within the Strategy:
  - Stourport Relief Road

- Re-dualling of the A449 / A456
- Kidderminster Ring Road Improvements (including Churchfields Masterplan)
- Kidderminster Railway Station upgrade
- 4.11 Whilst it is recognised that not all projects have available funding and that decisions on priorities need to be made, it is felt that these schemes should be referenced within the Strategy. This is because these projects are seen as strategically important and their implementation would have a beneficial impact over a number of administrative boundaries and are therefore of importance to Worcestershire as a whole. Furthermore, the inclusion of the identified schemes within this document will ensure consistency of approach across the two Local Enterprise Partnership areas, enabling a clear message to be sent in relation to priorities for infrastructure.

### **Funding**

4.12 The document provides a useful section identifying the funding sources that may be available in the future to help deliver infrastructure projects. However, it is felt that this should include further detail with regard to specific projects that these various mechanisms could fund. Whilst it is appreciated that funding mechanisms are difficult to identify with a great deal of certainty it is felt that the strategic sites should include a list of potential funding mechanisms in order to provide some certainty that they can be delivered within the 15 year time horizon. Linked to this section, it is felt that the document should also provide further commentary in relation to the role of both the Worcestershire and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). This is because the LEPs have already been the source of funding for infrastructure within the County and it is considered that other sources will be made available via these bodies over the lifetime of this strategy.

### Economic Growth Area – 'Game Changers'

- 4.13 The final section of the document focuses on what is termed the 'Game Changer' sites, of which there are four identified within Worcestershire:
  - Worcester Central (land around M5, Junction 6);
  - Redditch Eastern Gateway (Land around Winyates Triangle);
  - Kidderminster Enterprise Zone;
  - Malvern Technology Park (Land around Malvern Science Park and Qinetig).
- 4.14 Whilst the approach to focussing the Strategy on key 'game-changer' sites is generally welcomed and supported, it is concerning that there is very little detail provided within this section and where information is included it is often confusing or inaccurate. A detailed response to the section on the "Kidderminster Enterprise Zone" is included at Appendix 2, with some of the key concerns as follows:
  - The section has a number of misleading titles including "Kidderminster Enterprise Zone" as well as referring to the Kidderminster Area, 'including the Enterprise Zone'. This is factually incorrect as Kidderminster does not benefit from an Enterprise Zone;
  - The map included in this section covers a large area of Kidderminster and therefore it will be important that this section, when finalised, picks up on all of the opportunities and constraints that exist within the corridor. It should also

be noted that the map included within the Strategy covers a larger area than the District defined 'South Kidderminster Enterprise Park'. This in itself is not an issue if the objective of the map is to show other key project areas within Kidderminster. However, if the plan is not to focus on the SKEP area but include a wider boundary than the difference between the two designations will need to be articulated in the Strategy in order to avoid confusion and increase clarity between work at a County and District level;

- The table included at page 92 is difficult to understand as there is no
  introduction or context associated with it. This results in the table being
  unclear in relation to its function and what it is trying to show. For example, the
  table is a mix of existing and proposed development sites that are difficult to
  understand. Furthermore, much of the information in the table is absent.
- Detailed comments are also made in relation to the table on Page 93, some of which are as follows:
  - There is no context or introduction for this table and the information included is fairly sparse and in some areas inaccurate;
  - The table refers to the existence of a Local Development Order, but this
    does not cover all of the area identified on the map at page 91 and
    therefore this could cause confusion for future investors in this location;
- 4.15 Overall it is considered that the whole of the 'Game Changer' section of the Strategy requires an overhaul so that clear and accurate messages that link to known projects at a local level can be included. It is noted at Paragraph 16.4 of the consultation document that further work is anticipated to take place in relation to this section and the North Worcestershire authorities would welcome the opportunity to help draft this section of the Strategy in conjunction with the County Council, in order to benefit from combined expertise and knowledge at different authority levels.

### 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The implementation of infrastructure schemes in the future could have a financial implication for the authority but this will vary on a site-by-site basis. Furthermore, infrastructure improvements could have a potential positive financial benefit through an improved and more attractive environment for business.

### 6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no legal requirements for Worcestershire County Council to produce an Infrastructure Plan but the strategy has been devised taking into account the advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

### 7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken to inform the preparation of the Council's Development Plan Documents. As the County Council's Strategic Infrastructure Plan forms part of this wider Development Plan process it is considered that further work is not required for the Infrastructure Plan. Therefore, it is considered

that the same conclusions can be drawn for this piece of work, which was that there are no adverse impacts in terms of equality.

### 8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 There is a risk that without a coherent strategy for future strategic infrastructure requirements being provided that opportunities for implementing new schemes could be lost and investment not forthcoming. It is considered important, therefore, that the District Council continues to influence this process to ensure that the projects that are of importance to the future sustainable development of the District are prioritised. Without undertaking this work there is a risk that opportunities would be lost for bringing forward key projects of a strategic nature and the investment targeted to other areas in the County.

### 9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 It is considered that the Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy is a key piece of work and the District Council is pleased to see this being progressed. However, there remain reservations about the format and content of the current strategy and it is considered that a greater emphasis should be placed on strategic priorities linked to known projects at a District level. It is also concerning that a number of the issues raised by the District Council at the previous stage of consultation have not been addressed.
- 9.2 The proposed responses set out at Appendix 2 raise a number of important issues. In particular, officers have raised a number of concerns about the current format and content of the Strategy. The responses are, however, intended to be proactive and useful for the County Council and with this in mind there is a clear commitment from officer's across the whole of North Worcestershire in offering support to the County Council in the finalisation of the Strategy.

### 10. CONSULTEES

- North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration Section
- Planning Policy Manager, Bromsgrove District Council
- Planning Policy Manager, Redditch Borough Council
- Section 151 Officer

### 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Needs and Issues Research Paper (2012 update)
   <a href="http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/pdf/Need%20&%20Issues%20combined">http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/pdf/Need%20&%20Issues%20combined</a>
   June%202012.pdf
- Establishing Priorities Research Paper (2012 update)
   <a href="http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/pdf/Establishing%20Priorities\_June%202">http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/pdf/Establishing%20Priorities\_June%202</a>
   012.pdf
- Infrastructure Funding & Delivery Mechanisms Research Paper (2012 update)
   <a href="http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/pdf/Infrastructure%20Funding%20and%2">http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/pdf/Infrastructure%20Funding%20and%2</a>
   ODelivery%20Mechanisms June%202012.pdf

- Planning for Infrastructure, Strategic Options Consultation, June 2012
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- Wyre Forest District Infrastructure Delivery Plan <a href="http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/cms/non-lgnl-pages/planning-and-regulatory-ser-vic/planning-policy/idoc.ashx?docid=a878051a-29c8-4287-998a-d741ee81d875-2.pdf</a>
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Planning for

# Infrastructure

in Worcestershire

WORCESTERSHIRE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY



Consultation Draft
January 2013



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### Introduction

"Infrastructure networks form the backbone of a modern economy and are a major determinant of growth and productivity. However ... development of these networks has been fragmented and reactive. Investment has not kept up with the needs of a growing population. [We] need an infrastructure capable of supporting a dynamic, modern economy."

(HM Treasury (2010) Strategy for National Infrastructure)

### 1. Context

- 1.1. Infrastructure networks are crucial to Worcestershire's long-term economic growth and social well-being. It helps to create places where people want to live, work and thrive. The quality, location and capacity of our infrastructure impacts business investment decisions; while weak networks can restrict growth, high-quality infrastructure can unlock development and boost private sector investment, with multiplier effects far exceeding original costs.
- 1.2. Over the last five years the economy and industry have seen unprecedented changes, significantly affecting the public and private sectors' ability to invest and grow. Infrastructure investment is seen as a key driver for the economy, but businesses feel current government policies and interventions fail to adequately meet the scale of the challenge.
- 1.3. In order to ensure our future networks are fit for purpose, we need to move away from a 'business-as-usual' approach, towards more considered infrastructure planning and delivery. Population growth, demographic change, new development and climate change all pose challenges to the capacity, resilience and distribution of our existing infrastructure. Alongside the challenges, however, are significant opportunities; regulatory reform, changes to the makeup of industry, and advances in technology offer new approaches to provision. Worcestershire's approach to infrastructure planning should:
  - Accelerate delivery of priority development sites/growth locations

- Use existing infrastructure smartly
- Result in infrastructure resilient to climate change and demand/supply side shocks
- Protect and enhance Worcestershire's environment
- Reduce carbon emissions
- Reduce delivery and running costs of infrastructure
- Increase the value of projects through better design
- Improve resilience and future flexibility
- 1.4. Creating efficient and sustainable infrastructure networks that meet these requirements requires an integrated approach. A co-ordinated infrastructure plan can harness public and private sector buy-in to the implications of growth, recognising the resource constraints on long-term viability. Because the co-ordination, prioritisation and implementation of strategic infrastructure are best carried out at a larger-than-local scale, Worcestershire County Council (WCC) is working in co-operation with district councils and infrastructure providers to produce a county-wide Infrastructure Strategy. Working on a county basis aligns with the coverage of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Worcestershire Partnership's Place-Shaping Group<sup>1</sup> (PSG).
- 1.5. The Strategy aims to set out a clear framework for the provision of infrastructure over the next 15 years or so. WCC's Strategic Planning team is preparing the Strategy, in consultation with public and private sector partners (including representatives of the Local Enterprise Partnership<sup>2</sup>, the Place Shaping Group of the Local Strategic Partnership, Local Authorities and infrastructure providers).
- 1.6. The Strategy is being produced in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012). The Framework advocates informal joint infrastructure and investment plans, co-operation between upper and lower-tier councils, and collaborative working

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Place Shaping Group brings together Worcestershire's public, private and third sectors to remove barriers to economic development and to consider planning, housing, transport and infrastructure collectively.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> All references to "the LEP" include both the Worcestershire LEP and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP (of which the three north Worcestershire councils are also part). The geographical coverage of the Strategy, however, is Worcestershire-only.

between planning authorities to deliver sustainable development in consultation with LEPs and Local Nature Partnerships.

### 1.7. The Strategy will:

- Identify needs and issues relating to the provision and quality of infrastructure.
- Set a framework for innovative approaches to managing and delivering infrastructure.
- Co-ordinate and concentrate partner investment on strategic needs .
- Maximise economic benefit and resource efficiencies (reflecting the economic downturn and reduced public spending).
- Provide the economic and policy context for private and public sector investment in infrastructure to support development, growth and regeneration across
   Worcestershire.
- Support external funding bids through an evidence-based approach to infrastructure,
   demonstrating partners' commitment to investment priorities.
- Identify priorities for efficient, sustainable infrastructure delivery for
   Worcestershire's four economic 'game-changing' areas to enhance their economic potential.
- 1.8. This Strategy aims to clarify the current and future infrastructure requirements in Worcestershire and to co-ordinate activity to enable accelerated delivery of the important but as yet un-programmed infrastructure. Infrastructure planning to support Local Plans (formerly known as Local Development Frameworks) is the responsibility of the district, borough and city councils in Worcestershire; individual<sup>3</sup> Infrastructure Delivery Plans (IDPs) remain the primary information source on the deliverability of Local Plans and the programme, costing and delivery dates of specific infrastructure projects.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A collective IDP is being developed by South Worcestershire authorities.

- 1.9. This Strategy is separate from the formal planning documents and accompanying infrastructure delivery plans being prepared by Worcestershire's district, city and borough council's, but has been prepared with a view to being complimentary to such plans.
- 1.10. This strategy is not intended to draw together the work of the districts on a county-wide basis. Rather, WCC has assisted the local planning authorities in Worcestershire in identifying infrastructure requirements and has helped forge relationships with infrastructure providers. It should be noted that this document is not a technical planning document. Instead, it serves to challenge the business-as-usual approach to delivery of infrastructure and to influence infrastructure providers, developers and statutory planning documents.

### How the Strategy has been developed

- 1.11. Background work on the Strategy dates back to a consultant's study of infrastructure requirements, commissioned in 2008 to inform Worcestershire's response to the Regional Spatial Strategy. This early study has been built upon and the scope broadened through the work leading up the preparation of this draft Strategy, and the approach and content has been refined through various stages of consultation. A full timeline showing development of the evidence base and Strategy, and who has been consulted at each stage, is provided in the Statement of Co-operation appended to this Strategy. In summary, the Strategy has been developed through the following stages:
  - <u>'Needs and Issues' research paper</u>
     Setting out a comprehensive assessment of our understanding infrastructure needs,
     developed through extensive cooperation and discussion with our partners
  - Strategic Options consultation (summer 2012)
     This demonstrated strong support for a strategic approach to planning for infrastructure across Worcestershire. There were also concerns over the added value of collating infrastructure needs on a county-wide basis and the potential for conflicting priorities in terms of delivery timescales of different public/private sector bodies and local authorities.

### • <u>Drafting of Strategy (autumn 2012)</u>

As a result of the consultation, the scope of the Infrastructure Strategy has been amended. The Strategy focuses only on those infrastructure themes which provide the greatest challenge to delivery of economic growth and which have the maximum impact on performance of Worcestershire's economy. The Strategy identifies gaps and explores opportunities for the efficient delivery of infrastructure to support the delivery of the primary economic growth areas in Worcestershire, as identified by the Place Shaping Group.

### • <u>Statement of Cooperation</u> (winter 2012)

The statement details the stakeholders who have been engaged in the Strategy's preparation, and how they have been involved.

• Sustainability Statement (winter 2012)

Sets out how a more sustainable approach to infrastructure provision can give environmental, economic and social benefits.

### 2. Structure of the Strategy

### 2.1. This Strategy is formed of three parts:

Part A sets out the current infrastructure needs, issues and funding considerations, focussing mainly on those strategic infrastructure themes offering the greatest contribution Worcestershire's economy (transport, energy, flood defence, water supply and treatment, communications, waste management and green infrastructure). The Strategy also recognises the strong interactions and mutual inter-dependencies with other infrastructure (such as education, health or built leisure). As for the strategic infrastructure, this 'social infrastructure' also requires capital spending and a co-ordinated approach to delivery.

**Part B** examines, for each theme, the opportunities that changing legislation, industry structures, technologies, etc. could offer for more sustainable, efficient and integrated infrastructure delivery. It includes a series of Strategic Objectives and sets out how these objectives could be delivered. The section concludes by considering funding

options, and investigating how new partnership approaches can bring together the public and private sectors to accelerate delivery.

**Part C** considers the objectives in the context of four sites, and their hinterlands, that have been prioritised by Worcestershire's Place Shaping Group. This section is at an early stage of development and is a work in progress. Through the consultation process and continuing dialogue with our partners, we are seeking contributions on the key opportunities, challenges and issues affecting these sites.

2.2. The remainder of this introduction sets out the challenges Worcestershire is facing in terms of population growth, new development and climate change, and sets the context for the Strategy.

### 3. Key challenges

### **Population increase**

- 3.1. Over the next ten years, significant population growth and demographic shift is expected in Worcestershire. The current population of Worcestershire stands at around 566,600 people (2011 mid-year estimates) and is anticipated to rise to 593,800 by 2021 (approximately a 5% increase). The map below shows how population has changed between 2001 and 2010.
- 3.2. Population growth will increase the demand for improvements and development of new infrastructure with more pressure on major transport routes, more residents requiring emergency services, etc. Demographic shift with ageing population in rural areas and younger resident profiles in some of the more urban settlements will also need to be reflected in the future delivery of infrastructure, for example through the application of different models of service provision in health and social care.

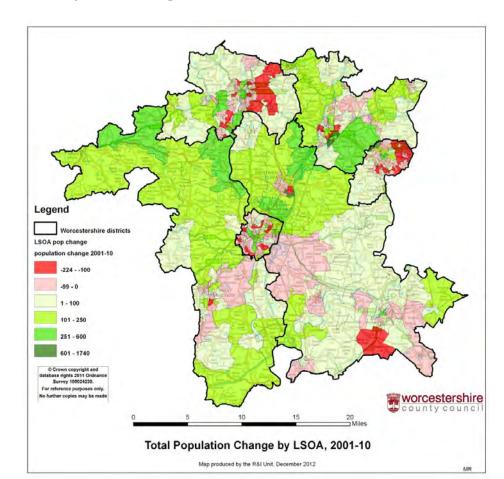


Figure 1 - Total Population Change in Worcestershire, 2001-10

### **New Development**

- 3.3. Growth needs to be managed in a way that meets economic, housing, social and regeneration pressures. To ensure growth is sustainable, it must respect the environmental and cultural character of the county and must be accompanied by sufficient infrastructure.
- 3.4. The level of housing and employment development required as a result of population change is determined at a district level through the local planning process. The quantum and location of new development will be set out in Development Plans, supported by district-level Infrastructure Delivery Plans (IDPs). In Worcestershire, there is currently one adopted Core Strategy (for Wyre Forest district). Bromsgrove and Redditch districts are working on their respective Development Plans but do not yet have fixed timetables for adoption. The South Worcestershire authorities (Malvern Hills district, Worcester City and

Wychavon district councils) are working jointly on a South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP), due for adoption in late 2013.

3.5. The map below sets out the key housing, employment and retail developments in Worcestershire anticipated to come forward in the next 14 to 18 years<sup>4</sup>

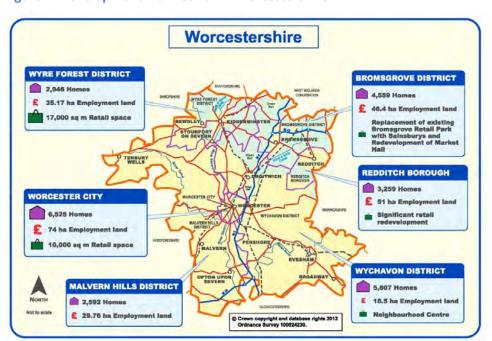


Figure 2: Development Planned for in Worcestershire

3.6. The detailed locations and numbers for the anticipated developments for the main settlements in each of the districts are available in Chapter 13 of the Needs and Issues Research Paper.

### Climate Change

3.7. When considering climate change we should take into account not only the human impact on the environment through emissions from the use of fossil fuels and other practices, but also the impact that changes in climate are likely to have on society. We have already seen the impact severe weather events have on our infrastructure and how this then affects society, the economy and aspects of the natural environment. Climate

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Development Plan timescales: Bromsgrove (2006-2026), Redditch (2011-2030), Wyre Forest (2006-2026), Worcester City (2006-2030), Wychavon (2006-2030), Malvern Hills (2006-2030)

projections indicate an increased frequency and intensity of these severe weather incidents, making building resilience even more important.

- 3.8. Severe weather conditions bring costs and disruption to infrastructure networks. This can include extremes in temperatures affecting our transport networks, excess water flooding electricity substations and droughts limiting water abstraction. These disruptions can impact upon the everyday life of residents and the running of businesses. The affected infrastructure services will require more investment in order to bring them back to use. Building infrastructure resilient to these types of events is therefore key to the economic success of Worcestershire.
- 3.9. Development of new infrastructure offers opportunities not only to build resilience to expected changes, but also to limit the impact the development has on the environment and to reduce emissions. Taking action to mitigate the impact of climate change now will reduce the need for infrastructure networks to adapt in the future.
- 3.10. Building increased levels of resilience and efficiency in infrastructure developments will ultimately add to the quality of the development and help to ensure business continuity.
- 3.11. The way infrastructure is designed and located needs to be fit for purpose to cope with a changing climate as well as other changes (such as expected increases in energy prices). The innovative solutions to design and construction of development (such as prestressed railway tracks that can cope with a wide spectrum of temperatures, or green roofs which slow water run-off) may be an option to reduce the problem. In most cases the solutions to these issues already exist elsewhere, but are perhaps not widely used in the UK market.

### **Fiscal Austerity**

3.12. Investment in infrastructure can provide a platform for increased economic growth and provide businesses with the services they need in order to locate or grow in the county. This infrastructure includes digital communications networks, quality reliable transport networks, and cheap, secure energy.

- 3.13. Funding is limited. Financial restraint within the public sector means there is little capital for investment in infrastructure, whilst borrowing in the private sector is restricted by concerns over risk.
- 3.14. We need to use funding and existing assets more efficiently, increasing productivity and performance and reducing duplication. There is also a need to explore the use of public/private partnerships and the commissioning of services, which could include the the transfer of services to be delivered by and for the benefit of the local community.

## Part A: Worcestershire's Infrastructure Needs

### 4. Context

- 4.1. The current picture in relation to the infrastructure requirements across the county has been set out in the **Needs and Issues Research Paper**. The evidence base collated in the paper is to inform both the development of the Worcestershire-wide Strategy and the districts' IDPs.
- 4.2. Worcestershire's infrastructure operates within constantly-evolving demographics, developments, policy changes, funding opportunities and stakeholders. Therefore, this evidence can be only a snapshot in time and some of its detail can change. It does not form a complete picture because there are areas where information is not available. The information in this chapter illustrates the infrastructure needs, issues and funding considerations for each of the infrastructure themes and, for the full overview, it should be read together with the **Needs and Issues Research Paper**.
- 4.3. Table 1 below sets out the indicative costs, funding secured and current funding gap.
- 4.4. It is important to note that while this table suggests there is a large funding gap, there are many funding sources likely to come forward that have not been taken into account at this stage. For example, Worcestershire has a revolving Growing Places Fund of £5.54 million, which will be used to invest in infrastructure to kick-start projects.

  Additionally, all six Worcestershire districts are currently preparing evidence to assess the viability of charging the Community Infrastructure Levy. This could provide a significant income stream over the period of the strategy and, along with other funding sources identified throughout the document, could help to fill the gap identified.

Table 1: Infrastructure requirements by theme

Topic Area	Cost	Funding Secured	Funding Gap
Transport	At least £385m	c. £35m	At least £350m
Energy	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Water Supply and Waste Water	At least £11.8m	£7.5m	£4.3m
Flood Risk	Unknown	£13.3m	Unknown
Broadband	£20 to £25m	£11.85	£8.15 to £13.15m
Waste Management	£190m to £230m	Unknown	None Expected
Green Infrastructure	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Education	£107.5m	Up to £73.7m	At least £73.7m
Health and Social Care	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Libraries	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Built Leisure	£46.1 to £50.1m	At least £2.5m	£43.6m to £47.6m
Emergency Services	£32.27m	£10.5m	£21.77m
TOTAL	£792.67m to £841.67m	£154.35m	£501.52 to £510.52

- 4.5. The Strategy focuses on the strategic infrastructure themes offering the greatest contribution to the economic performance of Worcestershire (which include transport, energy, flood defence, water supply and treatment, broadband, waste management and green infrastructure). The Strategy also recognises the strong interactions and mutual interdependencies with other infrastructure areas (such as education, health or built leisure).
- 4.6. These areas, referred to as social infrastructure, also require capital spending and a co-ordinated approach to delivery. However, the detail around these themes will be done by Local Planning Authorities' Infrastructure through the preparation of Infrastructure Delivery Plans to support their Development Plans.
- 4.7. Worcestershire has a successful record of addressing infrastructure challenges, as illustrated by various case studies in this section.

### 5. Economic Infrastructure

### **Transport**

- 5.1. The capacity and reliability of the transport network is already a major concern in parts of Worcestershire. There are significant sections of the transport network which are currently at or approaching capacity.
- 5.2. New commercial and residential development in Worcestershire will add pressure to the local and regional network across all modes of transport, but in particular road, rail and local passenger transport. This pressure is expected to be greatest in and around the urban areas (Worcester, Redditch and Kidderminster) and along key inter-urban links (including the M5 between Junctions 4 & 5, 5&6 and 6 &7, and the M42 east of Junction 1) where most service and employment opportunities are located and where demands for travel are likely to be greatest, even with a dispersed pattern of growth.
- 5.3. The major issue for transport is availability of funding to finance transport schemes, which are typically large and expensive. Investment in transport is crucial; the quality and efficiency of transport infrastructure and services, and the comprehensiveness of the network, will influence the role transport plays and its contribution to the functioning of a successful economy.

### **Major schemes**

5.4. The major transport project coming forward is the redevelopment of Bromsgrove Rail Station (£14m). Other major schemes to come forward are Worcestershire Parkway Station (£20m) and improvements to Hoo Brook Link Road (c£20m).

### **Caste Study - Whittington Roundabout Improvement Scheme**

The Whittington roundabout is a key part of Worcester's transport network which suffers from traffic congestion, particularly in the morning and afternoon peaks. An improvement scheme to alleviate congestion at this location has been a strategic priority for the County Council. The key objective of this enhancement scheme is to alleviate congestion at Whittington Roundabout and provide the basis for future improvements to the Southern Link Road.

The new scheme provides segregated left filter lanes from the Crookbarrow Way (A4440) on to the Whittington Road (A4440 N), roundabout geometry modifications and road marking changes to facilitate right turn movements from Crookbarrow Way (A4440) towards M5 junction 7.

The enhancements to Whittington roundabout cost £1.7m. £1.3m of funding was secured from New Growth Point funding and supplemented by the New Homes Bonus with support from South Worcestershire Planning Authorities. The new roundabout layout was completed and in use by late August 2012.

Since August the benefits for network users in the area have been identified. Compared to the previous roundabout layout, there are now reduced delays and variations in journey times which results in less congestion at this key point on the Worcester transport network.

### **Energy**

- 5.5. National Grid Gas operates the national gas transmission network in England, and most of the distribution network in Worcestershire (part of the south east of the county falls under Wales and West Utilities). There are no foreseen problems with gas supply over the next 20 years, but growth in the larger settlements (Redditch, Worcester and Bromsgrove) will require network reinforcement to meet future development growth. There may be a timing issue between development coming forward and construction of high pressure pipelines or plants which typically require two to four years notice, although in some circumstances the project lead-time may exceed this period.
- 5.6. The electricity distribution system in Worcestershire is operated by Western Power Distribution. The transmission system is owned by National Grid and generation is owned and operated by a number of different companies. Some parts of the 66kV electricity

network in north Worcestershire are ageing and will require replacement over the next 5-10 years. Rural areas are typically served by long 11kV overhead lines, and have a low capacity from the substation. Local knowledge provides information on known 'weak' networks that are acting as constraints to existing businesses and future economic growth. A lack of clear direction in terms of commitments to development could act as a disincentive to distributors to provide a supply in any instance in which there is no proven end-user demand, such as an allocation of land for development in advance of a developer commitment.

- 5.7. It is estimated that Worcestershire has approximately 9.5MW of total installed capacity within the county, mainly derived from landfill gas generators. Technical research suggests that 3.5% of energy consumed could come from large-scale renewable energy within Worcestershire by 2026. The slow rate of development of large schemes to date means that the bulk of renewables development would need to come forward in the next 15 years to meet this proportion. Larger renewables are generally market-led and will be developed where the best and most accessible resources exist.
- 5.8. Resilience is a major issue for energy networks. Flood risk is being considered, and part of the design process of new primary substations takes flooding into account.
- 5.9. Worcestershire is reliant on a centralised energy system, importing almost all of its energy needs from outside its borders. The government is encouraging greater decentralisation of energy, and business and councils in Worcestershire agree that providing more of our energy needs within the county from zero and low-carbon sources could have wide-ranging benefits. A greater focus on local infrastructure, such as district heating and cooling networks and local energy generation, can help avoid the need for large-scale transmission infrastructure associated with centralised plant. This avoids unnecessary transmission losses and helps increase the relative efficiency of local projects.

### Case study - A Renewable Energy Strategy for Worcestershire



Alongside environmental benefits, the development of renewable energy presents a range of opportunities for Worcestershire's businesses, communities and public sector.

To capture these opportunities, Worcestershire County Council is leading on the production of a Renewable Energy Strategy that will outline how the county can secure the gains from renewables.

Properly planned, renewable energy in Worcestershire can:

- provide income generation and support for local businesses and jobs;
- increase self-sufficiency
- reduce carbon emissions
- create more efficient processes
- reduce waste
- help alleviate fuel poverty

The Strategy will identify the concerns and uncertainties over renewables which, if not properly managed, could create distrust among 'host' communities and could lead to poorly-planned projects.

The Strategy will foster a positive approach to renewables, supporting appropriate technologies and setting out how the public sector can help support local projects in a move towards greater decentralisation.

### **Water Supply and Waste Water**

- 5.10. Severn Trent Water Limited (STWL) provides the majority of clean potable water and treatment in Worcestershire, except for a small area of Bromsgrove supplied by South Staffordshire Water (SSW).
- 5.11. The latest assessment of supply/demand of water for the Severn Water Resource Zone (WRZ) identified sufficient supply to meet demand until 2013-14, but beyond this point the supply/demand balance becomes increasingly negative, reaching a projected shortfall of approximately 120ml/d (millions of litres per day) by 2035. Aquifers are under pressure in many areas including Kidderminster and Bromsgrove. Climate change, long-term water quality trends, and projected growth in demand across this zone could all impact upon future available supply.
- 5.12. Diffuse pollution from phosphates and nitrates are causing the most problems in Worcestershire's watercourses, with Worcestershire having the highest levels of these pollutants in the West Midlands. The majority of watercourses in Worcestershire are at a medium or high risk of not meeting the Water Framework Directive (WFD) objective expected. The WFD has set a target that all surface and ground waters should aim to reach 'good status' by 2015 and all water bodies must reach 'good' or 'high' status by 2027.
- 5.13. Present capacity within Sewage Treatment Works (STWs) varies across the county, with some STWs able to accommodate some development (Priest Bridge, Redditch and STWs in South Worcestershire), while others are at capacity or under pressure (Alvechurch, Fridge Green, Roundhill and Minworth). In all areas additional development will lead to a requirement for upgrades to sewage treatment works.
- 5.14. STWL is currently developing a Water Resources Plan for the next 25 years which aims to identify the best mix of cost-effective solutions to addressing water pollution, water demand and climate change impacts.
- 5.15. The movement of water is reliant upon existing infrastructure, such as pump capacities and pipe size, which may act as a limiting factor to future development.

5.16. More emphasis on sustainable water management can have a positive impact on water quality and water supply and demand balance in the county. It will play an increasing role in recharging both groundwater and watercourses, providing opportunity for infiltration of surface water into soil, to replenish groundwater and help to maintain base flows in rivers.

### **Major schemes**

5.17. Major future schemes for water supply include various upgrades to pump capacity and sizes across the county. Major upgrades to the Sewage Treatment Works (including Roundhill and Minworth) are also planned across Worcestershire. The estimated cost of these schemes could total £11.8m.

### **Flood Risk**

- 5.18. Approximately 10% of the land area of Worcestershire is at risk of pluvial (surface water) flooding (about 167km²). Around 11% of domestic and commercial addresses are currently at risk of both surface water and/or fluvial flooding. During the 2007 floods, 4,784 properties in Worcestershire were internally flooded. There were also severe impacts on businesses, schools and health & social care facilities and disruption of the highway and transport network (including closure of the M5) caused by run-off from natural springs and the increase in the water table. There was also a significant impact on the agricultural community.
- 5.19. The Flood and Water Management Act (2010) gives Worcestershire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) a new role in flood leadership with the statutory requirement to develop, maintain and apply a local flood risk management strategy.
- 5.20. Defra introduced a new partnership approach to assessing flood risk and underlying sources of capital funding starting from 2012/13. The Flood & Coastal Risk Management Grant in Aid is funding available from central government to undertake projects which reduce flood risk from surface water, fluvial and coastal sources.
- 5.21. Work is underway to investigate locations which might be susceptible to future surface water flooding but which have not experienced flooding in the past. Sustainable

drainage systems (SUDS) will play an important role in the management of surface water run-off, with the automatic right for new developments to connect to the drainage system due to be removed. The LLFA will take on the role of the SUDS Approval Body (SAB) following commencement of the relevant parts of the FWMA. This role is also due to extend to LLFAs adopting any SUDS which are approved and satisfactorily developed.

#### **Major schemes**

5.22. Major flood defence schemes in the pipeline include projects in Broadway, Barbourne Brook and Uckinghall and are likely to cost approximately £2.58m.

#### Case Study - Powick flood alleviation scheme



The Environment Agency working in partnership with the local community, landowners, the Powick Flood Forum and Worcestershire County Council delivered the flood alleviation scheme in Powick. A number of residential properties and businesses in Powick were flooded during the major flood events in 2007 when the River Teme burst its banks.

The flooding and closure of the road, a main commuter link between Malvern and Worcester and the access road to the M5, impacted on the local economy. Significant floods were also recorded upstream and downstream of the site between 1947 and 2004.

The completed scheme comprises a new embankment on the Common Land on the southern side of Powick and a southern embankment that will collect runoff from the land, which will drain into the existing stream. A culvert with a flow control device to prevent the passage of floodwater has been constructed in the southern embankment to allow the existing stream to flow through it in normal conditions. The existing access road has been raised to form a flood embankment to the north. The completed scheme will provide protection from a flood with a 1 in 75 year chance of occurring in any one year.

#### **Broadband**

- 5.23. For the vast majority of residents and businesses in Worcestershire, broadband is supplied via terrestrial, fixed line networks. Two national infrastructure providers, BT and Virgin Media, have competing networks in the county. A network investment by BT is bringing 'superfast' broadband to the county (superfast speeds are considered download speeds of greater than 24 Mbps). National mobile networks operators such as Vodafone, o2, EE and 3 also manage networks within the county through which internet access can be purchased.
- 5.24. The main barrier to securing a world-class communications system is the availability of super-fast broadband in Worcestershire. It is estimated that by April 2013, following the latest commercial deployment by BT, approximately 73% of residential and non-residential properties in Worcestershire will have access to superfast broadband.
- 5.25. Urban areas generally enjoy better fixed-line broadband and 3G (mobile) coverage than rural areas, primarily because they have better communications infrastructure. However, there is increasing evidence that suggests that this is causing the rural economy and rural areas to fall behind their urban counterparts.
- 5.26. For investors, rural communities (like much of Worcestershire) will always be less attractive investment propositions compared to urban areas because their infrastructure costs are much higher and potential revenues far smaller.
- 5.27. WCC have a vision to deliver faster broadband for all by 2015. Working with partners WCC aim to ensure that:
  - Everyone in the county to have access to broadband speeds of at least 2Mbps by
     2015
  - Superfast broadband (>24Mbps) available for 90% of the county by 2015
  - 90% of businesses to have the ability to access superfast broadband by 2015

#### **Major schemes**

It is expected that the deployment of superfast broadband to meet the WCC vision for Worcestershire will cost around £20 million. Presently, £11.85 million is available for County-wide deployment of superfast broadband of this, £3.35 million was received from the national funding pot, with the additional £8.5 million coming from the local authorities in Worcestershire to ensure our vision is realised. The preferred private sector communication provider is also expected to contribute to the total cost of the programme and the level of their investment will be agreed through contract dialogue. In addition, five Worcestershire Communities have bid for an additional £1.1 million from Defra and a further £700,000 has been made available from the County Council's Green Infrastructure Fund (£400k) with a further £300k being made available through the Sustainable Transport Fund. This additional £700K has already been allocated for Community Pathfinder projects in the County.

#### **Case Study - Superfast Broadband**



In January 2012, three communities submitted successful Expressions of Interest to access a share of £700k made available by the County Council for enhanced broadband infrastructure to communities who may not benefit from the superfast county-wide roll out. The County Council is working in partnership with Worcestershire parish communities.

Tender specifications were developed, scored and approved jointly between the County Council and community representatives, who selected Airband as the preferred supplier. Deployment is expected to begin before the end of January 2013, subject to Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) processing the required State Aid notifications.

This infrastructure will enable communities who currently have very poor broadband speeds to access minimum download speeds of 10Mbps at competitive market rates. This will allow individuals and businesses to send and receive large files, utilise the latest video conferencing facilities, play games, watch online TV and make Voice over Internet Protocol telephone calls, in addition to browsing the internet. Availability of broadband in these rural locations will help safeguard and create employment as well as ensuring these communities remain sustainable places in which individuals can live and work .

As part of the WCC desire to create a county-wide network of high speed internet, a trial project by the Redditch Travel consortium has begun. It will use real time travel data to provide a platform for local commuters to identify the quickest and most sustainable mechanism to travel into work. This is an example of using infrastructure smartly to reduce transport network congestion at peak times, to reduce carbon emissions, and to improve people's daily commute.

### **Waste Management**

- 5.28. At present re-use, recycling and recovery capacity in the county is much lower than what is needed. It is also anticipated that the amount of waste produced in the county will continue to grow in the future. Additional waste management capacity will therefore be required. Existing waste management facilities in Worcestershire have an approximate capacity of 1,274,500 tonnes per annum (2008/9) but Worcestershire is not yet self-sufficient in waste management capacity. This means that there is a capacity gap for re-use and recycling and other recovery across all waste streams:
- Re-use and recycling estimated capacity gap of 391,000 tpa in 2010/11, projected to increase to 541,500 tpa by 2030/31 if no further facilities are developed.
- 'Other recovery' estimated capacity gap of 240,500 tpa in 2010/11, projected to increase to 300,500 tpa by 2030/31 if no further facilities are developed.
- 5.29. The amount of waste which needs to be managed in Worcestershire is likely to increase. Local Authority Collected Waste is likely to increase 16.47% by 2031 as the population increases, and Commercial and Industrial waste is likely to increase 34.39% by 2031.
- 5.30. A key issue in ensuring sufficient waste management capacity will be to ensure the provision of sufficient land or to find alternative uses for waste. This is estimated to require an additional 30Ha by 2025/6 (33 Ha by 35 Ha by 2035/6), of predominantly employment land. This will need to be considered in new employment land allocations.
- 5.31. Waste management infrastructure is usually provided and operated by the public sector (district councils and Worcestershire County Council) or by private companies. In December 1998 Herefordshire Council and Worcestershire County Council signed a 25 year contract to provide waste management facilities to be operated on our behalf by Mercia Waste Services. The waste contract enables the Council's long-term strategy for the management of household waste in Herefordshire and Worcestershire to be implemented.

#### **Major schemes**

5.32. The following schemes have been identified to meet the capacity requirements in Worcestershire - Hartelbury Energy from Waste plant and 5 Household Waste Recycling Centres. They total cost is expected to be approximately £150m. It is anticipated that by 2025/26 around £70m of private sector capital investment in new facilities will be required, and this is estimated to have increased to £210 million by 2035.

#### Case Study – Energy from Waste facility at Hartlebury



On 20 July 2012, Worcestershire County Council received notification of the Secretary of State's decision to grant planning permission for the proposed development of an Energy from Waste facility at Hartlebury. The plant:

- Will have a capacity of around 200,000 tonnes per year which is the right size to manage all the residual waste from the two counties, after recycling and composting.
- Will provide up to 15.5MW of electricity for distribution to the local grid; this is enough electricity to supply around 20,000 homes.
- Will be capable of providing direct heat/steam/space cooling for local businesses and industries.
- Will not 'crowd out', replace or undermine the present or future initiatives aimed at reusing, recycling and minimising waste.

This represents key infrastructure in meeting Worcestershire's waste management requirements.

#### Green Infrastructure

- 5.33. The multi-functional character of Green Infrastructure (GI) means that it cuts across a variety of themes such as blue infrastructure, historic environment, landscape, biodiversity and access & recreation to deliver its environmental and socio-economic functions. This multi-functionality offers potential for cost-efficient delivery of cross-cutting infrastructure and for delivering a range of benefits which include:
  - Provision of biomass fuel for energy plants
  - Enhancing water quality
  - Flood defence and sustainable urban drainage
  - Walking and cycling routes

- Enhanced quality of the environment and adaptation to climate change
- 5.34. According to the assessment of the landscape, biodiversity and historic environment of Worcestershire, the majority of its area is recognised as beinggood or medium quality for GI. There are only a few poor quality areas, which will entail more emphasis on the creation and restoration of the natural and historic environment. Design of infrastructure needs to respect existing quality and enhance it where possible.
- 5.35. The carrying capacity of GI assets is a major concern in parts of the county, with many of the significant recreational assets being at or near capacity, especially during busy periods, such as weekends. The population growth and housing developments in the county and in neighbouring areas may further increase demand on sites which are already at capacity, increasing the desire to travel further for recreation.

#### Case study – Grow with Wyre



The Grow with Wyre landscape partnership has taken a green infrastructure based approach to delivering a range of benefits for the project area much of which is designated a SSSI and is one of the largest areas of ancient semi-natural oak woodland in Britain. Benefits derived from the approach have included:

- Skills and economic development; training courses on traditional coppice crafts and management techniques including orchard management, produce and marketing of products
- Health and well being; new self guided routes through the forest, with interpretation, including trails accessible to the less able and wheel chair users, and multi-user routes
- Wood fuel; wood chip heating installed in 6 community buildings using wood sourced from the Wyre Forest enhancing biodiversity through the management of the woodland

Wyre Forest Discovery Centre, an example of a low carbon construction with a green roof, wood fuel heating, rainwater recovery system.

# 6. Social infrastructure

6.1. The primary focus of the Strategy is the strategic infrastructure which most efficiently supports development, growth and regeneration across Worcestershire. Worcestershire County Council, however, recognise social infrastructure as an important part of the wider sustainable growth agenda. The more detailed consideration of education, emergency services, health and social care, libraries and built leisure will be undertaken by the local planning authorities through their IDPs, but this Strategy sets out the high-level issues where relevant.

#### **Education**

- 6.2. Primary pupil numbers are increasing in urban areas where the rising birth rate is felt most keenly. Secondary schools are currently experiencing more of a dip in numbers but will feel the impact of the higher primary numbers in due course. There is a comparatively lower pressure on places in most rural areas, including Upton and Evesham.
- 6.3. Although a number of schools have become or will shortly be transferring to become academies, it is not expected that this will have any adverse impact on the ability of WCC to manage school places across the county.
- 6.4. The number of school places is highly dependent on future housing developments as they will lead to an increase in the 0–19 year old population in the area, resulting in a demand for additional school places for all types of education (early-years to post-16 and Specialist provision).

#### **Major schemes**

6.5. Pupil numbers are reviewed annually and the Local Authority will bring forward proposals for increases when needed. Worcestershire County Council is currently consulting on proposals to increase capacity at Cranham Primary School; Red Hill Primary School; Stanley Road Primary School; St Joseph's Catholic Primary School; and Perry Wood Primary and Nursery School (Griffin Schools Trust Academy).

#### **Health and Social Care**

- 6.6. Population profiles are changing and these will change service demands for both health and social care. The NHS estimates that 19% of Worcestershire's population is aged 65 and over. Furthermore, older people with long term conditions will rise by 63% in 20 years.
- 6.7. There may be a requirement for extensions to or total replacement of existing premises or new premises to service new settlements.
- 6.8. There is some capacity in Worcestershire within existing GP practices based on GP patient registers. The lack of community hospital facilities for Worcester City has an influence on care pathways and access to local services. There is variability of provision across the county, mainly because of previous NHS reforms which changed the geographical footprint for service planning several times in recent years.
- 6.9. Initial discussions with NHS representatives have suggested that there is unlikely to be any new capital investment in new health infrastructure in the short term. The focus is likely to be on refurbishment or expansion of the existing estate, driven in part by sustainability considerations and the need to reduce the estate's carbon footprint.
- 6.10. A Joint Services Review (JSR) is currently being undertaken across all of NHS Worcestershire. This review is considering the best way to deliver the services of three hospitals managed by Worcestershire Acute Hospital Trust in the future in the light of competing demand for resources and skill shortages in key areas. Service changes could impact on future infrastructure requirements at the hospitals at Worcester, Redditch and Kidderminster. In January 2013 the Trust will outline more about the detail of the options which they will take to the next stage of public engagement. The Trust now expects to hold a second phase of engagement to begin in February with a full, three month consultation starting in the summer of 2013.
- 6.11. Regarding social care, changing needs of the population and the changing nature of delivery have led to a move away from the need for larger facilities and this will increase in the future. There is an increasing drive to deliver services closer to patients, in community

facilities or in the patient's home. Changes to service delivery and disability standards could result in different requirements for property, making some properties redundant and creating a need for more buildings/facilities in different locations as services move.

#### Libraries

- 6.12. There are 23 public libraries in Worcestershire. A new multi-million pound Library and History Centre has recently been completed in Worcester City Centre. The centre, known as "The Hive" is the first joint public and university library in Europe, providing the community with a range of services and facilities.
- 6.13. Library authorities have a statutory duty to provide a public library service and to ensure that it is "comprehensive and efficient". Worcestershire County Council's Capital and Asset Partnership programme considers how a community asset model could be applied to the community libraries. Work is taking place in Droitwich, Pershore and Broadway on piloting the joint use of library assets for other public services and local community use whilst reducing the number of buildings and on-going revenue costs.
- 6.14. This is a period of great change for the Library Service in Worcestershire. The gross library budget 2010/11 is £6.2m, but this is being reduced by £1.8million (28%) over the next 3 years. Libraries are to be assessed individually over a 3 year period. The County Council's aspiration is to seek community-led solutions, devolving responsibility for local delivery where appropriate. It is hoped that future investment in libraries will be managed and delivered jointly with other providers of community infrastructure such as the NHS and/or police. Cost saving measures have already included the co-location of local authority and partners' services.

#### Case Study - The Hive



Worcestershire County Council and the University of Worcester worked together to create a new multimillion pound Library and History Centre which has recently been completed in Worcester city centre.

The centre, known as "The Hive" is the first of its kind in Europe, providing the community with a range of services and facilities which include:

- A fully-integrated public and university library
- Worcestershire Record Office
- Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service
- Worcestershire Hub Customer Service Centre

The building provides over 10,000m<sup>2</sup> of public space over five floors and has been nominated for numerous national and international design awards.

In 2004, the public library service had identified that the original Worcester City library building was no longer fit for purpose. At the same time, the University was seeking to improve its learning resources. The Council and the University therefore came together and forged a partnership that led to the creation of The Hive. Building work began on a derelict site in the city centre in 2010 and the doors opened to the public for the first time on 2 July 2012. The Hive was officially opened on 11 July 2012 by Her Majesty the Queen.

It is anticipated that the library will attract over a million visitors a year.

#### **Built Leisure**

- 6.15. Across the county there are a variety of built leisure facilities, including theatres, cinemas, bingo halls, sports centres and swimming pools. Some assets are provided by the private sector, while other facilities are provided or commissioned by the public sector (e.g. local authority run sports centres).
- 6.16. The Regional Sports Facilities Framework for the West Midlands identified that the key issue for built leisure facilities in Worcestershire is their age (this may include considerations such as condition, size and flexibility to meet future needs). The expected trend is for people to live longer and to be active longer in a wider range of sports. In rural areas of Worcestershire the population will be ageing and net increases in population may be low up to 2026, despite new housing growth. In some urban areas such as Worcester and

Redditch, however, the population will not only increase but typically have a younger profile and so a higher level of need for sports facilities (for example Worcester swimming pool).

#### **Major schemes**

6.17. There are major schemes coming forward for built leisure such as University of Worcester Sports Arena (£15m), Worcester Swimming Pool (c. £13m), Bromsgrove Leisure Centre (c. £11m) and Wyre Forest Leisure Centre (£10m).

### **Emergency Services**

- 6.18. Increased development levels create new areas that will require emergency services (i.e. the police, fire and rescue service and ambulance service) and new people who increase emergency incidents. Increased development and population leads to increased incidents which require an emergency response. Similarly, new development such as major urban extensions will provide new destinations to be serviced which can affect the emergency services' response times.
- 6.19. West Mercia Police (WMP) have identified that South Worcestershire would require 96 new staff to police the planned growth in the area. The staff and other resources would need to be accommodated in new estate including two new police stations and five new police posts. Similarly, there is a need for 32 new police staff and refurbishment of and extensions to local police stations in order to meet North Worcestershire's growth needs.
- 6.20. The capacity of existing fire stations to accommodate additional pressures due to new development growth is currently being assessed. It is proposed to replace the existing police and fire station in Bromsgrove with a Joint Police and Fire Station. This innovative solution is a result of the cooperation between WMP and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS).
- 6.21. West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust aims to consolidate emergency and ambulance accommodation into centralised hubs supported by a network of Community Ambulance Stations in order to enable maximum efficiency savings. The plan is to replace the current estate of 50 ambulance stations and 25 facilitative response posts with up to 100 Community Ambulance Stations, for which there will be 12 central hubs.

#### **Major schemes**

**6.22.** Major schemes in the pipeline for emergency services include replacement of Bromsgrove police and fire station with a joint station (see case study below), Stourport-on-Severn police station (£3m) and 2 new police stations required in South Worcestershire (£3.25m).

#### Case Study – Bromsgrove Police and Fire Station



As part of the Worcestershire Capital Asset
Pathfinder (CAP) project WMP and HWFRS have
taken an innovative approach to the delivery of
new joint police and fire station in Bromsgrove.
The Bromsgrove project has planning consent and
work is due to complete in August 2013.

The new site will replace old police and fire stations, which are expensive to run and will incur increasing costs to maintain as time goes on.

Co-location will help to achieve a reduction in floor area by 25%, subsequently reducing capital investment by 15% (circa £1million), and will reduce revenue running costs by 20% (circa 70k per annum). The cost of the station (approximately £10 million) will be met up-front entirely through prudential borrowing shared between WMP and HWFRS. The capital receipts raised from the disposal of the existing police and fire stations will also be put towards the cost of the new facilities.

# **Delivery of Social Infrastructure**

- 6.23. One response to the requirements of social infrastructure that has been highly successful in Worcestershire is the management of built assets through co-operation between public sector bodies to minimise over-capacity and under- and poorly-managed buildings and sites.
- 6.24. The Worcestershire Capital and Asset Partnership (WCAP) has been successful in developing such a collaborative approach to the use of existing public assets, resulting in the delivery of a number of innovative, financially-efficient solutions to accommodation needs of a number of partner organisations. This work has also been expanded to include engagement with elements of the third sector that are increasingly likely to be delivering commissioned services.
- 6.25. WCAP recognises the need to expand further into infrastructure planning for a future asset base, which addresses the need to meet social infrastructure requirements and to support economic growth in the county. Partners recognise that new facilities need to be designed to be as flexible and multi-functional as possible to provide efficient asset usage and provide the catalyst for the longer-term strategy of collaborative service development where possible. Resultant redundant properties can also act as a springboard to economic growth. With diminishing direct public sector funding sources it is all the more important that a collaborative, cross-organisational model becomes the norm and, in conjunction with the opportunities that localism brings, the public sector has a clear plan for delivery.

#### Case Study - Capital Assets Pathfinder in Bromsgrove



WCAP has undertaken extensive work in Bromsgrove under the Capital Asset Pathfinder initiative to establish the potential for the better use of public sector assets through exploring opportunities for collocation and integration. This has so far produced:

- A site for the development of a new Health Centre
- A new joint Police and Fire Station is being developed (a national first and possible pattern for whole estate consolidation across both services)
- Plans are being developed for a joint County and District office
- Options being developed for a replacement Leisure Centre
- The town's High Street environment is being upgraded

There are also clear economic benefits to Bromsgrove as a result of this initiative, including:

- Creating a consortium of public and private sector partners to jointly market redundant properties to create a redevelopment site of real significance for the town and to exploit maximum land values by combining land interests.
- Capital receipts have so far topped £2.5 million for the public sector and are likely to exceed £10 million by the end of the programme.
- Attracting more than £70 million of private sector investment into the town as part of the regeneration proposals.

# Part B: Our Challenge and Proposed Strategic Approach

### 7. Introduction

- 7.1. The information set out in **Section A** included a summary of the entirety of WCC's evidence on infrastructure needs. However, while it is recognised that delivery of the other infrastructure themes is essential for a sustainable and functioning society, this strategy will focus on the infrastructure that WCC and its partners feel is essential to enable economic growth. As such, the strategy focuses on six infrastructure themes:
  - Transportation
  - Energy
  - Water Management
  - Broadband
  - Waste
  - Green Infrastructure (and its role in delivery of other infrastructure themes).
- 7.2. For each theme, the County Council has examined the opportunities that changing legislation, industry structures, and technologies, etc. might bring for the more sustainable, efficient and integrated delivery of infrastructure. Within a Worcestershire context, a series of Strategic Objectives have been arrived at which will be further developed by the County Council through more specific topic-based strategies (e.g. a Green Infrastructure Strategy; Renewable Energy Strategy; Integrated Water Management Strategy).
- 7.3. This section concludes by considering available funding opportunities, and how new partnership approaches can bring together the public and private sectors to accelerate sustainable delivery of infrastructure.

# 8. Transport

#### Potential synergies and interdependencies with

- Water
- Green Infrastructure
- Energy

#### **Industry Analysis**

- 8.1. Transport in Worcestershire is facilitated by road, air, rail, bus and coach, walking and cycling and water networks.
- 8.2. The **Road network** is predominantly provided and maintained by the public sector, either locally by Highways Authorities or Strategically by the Highways Agency (an executive agency of the Department for Transport). Outside the county, there are notable examples of toll roads and structures, which are often provided through public private partnership (e.g. the M6 Toll and Severn Bridge).
- 8.3. The **Railway network** was historically controlled by the public sector, but it was privatised in the 1990s and divided into infrastructure, maintenance, rolling stock, passenger and freight companies. Infrastructure (predominantly track, stations, depots and signalling) is owned and maintained by Network Rail. Passenger services are operated by train operating companies (TOCs), which are franchises awarded by the government. A number of franchises are currently being renewed (for example, the Great Western Railway franchise).

#### **Worcestershire Context**

- 8.4. The transport network is multi-modal and secures connectivity between different parts of Worcestershire and between the county and the wider West Midlands, the UK, and the rest of the world (via international hubs).
- 8.5. Key infrastructure includes:
  - Local, regional and inter-city network of rail infrastructure and services linking

- Worcestershire's main urban areas with each other and with key regional, national and international destinations (and via key hubs such as Birmingham International Airport, London Heathrow, London St Pancras, etc.).
- Approximately 160 registered bus services providing transport choice for shorter journeys within and between Worcestershire's urban areas.
- Over 8,000 km of dedicated and off-road cycle routes, footpaths and Rights of Way.
- National road network (including M5, M42, M50, and A46) managed by the Highways Agency.
- Strategic road network (including A38, A449, A44, A4440, etc.) managed by
   Worcestershire County Council.
- Local road network (A422, A4184 and other A, B and C roads) managed by
   Worcestershire County Council.
- 8.6. The capacity and reliability of the transport network is already a major concern in parts of Worcestershire, with significant sections at or approaching capacity. New commercial and residential development will add pressure to the network across all modes of transport. This pressure is expected to be greatest in and around the urban areas and along key inter-urban links where most service and employment opportunities are located, and where demands for travel are likely to be greatest.
- 8.7. In order to ensure the transport network is able to support a sustainable economy, Worcestershire County Council prepares Local Transport Plans (LTPs) and Strategies. The most recent LTP (LTP3) was published in 2010 and identifies a series of packages of transport infrastructure and service schemes that WCC believes are essential to support a sustainable economy.

#### **Opportunities and Threats**

8.8. **Bidding Success** – WCC's successful record in bidding for funding (£48.28 million having been received in the past 5 years for transport investments, including for the Worcester Technology Park and Newtown Road), means the county is well-placed to take advantage of future opportunities.

- 8.9. **Complex Funding Regime** The funding regime for transport schemes is complex and continually changing as new funds become available. This presents a real risk to delivery, but also serves as an opportunity to explore new and innovative funding mechanisms.
- 8.10. **Reletting of Rail Franchise** the Great Western Railway franchise which would run through the proposed Worcestershire Parkway station is currently being relet. The County Council have been working with the DfT to ensure that the proposed Worcestershire Parkway Station at Norton is included within the franchise bidding documents.
- 8.11. **Fragmentation of Delivery** although transport networks are interlinked, delivery providers are fragmented. Providers of public transport are not proactive in supporting drives to achieve modal shift. There is therefore a need for greater integration through collaboration, bringing local authorities and operators together, sharing and mitigating risk and reward across a range of transport modes and projects.

#### **Objectives**

- 1) Delivery of strategic rail improvements including:
  - Worcestershire Parkway (Norton)
  - Dualling of the Worcester to Birmingham New Street line between Droitwich and Stoke Works, including electrification

This could be done by:

- Working with our partners to deliver these key projects, based on robust business cases.
- Considering innovative models for funding investment.

Why we think we should do this:

- To deliver significant accessibility enhancement and decongestion benefits for Worcestershire and the wider sub-region.
- The findings of the business case for Worcestershire Parkway (developed in 2012 in line with Department for Transport appraisal guidelines) are that the station is operationally feasible and has a strong economic case with a benefit: cost ratio of

- 3:1, and approximately 300,000 passengers per annum are forecast to use the station. The financial case for the scheme is also strong with a significant net operating surplus for train operating companies.
- To improve the attractiveness of Worcestershire to investors.
- To increase the number of journeys made via sustainable modes.

# 2) Use innovative funding mechanisms to deliver strategic and local transport projects, including LTP3 urban packages (across all modes)

This could be done by:

- Encouraging greater use of partnership approaches to delivery (for example the approach used at Bromsgrove Railway Station).
- Promoting 'packages' of transport improvements across all modes.
- Identifying opportunities for greater integration through collaboration, bringing local authorities and operators together, sharing/mitigating risk and reward across a range of transport modes.

Why we think we should do this:

- Failure to do so could risk delivery, as funding regimes for transport schemes are complex and continually changing.
- Austerity measures are putting pressure on funding sources, resulting in a large funding gap.
- Integrated models of transportation work well when designed/constructed
  efficiently. However, congested networks result in economic losses as well as having
  a negative cost in non-traditional areas such as health and wellbeing.

#### 3) Promote increased uptake of low emission vehicles

This could be done by:

- Encouraging new developments to include electric vehicle (EV) car/bus charging points, particularly in key locations such as city centres.
- Encouraging the provision of free parking for EVs in key locations.
- Considering the viability of establishing EV car clubs and providing ready access to charging points via common infrastructure.

Why we think we should do this:

- To reduce carbon emissions.
- To stimulate the market for low emission vehicles.
- To reduce running costs for consumers.

# 4) Promote innovative solutions to improving connectivity and integration with other infrastructure themes

This could be done by:

- Investigating the ability of bus shelters to include solar PV to supply surplus energy to the grid.
- Investigating the use of LED lighting across all transportation infrastructure.
- Investigating the potential to install solar PV within transport networks.
- Using GI within transport routes.
- Using SuDS for highways drainage.

Why we think we should do this:

- To realise efficiencies in delivery.
- To create new markets.
- To stimulate new markets.
- To reduce demand on sewers and reduce the risk of flooding from surface water runoff.

# 9. Energy

#### Potential synergies and interdependencies with:

- Waste
- Waste Water
- Green Infrastructure

#### **Industry Analysis**

- 9.1. All homes and businesses need a supply of electricity and, more often than not, gas. Each of these can be divided into generation, transmission and supply. While consumers can choose their particular supplier, the transmission of energy is a regulated monopoly (the regulating body is OFGEM (Office of the Gas and Electricity Markets)). As the transmission market is dominated by monopoly suppliers, there have traditionally been huge barriers to entry; the sector's established networks are long-standing and difficult to duplicate. This difficulty has, however, been reduced with the Electricity and Gas (Internal Markets) Regulations 2011. The Regulations introduced new obligations on license-exempt distribution and supply undertakings (irrespective of size), including a duty to facilitate third party access to their electricity and gas networks.
- 9.2. Legislative changes are deregulating the market and increasing the ability of smaller operators (who generate their own electricity and export any surplus back to the grid) to enter the market. This is leading to new start-ups moving into the sector who deliver infrastructure in non-traditional ways:

DECC's Energy White Paper envisages that by 2030 "Distributed energy, and distributed energy storage, will ... interact with the network, helping to manage local network constraints and balance supply and demand, reducing the pressure on centralised generation."

National Grid's 2009 report The Potential for Renewable Gas in the UK states that "in the longer term, with the right government policies in place, renewable gas could meet up to 50% of the UK residential gas demand".

- 9.3. In addition to smaller operators entering the market, there is also potential for micro generation at a business or household level to reduce overall consumption.
- 9.4. Local Authorities have opportunities to become more involved in distributed energy generation following the Sale of Electricity by Local Authorities (England and Wales)

  Regulations 2010 which allows local authorities to sell electricity, provided it is from renewable sources.
- 9.5. OFGEM have warned of increased risk to the security of electricity supply over the next four years. This is a major issue for businesses and communities as the risk of electricity customer disconnections (blackouts) will appreciably increase from near zero levels. This is primarily because of a significant reduction in electricity supplies from coal and oil plants which are due to close under European environmental legislation, and the long lead-in times for large-scale replacements to become operational.

#### **Worcestershire Context**

- 9.6. What is produced here now? Currently in Worcestershire there is an installed capacity of approximately 9.43 MW of medium/large-scale renewable energy. This is predominantly from landfill gas and 4 wind turbines, but the biomass (woodchip) boiler at County Hall has around 0.7MW of installed heat capacity. Alongside these larger installations, the county also has an increasing amount of small-scale 'microgeneration' (such as roof-mounted solar panels), which has increased dramatically since the introduction of feed-in tariffs. All of these sources, however, currently provide only a small fraction of the energy the county needs; the majority of demand is satisfied by importing energy via the national grid to the local distribution network. An Energy from Waste plant at Hartlebury has been granted planning permission, and could provide an additional 13.5MW of exported electricity once operating.
- 9.7. What is the customer base in Worcestershire? Across Worcestershire, commercial and industrial (C&I) users consume 1,349.7 GWh of energy per annum. Domestic use is 1,082.7 GWh. The apportionment between these two sectors varies by district. In Wychavon, Redditch and Worcester C&I demand is significantly greater than domestic, but

in Bromsgrove and Malvern Hills domestic consumption is higher. In Wyre Forest the ratio is more even.

9.8. Across Worcestershire, it is the end users who are currently driving the growth in renewables / low-carbon energy generation. For example, food producers in the Vale of Evesham need affordable ways to meet their heat and electricity demands. This has led to the producers themselves investing in new technologies to provide an energy supply. Anaerobic digestion can be particularly well-suited to locations involved in food production; there is a readily available feedstock, and food growing can make the best use of heat and power, with the CO<sub>2</sub> generated being used in the growing process. Such interventions highlight the need to ensure the grid connections are adequate, as new schemes often require a grid connection to achieve financial viability. Changes in legislation and incentives are helping to drive growth, but if financial regimes are uncertain it could dissuade the market from investing.

#### **Opportunities and Threats**

- 9.9. **Decreasing Investment Risk** –Energy policy needs to be clear and stable to reduce risk and ensure investment. Changing/removing incentives could destabilise investment.
- 9.10. **Cost of Energy** Continued increases in energy costs can act as a major constraint on growth and investment, as well as leading to increased fuel poverty. A recent CBI/KPMG survey of businesses found that 95% of companies are concerned about the rising cost of energy, with 74% saying it would impact on investment decisions. Additionally, quality and reliability of energy infrastructure was highlighted as important by 71% of respondents. Figures were even higher within the manufacturing sector.
- 9.11. **Need for water** depending on the technology, large scale energy generation requires water- often in vast quantities for cooling, and so the availability of water is an important factor in location.
- 9.12. **Demand Density** To fully embrace a decentralised energy future, the balance of generation/demand at different times of day needs to be researched. This will allow for

appropriately-sized and located infrastructure to be planned that makes the most of any energy inputs by linking the right heating/cooling/electricity users.

- 9.13. **Cleaning up Gas** before renewable gas can be injected into the UK gas network, it must be cleaned or 'upgraded' and odorised to meet UK gas pipeline specifications.
- 9.14. **District Heating/Cooling** street works required to put in district heating/cooling networks are expensive and disruptive.
- 9.15. **Community Projects** While community schemes may play a small part in terms of total energy generation, they offer opportunities to deliver multiple benefits. Communities become advocates as they have a sense of ownership and understanding of how the energy supply system works through direct involvement in a project. There is a need to increase understanding of the potential for widening the scale and coverage of these schemes and integrating in new development.
- 9.16. **Leading by example** The County Council has the opportunity to lead by example by delivering an exemplar scheme. The cluster of public sector and other buildings around County Hall could offer the potential to consider a district heating network supplied by the biomass boiler at County Hall (with other generators feeding in as required).

#### **Objectives**

1) Increase the amount of energy, gas and heat generated within the county from renewable sources

This could be done by:

- Investigating the feasibility of installing ground or roof-mounted solar PV and other technologies on Council buildings, including the potential to gain from Feed in Tariff incentives.
- Investigating the potential of a Community Energy Fund (within the SWDP this is known as Carbon Investment Fund).
- Identifying areas suitable for district heating/decentralised energy networks.

- Investigating a Council-established Energy Services Company which takes a longterm view on investment to install energy infrastructure.
- Supporting the use of waste as a resource, including the use of farm-based anaerobic digestion plants for on-site heating/power and for generating "gas to grid".

#### Why we think we should do this:

- Will help ensure the county is better prepared to cope with energy security issues.
- Will improve economic competitiveness.
- Will provide employment opportunities for local businesses.
- Could improve affordability.
- Could help strengthen parts of the grid that are suffering from weak supplies.
- Will reduce emissions.
- Will promote Worcestershire as a location for sustainable energy infrastructure.

#### 2) Support the development of community-level projects

#### This could be done by:

- If Allowable Solutions framework is adopted as part of the Zero Carbon policy, then
  we will seek to establish a local framework for collecting AS to develop a Community
  Energy Fund to hold and spend on local carbon reduction/renewable energy
  schemes.
- Providing guidance to developers and communities about the best way to progress renewable energy applications.
- Communicating the benefits of community level and larger-scale energy projects to developers and communities.

#### Why we think we should do this:

- Communities become advocates as they have a sense of ownership from being brought closer to understanding how the energy supply system works through direct involvement in a project.
- Provides a potential revenue stream for communities.

- Supports local supply chains.
- Reduces reliance on ever-increasing utility bills.
- Provide security if supply to customers.

#### 3) Encourage the uptake of farm-based energy generation

This could be done by:

- Encouraging small-scale biomass, taking fuel from local GI and waste to create new local networks and markets.
- Promoting ESCos and potentially investing in schemes.
- Supporting businesses and providing advice on planning application processes.

Why we think we should do this:

- Improves business viability by reducing costs and providing new income streams.
- Avoids the need to transport waste.
- Could help strengthen parts of the grid that are suffering from weak supplies.

#### 4) Continue to encourage a reduction in energy demand

This could be done by:

- Encouraging the deployment of smart meters.
- Investigating opportunities for retrofitting, predominantly through encouraging uptake of the Green Deal, but also potentially using any Community Energy Fund to increase energy efficiency of buildings.
- Ensure Local Plans have adequate sustainable construction policies in place.

Why we think we should do this:

- It is more cost effective to reduce demand than to build new infrastructure.
- Smart meters have been shown to achieve around an 8% reduction in energy use per dwelling. They are a very cost-effective way of increasing awareness of energy use and reducing carbon emissions.

# 10. Water Management

#### Potential synergies and interdependencies with:

- Waste
- Green Infrastructure
- Energy
- 10.1. The supply and treatment of water and the management of flood risk are all interrelated. Changes to any one of these can have both positive and negative impacts on the others. This means that the right interventions offer opportunities to deliver multiple benefits across a range of areas.
- 10.2. Although the sections below separate water supply and sewage treatment from flood risk, a single set of integrated objectives are provided at the end of this section.

# **Water Supply and Waste Water**

#### **Industry Analysis**

- 10.3. The water supply and sewage treatment industry is a monopoly regulated by Ofwat (the Water Services Regulation Authority). Consumers currently have no choice of supplier in 'on-grid' areas<sup>5</sup>.
- 10.4. Water companies prepare **Water Resources Management Plans** (WRMP) every five years (in parallel with price reviews), showing how they intend to meet projected demands for water over the next 25 years. In 2014 there will be a price review and Defra's Statement of Obligations encourages catchment approaches, ecosystem services and emissions reduction. It encourages biological carbon sequestration through woodland creation and peat and soil management.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Note that some rural communities are 'off-grid' and extract their water from private boreholes or manage water through septic tanks/private regulated treatment systems which are then emptied and disposed of by a range of smaller licensed waste disposal companies.

10.5. In recent years the government has begun to legislate to remove barriers to entry to the water and sewerage sectors. European and UK legislation is also driving the need to improve water resource management in a more holistic way.

#### 10.6. **The draft Water Bill** proposes changes including:

- Allowing all businesses and other non-household customers in England to switch their water and sewerage suppliers.
- Removing some of the existing regulatory requirements acting as barriers to new entrants wishing to enter the market.
- Facilitating the development of a joint retail market for water and sewerage services by reducing burdens on operators wanting to supply in England.
- Introducing a more flexible upstream<sup>6</sup> pricing regime, and allowing increased opportunities in the upstream supply sector.
- 10.7. The environmental permitting regime is also being amended to include water abstraction and impounding licences, flood defence consents and fish pass approvals.
- 10.8. **The Water Framework Directive (WFD)** is designed to improve and integrate the way water bodies are managed throughout Europe. It is designed to:
  - Enhance the status and prevent further deterioration of aquatic ecosystems and associated wetlands
  - Promote the sustainable use of water
  - Reduce pollution of water, especially by 'priority' and 'priority hazardous' substances
  - Ensure progressive reduction of groundwater pollution
- 10.9. The WFD establishes a strategic framework for managing the water environment. It requires a management plan for each river basin to be developed every 6 years. The plans are based on a detailed analysis of the impacts of human activity on the water environment and incorporate a programme of measures to improve water bodies where required. In

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Upstream activities include the storage, treatment and distribution of water and the collection and disposal of sewage.

December 2009 the Environment Agency (the "competent authority" responsible for implementation of the WFD) published the first set of **River Basin Management Plans** for England and Wales. Worcestershire falls within the Severn River Basin District, which is the third largest in England and Wales. There are a number of issues relating to the Severn Water Resources Zone which are driving infrastructure considerations, including:

- A supply/demand deficit is predicted in the Severn Zone after 2013/14. Historically, there have been difficulties in gaining planning permission to facilitate capacity upgrades.
- Stressed and damaged groundwater within the Severn Zone is restricting abstraction.
- Aqueducts within the region are ageing and, without investment, this could lead to significant risks to service.
- STW is considering aquifer storage and recovery and artificial recharge at a number of locations within the Severn Zone.
- 10.10. The Code for Sustainable Homes and Building Regulations include requirements for minimising water use within the built environment through water efficiency and sustainable drainage solutions. This is further enhanced through the County Council's new responsibilities as the Lead Local Flood Authority and its role as a SuDS Approving Body (SAB).

#### **Worcestershire Context**

- 10.11. The majority of Worcestershire's water supply and treatment is managed by Severn Trent Water Ltd (STW), with South Staffordshire Water covering parts of Bromsgrove. The STW network includes sewers, drains, combined sewers and pumping stations.
- 10.12. There are five **Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies** which cover parts of Worcestershire. The Strategies identify a number of areas within the county with "No available water" or which are "Over abstracted" or "Over licensed". In order to address these issues, they require demand management strategies to be put in place. Across Worcestershire 72% of water abstracted is for public water supplies, with only 12% for industry.

#### **Opportunities**

- 10.13. Reducing the volume of water entering sewers: If storm water flow and runoff to sewers can be reduced, this can free up capacity for the system to accommodate foul water from new development. This can be achieved through more sustainable drainage measures and a reduction in impermeable surfaces. There is scope to manage demand through household water efficiency and basic rainwater harvesting. Innovations in technology, such as the collection and reuse of rainwater and grey water recycling, are increasingly featuring in new developments, and can also be retrofitted to existing buildings to achieve multiple benefits. The potential for 'closed loop systems' on new sites should also be explored, whereby a dual water supply system, separating potable and grey water, allows for a far more efficient use of resources. Investment in SuDS can help to recharge groundwater, as well as reducing flood risk and providing opportunities for GI.
- 10.14. **Energy generation:** STW has identified opportunities for energy generation from sewerage sites. Nearly half of water companies' emissions are from electricity used to pump water around networks, while nearly a quarter of emissions are methane and nitrous oxide from sewage treatment. Sewage sludge and other residues provide a renewable fuel source that can produce a biogas for generating heat and/or power that can be used on-site and exported to the grid.
- 10.15. **Greater interconnectedness** Government guidance and legislation recognises the interconnectedness and complexity of water systems. Opportunities for new pipeline connections between and within water resource zones can realise multiple benefits; they can improve water security, provide new incomes, aid attenuation, and improve GI. Connecting or locating infrastructure, such as pumping stations, close to renewable energy installations could improve the resilience of local networks that may currently be reliant on the grid.

#### **Threats**

10.16. Historically, requirements for water supply and treatment have been fairly predictable and water companies have used their experience to estimate future use. However, this predictability is being threatened by a range of challenges, including:

- Population growth and development (which affects the need for upgrades and their timing)
- A changing and unpredictable climate is putting pressure on ecology (such as fish
  populations), raw water availability, water cost, and domestic demand. It also risks
  increasing soil moisture deficit and instances of flash flooding, etc.
- Economic uncertainty
- Implementation of legislation (e.g. Water Framework Directive)
- Impact on water company profits (excluding Welsh Water)
- **10.17.** These challenges make the supply and treatment of water increasingly complex. Previous solutions to meet demand may not be sufficient and a 'business as usual' approach cannot, and should not, be adopted in future. If these challenges are not faced, there will be detrimental impacts on Worcestershire's economy and future resilience and on the county's overall security of supply.

#### **Flood Risk**

# **Industry Analysis**

10.18. Responsibility for flood risk is complex, with various bodies having either statutory roles or non-statutory interests in flood risk management. The Environment Agency has responsibility for managing flood risk from main rivers and reservoirs, whilst the County Council, following the Flood and Water Management Act (2010), has responsibility for coordinating the management of local flood risk from surface water, ground water and ordinary watercourses.

- 10.19. Other organisations involved in flood risk management include:
  - District and Borough Councils
  - Internal Drainage Boards
  - Water Companies (role increased via the FWM Act)
  - Highways Authorities

- 10.20. The automatic right for new development to connect to the drainage system is due to be removed. As such, LLFAs are to take on the role of SuDS approving body (SAB).
- 10.21. SuDS will play an increasing role in sustainable water management, providing multifunctional benefits including:
  - Reducing run-off volumes reduces pressure and requirements for capacity upgrades to existing sewage treatment infrastructure
  - Providing opportunities to improve water quality and to reduce the need for costly treatment of water (for water supply)
  - Providing opportunities for infiltration or slow release to recharge groundwater and to improve flows in water courses
  - Providing opportunities for connectivity of water habitats as part of green infrastructure
  - Providing opportunities for ecosystem services

#### Worcestershire Context

- 10.22. There are serious flooding issues across Worcestershire due to watercourses (the Rivers Severn, Avon and Teme) flowing trough urban areas. In addition to flooding from rivers, there have been many regular flood events caused by surface water run-off.
- 10.23. A number of defences have been built over the last 10 years which are helping to alleviate some flood problems. When water levels are at their highest, however, properties can still be damaged and there remain problems on some transport routes.

#### **Opportunities and Threats**

- 10.24. Traditionally, watercourses were maintained to very high standards, allowing free flow across all open networks. A relaxation of regulation, combined with poor or ineffective maintenance, has led to many culverts and watercourses becoming blocked.
- 10.25. Highlighting the importance of avoiding flood events, AXA Insurance estimates that 80% of small businesses affected by major incidents (such as flooding) close within 18 months, while 90% of businesses that lose data from disasters shut within two years.

10.26. Worcestershire has a strong track record of working in partnership to deliver flood defences, and this will need to be continued as funding mechanisms for flood defences are taking a more strategic approach. While fewer schemes will be fully funded from Environment Agency grants, a greater number of schemes will receive *some* funding, with an expectation that the cost burden should be shared between as many contributors as possible.

#### **Integrated Objectives**

# 1) Reduce waste water entering the sewage system and reduce potable water demand

We could do this by:

- Developing an Integrated Water Management Strategy.
- Targeting support and investment into areas of high water use and encouraging innovative water-saving measures such as 'grey' and 'black' water recycling, waterefficient appliances, spray taps, dual-flush toilets, etc.
- Encouraging measures to reduce surface water discharge.
- Creating aquifer 'recharge' systems and capturing rainwater.
- Ensuring the capture and cleaning of foul water through innovative processes at site level.
- Encouraging large wastewater emitters to recycle locally.

Why we think we should do this:

- The county's already-high water stress will increase with climate change and become more unpredictable, constraining growth and economic development.
- To ensure compliance with future changes to abstraction licensing.
- To improve water quality, biodiversity and ecology.
- To realise greater efficiencies.
- Reuse of foul water reduces demand for costly potable water treatment.
- To help meet Water Framework Directive requirements.

#### 2) Develop an integrated approach to water and flood management

We could do this by:

- Promoting minimisation of impermeable surfaces and prioritising permeable paving,
   swales, green spaces, and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).
- Encouraging planning authorities to use planning conditions and/or legal agreements to secure implementation of SuDS, especially in areas where pressure on water resources is high.
- Working with farmers and businesses to promote the capture and storage of water at peak flow (e.g. water storage reservoirs at all scales).
- Linking areas at risk of flooding with provision of GI.
- Exploring opportunities for retrofitting flood management measures within existing developments.
- Leading by example: installing rainwater harvesting, green roofs, and SuDS within the County Council's own estate.

Why we think we should do this:

- To minimise the economic, social and environmental damage caused by flooding to
   Worcestershire's businesses, communities and environment.
- To promote a holistic approach to flood risk management and water recharge.
- To improve resilience to unpredictable climate change.
- To maximise the multifunctional benefits a joined-up approach can bring, including green infrastructure improvements, reduced demand pressures, and reduced pressure on sewage treatment works.

#### 3) Strengthen the partnership approach to funding schemes

We could do this by:

 Seeking commitments from the development industry, businesses, communities and the LEP to engage in the partnership funding process.

Why we think we should do this:

- To satisfy Defra's funding regime requirements for a partnership approach.
- To lever in additional funding.
- To ensure those who benefit from improvements contribute to the costs.

#### 4) Address supply-demand balance deficit

We could do this by:

- Adopting a twin-track approach to managing the supply-demand balance deficit.
- Working with stakeholders and partners to encourage the adoption of demand management measures such as water-neutral developments (considering impact on development viability).
- Promoting water efficiency programmes for businesses and consumers.
- Identifying opportunities for localised or site-based treatment and re-use of water in non-domestic and domestic properties.

Why we think we should do this:

- Reducing demand eases pressure on water supplies.
- Treatment at source reduces pressure on waste water treatment, which improves efficiency.

#### 5) Develop new sustainable water resources

We could do this by:

- Identifying opportunities to attract inward investment and capitalising on government funding for pilot projects/innovative research.
- Encouraging the use of sub-surface water storage (including winter water storage)
   and working with businesses to develop solutions appropriate to them.
- Working with farmers to create natural barriers through encouraging development
  of marginal land adjacent to watercourses by growing crops. These crops could also
  provide valuable fuel feed-stocks for biomass plants.

- To realise multifunctional benefits (natural barriers create buffers, help treat water, improve GI, create energy crops, etc.).
- To help meet Water Framework Directive Requirements.

#### 11. Broadband

#### **Industry Analysis**

- 11.1. For the vast majority of residents and businesses in Worcestershire, broadband is supplied via terrestrial, fixed line networks. Two national infrastructure providers have competing networks in the county.
- 11.2. BT is currently rolling out superfast broadband across the country. This includes upgrading several exchanges within Worcestershire with fibre to the cabinet (FTTC) technology. This investment by BT is based upon a commercial model and is targeted to reach around two thirds of UK residential and business premises by 2015.
- 11.3. Virgin Media also operates a terrestrial TV and broadband network in Worcestershire and is available in parts of Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Redditch.
- 11.4. National mobile network operators such as Vodafone, O2, Orange & T-Mobile (which have together become 'Everything Everywhere' [EE]) and 3 also manage networks through which people can purchase internet access across 3G or 4G networks.
- 11.5. The coalition government's aim to create the best broadband network in Europe is echoed by the County Council's Corporate Plan, for which 'Open for Business' is a priority and broadband is a key enabler. This is fully supported by the business community and the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).
- 11.6. For investors, rural communities (like much of Worcestershire) will always be less attractive investment propositions than urban areas because their infrastructure costs are much higher and potential revenues far smaller.
- 11.7. A much more holistic approach to communications infrastructure is required.

  Network operators, rural communities and the government need to collaborate to identify present and future needs and to forge joint solutions.
- 11.8. Distance of premises from exchanges is a major barrier to providing superfast broadband. Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (ASDL) is only able to travel up to 5km, with available speed reducing in line with the distance from the exchange. Provision of at least

FTTC (fibre to the cabinet), preferably FTTP (fibre to the premises), would increase speed available to premises.

11.9. Work has already begun in some parts of Worcestershire. Allocated grant funding (Green Infrastructure Fund and Sustainable Transport Fund) is available for improvements to broadband in rural areas outside the Local Broadband Plan (LBP). The communities receiving this funding have been selected through an Expressions of Interest (EoI) and Business Case process. The Parish of Little Witley, the Redditch Travel Consortium (Redditch Arc) and the North West Malvern Consortium have been awarded funding.

#### **Worcestershire Context**

- 11.10. Under BT's current rollout of superfast broadband, twelve exchanges in Worcestershire have been upgraded to date and are already accepting orders (according to BT Openreach). However, not all cabinets on an exchange will be enabled. Those not being enabled may be those with few premises linked to them, or which are further from an enabled exchange. BT's experience to date shows that around 80-90% of street cabinets on an enabled exchange will be upgraded with fibre. There is a rolling programme of upgrades, with quarterly announcements of those exchanges which will be upgraded. As recently as April 2012, parts of Stourport and an area of Redditch were also announced for inclusion in the programme.
- 11.11. There remain other more densely populated urban areas in the county which could well meet the enablement criteria in the future, as the business case and cost of upgrading changes after every new upgrade to an exchange, as it brings communities closer to an enabled exchange.
- 11.12. BT is also investing in Ethernet technology in the county. Twelve enabled exchanges bring Ethernet quality connectivity to around 14,000 business premises within the county. Ethernet offers 'point to point', uncontended, high quality internet connectivity.
- 11.13. Rollout of superfast broadband is seen as a priority by both public and private businesses and organisations and is high on the LEP's list of priority infrastructure projects.

- 11.14. The Worcestershire Local Broadband Plan will facilitate a drive in economic growth and will improve quality of life for all residents and local businesses. As part of the Broadband Programme WCC has been actively engaged with local communities and commercial suppliers. Through such engagement we aim to raise broadband awareness, educate communities on the potential opportunities broadband can bring, and stimulate demand. This will maximise opportunities for private sector investment, thus reducing the need for public sector funding.
- 11.15. Worcestershire's Local Broadband Plan sets out the following ambitions for Worcestershire by 2015:
  - 90% of businesses in Worcestershire have access to Superfast Broadband
  - Minimum 2Mbps speed for everyone in the county
  - 90% of the county with access to superfast broadband
- 11.16. Three community schemes in Worcestershire are being established, sponsored by the local authority. WCC is the first and possibly only authority proposing these as part of the national roll out of superfast broadband. The schemes will use a variety of funding sources, including the Sustainable Transport Fund, to improve broadband in rural communities.
- 11.17. As part of the intention to create a county-wide network of high speed internet access, WCC has funded a trial project by the Redditch Travel Consortium to use real-time travel data to provide a platform for local commuters to identify the quickest and most sustainable way to travel to work. This demonstrates the real-world benefits of using infrastructure smartly to reduce congestion on our transport networks at peak times, to reduce carbon emissions, and to improve people's daily commute.

#### **Opportunities and Threats**

11.18. **High Profile** – the roll out of superfast broadband has considerable impetus locally and nationally. The UK government is supporting its delivery through a multi-million pound investment through BDUK. Locally, both the County Council and the Local Enterprise

Partnership view the provision of superfast broadband as a high priority and are supporting its roll out throughout the county.

- 11.19. **Job Creation** Superfast broadband has the potential to boost Worcestershire's economy by enabling businesses to work more effectively in new ways and to potentially reach out to new customers worldwide. Worcestershire County Council undertook a survey of businesses and found that:
  - 74% of businesses said access to superfast broadband would increase their turnover.
  - 31% said superfast broadband would allow them to create new jobs in total they have suggested it may allow them to create more than 800 jobs.
- 11.20. **Future Proofing** In addition to delivering broadband to existing exchanges and communities, development being built now should be future-proofed, as the major expenditure in providing broadband infrastructure is civil costs; building the infrastructure into new development at the construction stage will significantly reduce costs later on.

#### **Objectives**

#### 1) Ensure the widespread availability of superfast broadband

This could be done by:

- Working in partnership with communities and businesses to implement
   Worcestershire's Local Broadband Plan.
- Identifying priority business locations and ensuring they are upgraded.
- Working with communities to continue to build on successes of community projects.
- Putting in place protocols to ensure planning and highways issues are not barriers to upgrading cabinets.

- To make Worcestershire a more attractive place to invest.
- To help our businesses grow and to create jobs.
- To provide residents with improved access to online services and products (e.g. preferential savings and mortgage accounts online).

#### 2) Promote "free wifi zones"

This could be done by:

- Investigating the potential for free zones in key transport, retail and town centre areas.
- Working with suppliers to investigate the potential to create an internet business hub with free wifi for use by business start ups.

Why we think we should do this:

- To help improve footfall.
- To support businesses at the start-up stage.

#### 3) Integration of infrastructure and technology

This could be done by:

- Harnessing new technology
- Encouraging collaborative working between both service providers and local authorities to improve effectiveness through communications infrastructure

- To realise efficiencies that can be gained by harnessing communications technology.
- To positively impact on job creation.
- Greater use of communications infrastructure can help reduce carbon emissions.

#### 12. Waste

#### Potential synergies and interdependencies with

- Waste water
- Green Infrastructure
- Energy

#### **Industry Analysis**

- 12.1. Responsibility for waste collection and management is split across a variety of public and private organisations. Lower tier local authorities are responsible for collecting Local Authority Collected Waste (previously known as municipal waste). Upper tier authorities are responsible for dealing with this waste through the provision of waste management facilities, often in partnership with the private sector. The majority of other waste management collection and treatment capacity is provided by the private sector. The 'third sector' and quangos also have a role to play.
- 12.2. The **European Waste Framework Directive** requires the management of waste to be in accordance with the waste hierarchy (most favoured option first):

Reduce	Lowering the amount of waste produced		
Reuse	Using materials repeatedly		
Recycle	Using existing materials to produce new products		
Recovery	Recovering energy from waste		
Disposal	Safe disposal of waste to landfill		

12.3. Limited resources and diminishing landfill space have provided a new impetus to find ways of fully recovering value from waste, and reducing our dependency on primary sources of materials. Historically, waste has been seen as a cost or liability, whereas we need to see waste as a resource and an opportunity. The increasing shortage of landfill space, together with the need to produce more electricity renewably and higher metal prices, are combining

to make firms consider the value of waste more seriously. New technologies and innovations are also helping to make this a more viable option.

#### **Worcestershire Context**

- 12.4. Currently there are 79 waste management facilities in the county. A capacity gap could develop in reuse and recycling across all waste streams as the amount of waste produced is anticipated to increase with population growth. Although the permitted capacity of current facilities suggests there will be a gap, there is potential to increase efficiency and throughput of existing facilities without the need for new provision.
- 12.5. A 25 year PFI contract with Mercia Waste Management to manage all the Local Authority Collected Waste (LACW) in Worcestershire and Herefordshire has been agreed between the eight local authorities. In order to develop sufficient capacity to manage LACW in the period to 2023, part of this contract is the proposal to develop an Energy from Waste facility at Hartlebury, Worcestershire. This facility would manage LACW from both counties. A planning application for the plant was approved in summer 2012. Once built, this facility will provide capacity for the treatment of 200,000 tonnes per annum of residual LACW. It could also manage some Commercial and Industrial Waste.

#### **Opportunities**

- 12.6. **Integration** There are clear overlaps between waste and other infrastructure topics such as water and energy. The movement of waste will also impact on the transport network, further highlighting the integrated nature of our infrastructure networks.
- 12.7. **Co-location** Waste management facilities can be developed in conjunction with other types of development to benefit from treating wastes where they arise, or providing an end product from the waste management process to nearby development (e.g. energy from a waste recovery facility to heat and/or power local homes and/or businesses).
- 12.8. **Resource Loops** Significant amounts of resources go into the economy, and large amounts of waste come out. Resources need to come from somewhere and waste needs to go somewhere. Investigating how to 'close the loop' (by making waste a resource and

reducing demand for virgin materials and waste disposal) offers an opportunity to better manage waste and resources.

#### **Threats**

12.9. **Reliance on Private Sector Investment** – It is anticipated that by 2025/26 around £70 million of private sector capital investment in new facilities will be required, and this is estimated to increase to £210 million by 2035. Any failure in the market to achieve the scale of development required will result in considerably greater costs falling on the Worcestershire economy. Advantage West Midlands (the former Regional Development Agency) identified that, if not addressed, waste management would cost 5.7%-6.2% of business turnover by 2010/11 and 7.5%-8.4% by 2019/20<sup>7</sup>. However, new facilities will only be provided where operators believe they can make a profit.

#### **Objectives**

#### 1) Reduce the overall amount of waste requiring treatment

This could be done by:

- Encouraging businesses to minimise waste throughout their supply chains, including minimising packaging waste. This could be done by facilitating workshops with local businesses.
- Ensuring new developments include appropriate facilities that encourage sustainable waste management.
- Targeting key sectors (such as food and drink) and those that produce the most waste to identify waste streams and opportunities for reduction, reuse and recycling.

Why we think we should do this:

- To minimise the need to transport waste, thereby relieving congestion and reducing carbon emissions.
- Driving innovation in packaging can reduce costs for businesses.

#### 2) Realise the potential of waste as a resource

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Source: AWM (March 2008) Waste: A Future Resource for Business

#### This could be done by:

- Encouraging greater resource recovery as part of our approach to sustainable energy.
- Investigating the potential for landfill mining.
- Identifying waste streams currently going to landfill that could be diverted.
- Encouraging local waste clubs to identify resource loops (along the lines of NISP).
- Increasing the use of AD to divert organic/green/food waste from landfill, along with a contribution from GI resources.

#### Why we think we should do this:

- Landfill sites are currently seen as a liability, but they could actually become an
  asset. Technological advances mean landfill can be remediated and the land brought
  back into use, thereby uplifting land values, as well as recovering materials with
  economic value.
- To assist in creating new markets, which can improve economic performance and create jobs.
- To help achieve renewable energy targets (links with energy objectives).

# 3) Working with the private sector, take a proactive approach to identifying potential requirements for waste management facilities

This could be done by:

 Identifying where infrastructure could be co-located to reduce impact on land for other uses.

Why we think we should do this:

• To ensure the right facilities are brought forward in the right places, using the most efficient and sustainable technologies and approaches.

#### 13. Green Infrastructure

#### Introduction

Green Infrastructure is the network of green spaces and natural elements that intersperse and connect our cities, towns and villages. It is the open spaces, waterways, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, wildlife habitats, street trees, natural heritage and open countryside. Green Infrastructure provides multiple benefits for the economy, the environment and people.

Green Infrastructure may also be seen as part of the life-support system of an area, providing functions and environmental services to a community, such as employment, recreation, physical health and mental well-being, social interaction, contact with nature, drainage and flood management, climate change adaptation and pollution control. It may be considered the essence of local character and sense of place, the very heart of a community, or dear to the hearts of many thousands some distance away.

It spans administrative and political boundaries; it is publicly and privately owned, and it may be semi-natural or man-made in its origins. It may be green, brown or blue - think of canals or derelict land, woodlands in winter or ploughed fields. It may be wrapped around by houses, schools, factories or commercial properties. In urban situations it complements and balances the built environment; in rural settings it provides a framework for sustainable economies and biodiversity; in-between it links town and country and interconnects wider environmental processes.

- 13.1. Green infrastructure is concerned with delivering multi-functional environments, enabling land to perform a variety of roles. It realises the maximum environmental value of any area of land. To achieve this, GI has to be well planned and managed in both the short-term and the long-term.
- 13.2. There are a number of planning and related documents which support the provision of Green Infrastructure and its multifunctional benefits (such as the Natural Environment

White Paper, the NPPF, and the TCPA/WWT guidance "Planning for a Healthy Environment: good practice for Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity").

#### 13.3. Multifunctionality of GI can be demonstrated via the following uses:

- Blue infrastructure: managing water to contribute to water regulation and flood management through sustainable urban drainage, etc.
- Protection of the historic environment, including above and below-ground archaeology and other features of historic importance.
- Access and recreation networks for informal recreation (provision of opportunities for healthier lifestyles, etc.)
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation through design and orientation of buildings (green roofs, walls, street and public realm tree planting, etc.)
- Protection, enhancement and re-creation of existing biodiversity and landscape interest and the creation of new biodiversity.
- Provision of natural resources such as energy crops, biomass and food, including allotments.
- Carbon sequestration through retention, enhancement and creation of habitats which function as carbon sinks.
- Development of local markets and increasing self-sufficiency to reduce the need to import fuel, through the management and planting of existing habitats including woodland and grasslands to provide renewable fuels.

#### 13.4. Benefits can include:

- Water management (including contributing to purification).
- Contributing to the Water Framework Directive.
- Promoting health and well-being through informal recreational opportunities (mental and physical health).
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Enhancement, protection and creation of biodiversity through creation of networks and links.

- Securing the value of the landscape through sympathetic design and inclusion of key features.
- Safeguarding the historic environment through design and inclusion of key features and corridors.
- Supporting the green economy.
- 13.5. Green Infrastructure can be both public and privately owned, and can be both publicly accessible or private.

#### Worcestershire Context

- 13.6. The Worcestershire GI partnership has identified three different scales for GI delivery:
- 13.7. **Strategic or county:** These are large-scale projects which provide functions and facilities which benefit more than one district or population within the county. An example of strategic GI would be the provision of a 100ha+ country park to attract visitors from the whole of the county, or a large-scale flood scheme to reduce incidence of fluvial flooding (such as the Nottingham Left Bank flood scheme).
- 13.8. **District:** These are GI schemes providing a range of functions at a district level which benefit the population of the district. An example is the GI corridor alongside the river Severn in Worcester, providing a range of functions including flood alleviation, off-road walking and cycling routes and enhanced biodiversity.
- 13.9. **Neighbourhood or local:** These are small-scale GI enhancements which would typically be included within a development site. Examples could include off-road walking and cycling routes connecting with the local centre which also include SuDS provision through swales and balancing ponds.

#### **Opportunities and Threats**

13.10. Due to its nature, Green Infrastructure has significant overlaps with other infrastructure themes and offers opportunities to deliver real benefits in the way other infrastructure is delivered:

- 13.11. Water: there are strong links between green infrastructure and flood and water management. Strategically the decision to invest in GI and alternative ways of managing water (such as a SuDS system) can offer an alternative to investing in more traditional infrastructure as part of a development opportunity. Other potential links between GI and water management include green roofs, grass verges and urban trees, and roadside swales (subject to pollution management), etc. Both diffuse (agricultural) pollution and erosion of surface soils can contribute to rivers failing to meet WFD targets. Opportunities should be explored to increase the GI functions of land and to contribute to WFD objectives through actions such as reducing intensive agriculture adjacent to water bodies, and increasing functionality of flood plains.
- 13.12. Energy (particularly renewable and low-carbon energy): both wood fuel and biomass can bring benefits to GI. Wood fuel energy can assist in bringing under-managed woodlands into management for either logs or for wood chips/pellets. Both nationally and locally there is a legacy of under managed woodland on private and public land. Sustainable woodland management brings biodiversity and landscape benefits, but it is critical that woodlands do not become over-managed, as this can lead to a loss of biodiversity and landscape benefits, as the quality of the site will decline.
- 13.13. Energy crops can also provide opportunities for enhancement of GI through biodiversity benefits, landscape enhancement and informal access and recreation. The benefits that energy crops can bring are dependent on the type of crop being planted, its management regime, and the crop or land use which is being replaced. Established, low-intensively-managed agriculture will generally bring greater GI functionality than energy crops. Conversely, high-intervention, intensive monocultures (such as hemp) will have fewer GI benefits than some of the lower-intensity energy crops (such as short rotation coppice or miscanthus). The benefits, however, are also dependent on other issues (such as frequency of intervention and management, and spacing of crops) and schemes must therefore be considered on a case by case basis.
- 13.14. Increased demand for woodfuel can result in further woodland planting, which can also create additional income streams for both the public and private sector. Similarly, demand can be beneficial in terms of care farming in the community through additional job

creation. Potential GI benefits can arise through woodland's positive impact on water quality, biodiversity and landscape, dependent on location.

- 13.15. Biomass also has the potential to contribute to the creation and restoration of marshland habitats and the management of meadows. These opportunities can provide even greater potential income streams for partners.
- 13.16. **Carbon Sequestration:** GI can remove and store carbon from the atmosphere.
- 13.17. **Transport:** informal access and recreation is usually seen as a benefit of GI. Local Transport Plans frequently include proposals for the development of walking and cycling routes. The contribution these can make to GI can vary depending on specific routes and their impacts on the natural environment. For example, off-road Sustrans routes have contributed to the restoration of former railway lines, and the installation of new bridges, etc., which provide for informal recreation and are valuable GI assets. However, routes which utilise pavements and roads are of more limited or no GI value, except in the sense that they can safely connect such assets.
- 13.18. **Health and well-being (mental and physical health):** the benefits of greenspace for both mental and physical health and well-being are well documented. Greenspaces can:
  - Save lives and improve quality of life;
  - Help local authorities with pressing social, health and well-being issues;
  - Reduce stress, anxiety and depression;
  - Enhance social interaction and promote independent living;
  - Help promote and sustain increased physical activity;
  - Aid employment creation in related areas.

#### **Objectives**

#### 1) Ensure all new development contributes to multi-functional GI

This could be done by:

Requiring developments to assess their potential to support GI.

- Providing advice and guidance for on-site GI through the GI strategy, examples and best practice.
- Communicating the benefits of GI to decision-makers and developers.

#### Why we think we should do this:

- To provide a series of benefits for the county to ensure that the quality of the environment is enhanced.
- To ensure that the economic benefits of green infrastructure are secured and showcased in the county.
- To contribute to the growth of the green economy within the county.
- To build the resilience of the county to the adverse impacts of climate change, to increase resilience to flooding and to address WFD and biodiversity objectives.
- To promote GI as both a local and county resource.

#### 2) Realise the links between other infrastructure themes and GI

#### This could be done by:

- Promoting integrated management of run-off to achieve multiple GI and WFD objectives.
- Exploring the potential role of energy crops and biomass as contributors to renewable energy objectives and GI.
- Communicating and securing opportunities for investment in GI as a part of sustainable transport.
- Providing advice and guidance on integrating GI into other infrastructure themes and the benefits and savings that this can bring.

- To promote the multiple benefits of GI, particularly to developers and the community.
- To contribute to sustainable growth and the green economy.
- To realise both large and small-scale economic opportunities for GI.
- To identify new and enhanced income streams for landowners.
- To promote GI as both a local and county resource.

### 14. Working in new ways to accelerate infrastructure delivery

- 14.1. While traditional methods of delivering infrastructure will help meet some of the challenges identified in **Section A**, this approach will provide only a fraction of the investment needed and is unlikely to achieve the most sustainable and efficient results. The substantial public sector funding seen in the years running up to the economic downturn has been reduced. This funding had stimulated private sector investment and helped to kick start projects with significant economic impact. New partnerships for sustainable growth (sources of financing, technology, capacity building and management) are therefore needed. The public sector (Local Authorities) must now participate much more proactively in project delivery, and consider the use of initiatives to enable local government to raise project finance through alternative sources (for example: TIF, prudential borrowing and business rate retention).
- 14.2. True partnerships between public and private sector organisations are one of the emerging forms of cooperation. Through such joint ventures, local authorities, businesses and infrastructure providers pool their resources and expertise to tackle infrastructure and development challenges in a sustainable manner.
- 14.3. There is a range of models of PPP and the best approach will depend on the specific circumstances of the investment required.
- 14.4. The term 'joint venture' can describe a range of different commercial arrangements between two or more separate entities. Joint venture PPPs combine the typical advantages of the private sector (including access to finance, knowledge of technologies, and entrepreneurial spirit) with the public sector's social responsibility, environmental awareness, local knowledge, and job generation concerns.
- 14.5. A party may provide land, capital, intellectual property, experienced staff, equipment or any other form of asset. Each generally has an expertise or need which is central to the development and success of the new venture and it is vital that the parties have a 'shared vision' and objectives.

- 14.6. Joint ventures are an efficient way to capitalise on the strengths of the public and private sectors to provide a vehicle for the private sector to help deliver public services at lower cost, without adversely affecting quality or accessibility. Under the joint venture model, the public and private sector partners accept the idea of shared risk and shared reward; each must be willing to make quantifiable contributions during the project development and implementation process.
- 14.7. Worcestershire County Council is working with partners to develop an exemplar model of public and private sector partnership. The model is based on existing global best practice and the experience of the private sector in major scheme delivery. It pools the substantial capabilities and resources of the public and the private sectors, through a **Special Purpose Vehicle**, to provide long term investment opportunities. This investment will be focussed on utility infrastructure (power, water and waste) to enable and stimulate further business investment.

#### **Objectives**

This could be done by:

- Co-investment and participation in energy and utility infrastructure
- Co-investment in delivery of Worcestershire Parkway, and possibly other major transport schemes

- Capitalise on the collective strengths of public and private sector to deliver schemes more efficiently and quickly
- Leverage private sector investment
- Make better use of public sector resources

### 15. Funding Infrastructure

- 15.1. Infrastructure can be delivered in a number of different ways. The challenge of creating sustainable communities at a time of economic and fiscal restraint requires the identification and co-ordination of many funding sources and mechanisms.
- 15.2. Government has stressed that limited public funding is available for capital investment, and those funds should be used to unlock development and leverage other sources of investment. **Developer contributions** (s106 and CIL) will continue to play a significant part in meeting infrastructure requirements, but efforts are needed to maximise contributions to physical, social and green infrastructure from a wide range of funding sources. Alongside investment in new infrastructure, better use and efficiency in existing infrastructure is needed. This may involve finding new ways of delivering infrastructure beyond the 'business and usual' approach, including Tax Increment Financing, retention and pooling of business rates, pooling of new homes bonus, etc.
- 15.3. Capital funding for projects can come from a number of sources, including the public sector, central government, developer contributions and business investment. It is important to understand early on the mechanisms available to secure capital, as well as achieving buy-in and coordination from infrastructure providers for their own investment decisions.
- 15.4. Mechanisms which may be used are shown in the table on the next page.

**Table 2: Potential Funding Sources** 

Funding Source	Brief Description	Time period	Limits/Constraints	Opportunities	Decision maker(s)
Developer Contributions (CIL)	If implemented, a mandatory charge on chargeable development	In place by 2014	Affordable to development.  To fill the funding gaps that remain once existing sources have been taken into account.  Not be used to remedy pre-existing deficiencies in infrastructure provision unless those deficiencies will be made more severe by new development.  Administrative authorities are required to monitor and prepare annual reports with details of receipts, expenditure and infrastructure funded.	Used to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure or to repair existing infrastructure which is failing.  Can pool revenue from the levy.  Charging authorities (District Councils) can recover the costs of administering the levy.	District Council
Developer Contributions (S106)	Negotiated as part of planning consent. Needed to enable the development or as planning gain.		Planning obligations cannot be used for items already funded by CIL.  Administrative authorities are required to monitor and prepare annual reports with details of receipts, expenditure and infrastructure funded.	Can be used to fund affordable housing and services or revenue payments. Contributions from up to 5 developments can be pooled where infrastructure is not intended to be funded by CIL.	District Council/ developer

Funding Source	Brief Description	Time period	Limits/Constraints	Opportunities	Decision maker(s)
Regional Growth Fund (RGF)	£1.5bn fund over two years. Round 1 closed 21.01.2011. Massively over- subscribed.	Round 1 - closed January 2011. Round 2 – not for infrastructu	A minimum bidding threshold of £1m applies.  To support move from public sector to private sector employment creates jobs.  Bids must demonstrate that the Fund will create long term growth by levering private sector investment and jobs.	S106 funds can be used to match fund private sector contributions.	Central Governmen t
New Homes Bonus	Extra Council tax receipt on new homes. To be split 80/20 (district/county) to help local communities to meet costs of development.	First payments 2011/2012 ongoing for 6 years.	Some districts have allocated spend on anticipated receipts already. Benefit must be local.  Lag time in receipt of affordable homes element. Expectation that local councillors will work with communities and neighbourhoods affected by housing growth to understand priorities for investment and to communicate how the money will be spent. Not ring-fenced.  If oversubscribed may be subject to claw back from Local Settlement resulting in no net gain. Not ring-fenced.	Payable for six years. Development delivers a return.	District/ County

Funding Source	Brief Description	Time period	Limits/Constraints	Opportunities	Decision maker(s)
Local Transport Capital Settlement (Integrated Transport Block)	Funding for transport authorities for small improvement schemes of less than £5 million. Schemes include small road projects, road safety schemes, bus priority schemes, walking and cycling schemes and transport information schemes.	Allocated to 2014/15		Not ring-fenced, can be spent in accordance with local priorities.	Local Transport Authority
Local Transport Capital Settlement (Highways Maintenance Capital)	Covers major resurfacing, maintenance or replacement of bridges/tunnels and occasional reinstatement of roads following natural disasters.	Allocated to 2014/15		Not ring-fenced, can be spent in accordance with local priorities.	Local Transport Authority

Funding Source	Brief Description	Time period	Limits/Constraints	Opportunities	Decision maker(s)
Local Sustainable Transport Fund	Local transport can apply for funding to support the cost of a range of sustainable travel measures.		Bidding process.  Need to meet criteria of supporting economic growth and reducing carbon.	Authorities will be able to bid for small packages of under £5 million and larger packages of up to £50 million over the Fund period.	Local Transport Authority
Community Transport Fund	£10million of funding to be distributed to rural local transport authorities to kickstart the development of community transport services.		Small amount when split across all authorities.	Will complement the Local Sustainable Transport Fund	Local Transport Authority

Funding Source	Brief Description	Time period	Limits/Constraints	Opportunities	Decision maker(s)
Business Improvement District	A defined geographical area where ratepayers invest collectively in local improvements in addition to those delivered by local government.  Worcester City BID is funded by a 1.5% levy on the rateable value of most businesses in the area.	No set time span introduced by business groups	Spend of income has to be identified prior to BID vote.	Additional investment does not replace rates.	Local businesses.

Funding Source	Brief Description	Time period	Limits/Constraints	Opportunities	Decision maker(s)
Business Rates/ Business Increase Bonus	Business Rates normally levied centrally and redistributed by government.  The Business Rate Supplements Act 2009 provides a discretionary power for councils to levy a supplement on the national business rate. Levying authorities can retain the revenue raised from the supplement to invest in additional projects aimed at promoting economic development.		Businesses are unlikely to favour higher business rates.  May only be suited to large scale projects. The scale and type of businesses may not create a sufficient revenue stream to finance major investments. Business community may be unwilling to pay a business rate supplement that would benefit only one area.	Additional income. Authorities can group together to create levy.	District/ Business community.

Funding Source	Brief Description	Time period	Limits/Constraints	Opportunities	Decision maker(s)
Tax Increment Finance	Enables local authority to borrow based on anticipated growth in tax base from development. Royal Assent was given 2012. The Budget allowed for up to £150m to be available from 2013/14 for large scale infrastructure projects in core cities.	2013/14	Risk to councils if tax revenues do not materialise as expected.  An increase in net public sector debt. It may be difficult to prove that uplift in business rates are additional, not simply caused by businesses relocating from one area to another.  May require long periods (up to 25 years) for enough tax to be generated to pay off loans.  TIF schemes may be used for areas where redevelopment would happen anyway, meaning that the extra tax generated is used up paying off loans, rather than being available as revenue.  May attract development to certain areas at the expense of others.	A new source of funding for projects that may otherwise be unaffordable.  Ability to finance infrastructure in advance of housing  Developments.  A potential confidence boost for an area, making it more attractive to investors.	Local Authority/ Local Businesses
Prudential Borrowing	Allows local authorities to borrow to invest in capital works and assets.		Can only be used as a source of capital expenditure.  Revenue implications as authorities have to meet the interest and repayment costs of the borrowing.  Can be more difficult where multiple agencies are involved	Enable long term strategic planning of infrastructure.	County Council

Funding Source	Brief Description	Time period	Limits/Constraints	Opportunities	Decision maker(s)
Green Investment Bank	The aim is for the bank to support low-carbon and renewable energy infrastructure projects by raising equity and debt finance.	Launched November 2012	Current uncertainty of banks' mechanisms and structures.  May see pooling of existing government funds and grants i.e.  Carbon Trust. Reducing other potential sources of funding.  Revenue implications as authorities have to meet the interest and repayment costs of the borrowing.	Opportunity to sell energy and benefit from The Renewable Heat Incentive, Feed in Tariffs and Renewables Obligation Certificates would off-set some cost, creating a sustainable model for rolling investment i.e. ESCO.	Local Authorities, Business, Communitie s.
EU Funding  JESSICA  INTERREG  ELENA  ERDF  RDPE	A suite of mechanisms to fund interventions at a variety of scales and for a number of infrastructure typologies.		In some cases complicated application process or bidding rounds.  Requires specialist knowledge of EU funding mechanisms and laws.  May require dedicated posts.  Some schemes may be subject to withdrawal or re-prioritisation.	Able to attract large sums of funding. Able to couple with other sources of funding i.e. private sector, TIF etc. Funding can cover cost of posts.	Local Authorities, Business, Partnership s.
Local Asset Backed Vehicle			One-off receipt. May be subject to community objection. The capital cost of new facilities may exceed the capital value of any assets released.	Generation of capital receipt for re-investment. Co-location or sale of surplus or inefficient assets may generate revenue savings.	Asset owner

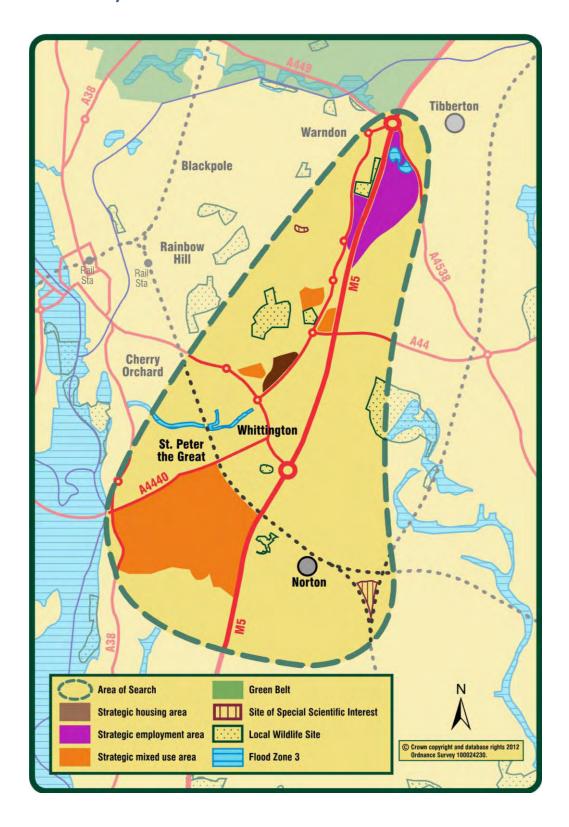
Funding Source	Brief Description	Time period	Limits/Constraints	Opportunities	Decision maker(s)
Public Works Loan Board	The PWLB provides loans on both a fixed rate and variable basis.		There may be hidden costs, such as the early repayment of PWLB loans being more expensive, thereby raising the cost of debt restructuring for local authorities.	Opportunity to pool authorities' borrowing into a single public offering can be beneficial in terms of both reduced borrowing margins and arrangement fees.	Local Authority

# Part C: Delivering the Strategy via Four Economic Growth Areas

#### 16. Introduction

- 16.1. The County Council and its partners, through the Worcestershire Partnership's "Place Shaping Group", have identified 10 economic development areas that, if delivered, could have a significant impact on the performance of Worcestershire's economy.
- 16.2. The Place Shaping Group has further prioritised this selection to four 'game changer' sites where they want to identify what is needed for the efficient delivery of the sites and accompanying infrastructure. The four priority sites are:
  - 1. Worcester Central (Land around M5 junction 6)
  - 2. Redditch Eastern Gateway (Land around Winyates Triangle)
  - 3. Kidderminster Enterprise Zone
  - 4. Malvern Technology Park (Land around Malvern Science Park and Qinetig)
- 16.3. This section of the Strategy will look at each of these sites and their immediate surroundings, and identify what opportunities there are to implement the objectives outlined in Section B. By considering not just the "game changer" sites, but also their wider context, we hope to identify opportunities for greater efficiencies and integration in infrastructure between and across existing and proposed development sites.
- 16.4. This section of the Strategy is at a very early stage of development. Ideas and opportunities included here are continuing to be developed and added to as we work with our partners to improve our understanding of these sites and issues and opportunities with delivery. We welcome submission of any evidence that can help us develop this section of the Strategy through the consultation process.

# 17. Worcester Eastern Growth Corridor (including Worcester Central)

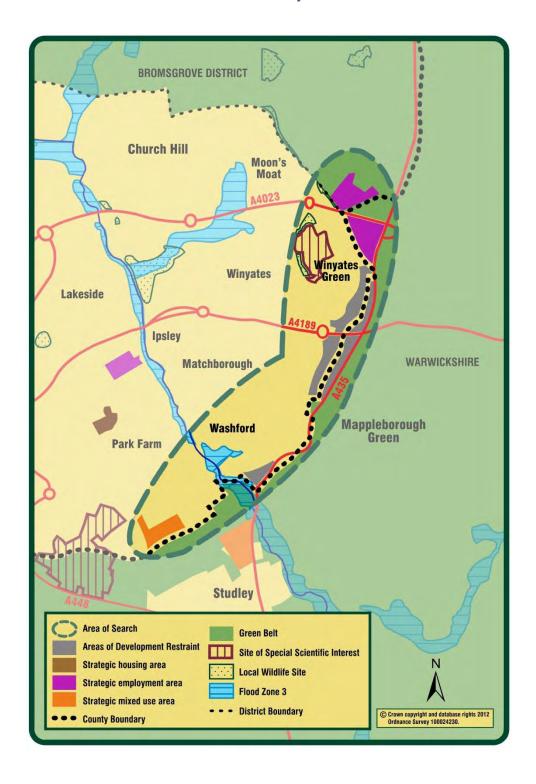


Site	Area	Number of dwellings	Employment land	Phasing	Use	Planning Status
Worcester Technology Park	70 Ha	-	70 Ha	2013 onwards	Phase 1 – B1, B2 and B8 Phase 2 – B1 and B2 High technology occupiers	Land allocated in emerging SWDP Phase 1 – Planning permission for 140,000 sqm (27 Ha) (by Worcester Bosch)
Land South of Warndon Woods	7.3 Ha	-	5 Ha (net)	Post 2019	B1	Land allocated in emerging SWDP
Land at Nunnery Way (football stadium)	8 Ha	-	8 Ha	TBC	Football stadium, including ancillary sports, leisure, A3, A4 and A5 uses	Land allocated in emerging SWDP
Worcester Woods Business Park, Newtown Road	11 Ha	-	11 Ha	TBC	B1 and well designed B2 uses (general industry, motor car showroom)	Land allocated in emerging SWDP
Kilbury Drive	ТВС	250	-	2013 onwards	C3 dwellings	Land allocated in emerging SWDP
Government buildings, Whittington Road	TBC	120	4 Ha	TBC	Mixed use: C3 dwellings and B1 office	Land allocated in emerging SWDP

Worcester TBC South Urban Extension	2,450	20 Ha	TBC	Mixed use urban extension C3 dwellings, 20 Ha employment and 2,000 sqm retail	Land allocated in emerging SWDP
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	Challenges	Opportunities
Transport	Funding the A4440 dualling and upgrades required to M5 j6	Value generating uses can contribute to upgrades Mass of development offers opportunity to reduce car dependency Worcestershire Parkway Station Regional Growth Funding of £17.5m secured in principle
Energy	TBC	Utilisation of innovative technologies on technology park for energy generation, including a Tri-Gen Plant (combined electricity, heating and cooling) through PPP
Green Infrastructure	Highlighted as an area that needs to be protected and restored  Scheduled Ancient  Monuments alongside various sites of local biodiversity importance that require protection  Areas of important woodland	Green Infrastructure Concept Statement completed for Worcester South Urban Extension, developed with cooperation of the site promoters
Water	Areas of flood risk	Opportunity for innovative technologies for waste water treatment and supply
Waste	TBC	TBC
Broadband	TBC	TBC

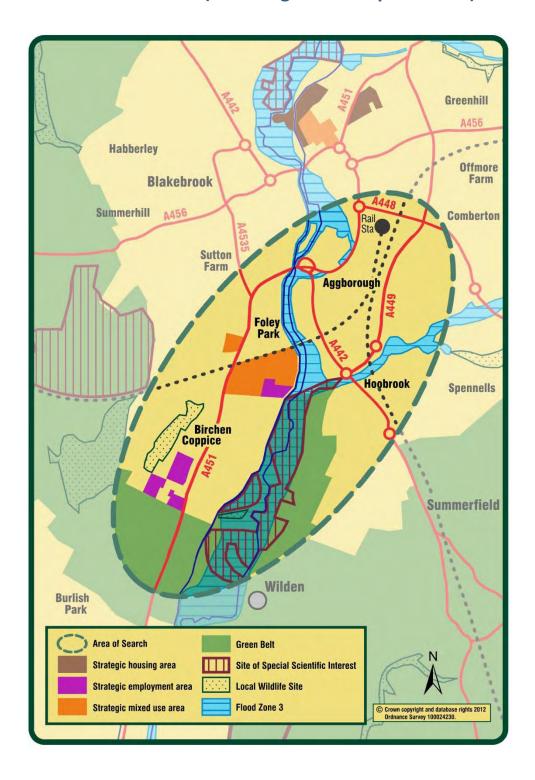
# 18. Redditch Eastern Gateway



LPA Area	Site	Area	No. dwellings	Phasing	Emp. land	Use
Bromsgrove	Ravensbank Business Park	30ha	-	TBC	30ha	Employment land to meet Redditch's needs
Redditch	Land at Alexandra hospital			TBC		Safeguarded land for bus interchange facility
Stratford	Studley (STUD1)	9ha	75	2011-16		Business uses through retention/replacement of existing employment premises on the eastern part of the site.  Specialist accom. for elderly (optional)
Stratford	Winyates Green Triangle REDD1	ТВС	-	2011-16		Employment land for Redditch's proposed 'diversification park'
Bromsgrove	ADR at Ravensbank Drive, Beoley	10.3 ha	-	TBC		
Stratford	ADR between A435 and Redditch boundary	ТВС		TBC		
Redditch	A435 ADR	ТВС		Beyond 2026		Safeguarded to meet longer term development needs beyond 2026
Redditch	Land to the rear of the Alexandra Hospital	TBC	145		1.4ha	Mixed use offices and housing

	Challenges	Opportunities
Transport	New site access required with roundabout proposed on A4023	Location close to motorway network Some capacity on network in this area
Energy	TBC	The Alexandra Hospital falls within the southern part of the site and could potentially offer an anchor heat load for a decentralised CHP plant
		The close proximity of existing and potentially new housing and employment also offers scope to consider a district heating/cooling and power network
Green Infrastructure	SSSI, Sites of local wildlife importance	There are a number of woods and coppices in the local area that could potentially offer a source of woodfuel
Water	An employment site of the nature being considered here could require a significant upgrade to the existing service and drainage infrastructure	TBC
Waste	TBC	TBC
Broadband	TBC	TBC

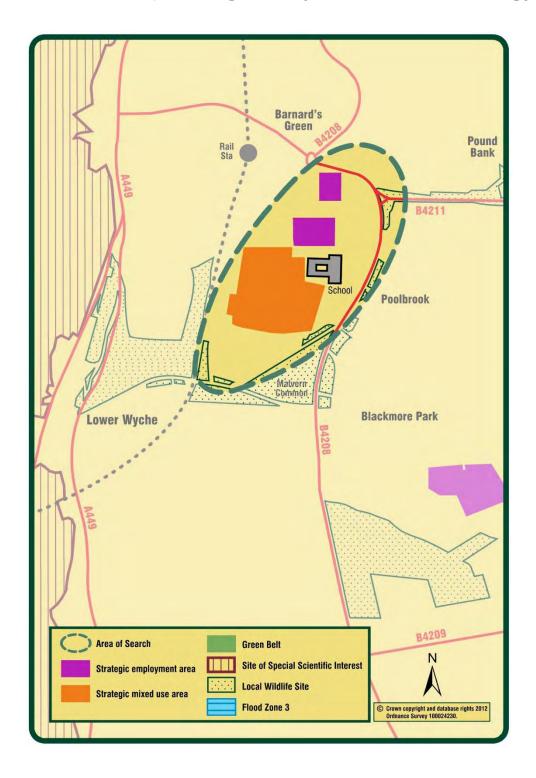
# 19. Kidderminster (including the Enterprise Zone)



Site	Area	Number of dwellings	Employment land	Phasing	Use	Planning Status
Former British Sugar Site, 27.59ha	27.59ha	320	c. 12ha, as part of a mix of uses	2011- 21	B1, B2 and B8  Community Facilities (Use Class D1)  Tourism (inc. Hotel) and non town centre leisure uses (Use Class D2)	Outline planning permission
Former Romwire Site	5ha	<del>-</del>	Approximately 5ha.	2011- 16	Allocated for economic development purposes and other sui-generis uses such as car showrooms and vehicle maintenance, repair and service centres.	
Oasis Arts & Crafts and Reilloc Chain	2.69ha	100	TBC	2016- 21	Provide for a mix of uses including residential and business.  Maintain B1, B2 and B8 uses as appropriate.	
Worcester Road Employment Area	TBC	TBC	TBC	ТВС	TBC	TBC
Hoobrook Industrial Estate	TBC	ТВС	TBC	TBC	TBC	ТВС
Hoo Farm	ТВС	ТВС	TBC	ТВС	TBC	TBC
Summerfield (Roxel)	ТВС	TBC	ТВС	TBC	TBC	TBC

	Challenges	Opportunities
Transport	Funding Hoo Brook Link Road: total cost of the scheme is estimated to be £20 million	£2.5 million loan provided by Growing Places Fund to help enable delivery of the initial phase of the road Potential links to Severn Valley Railway via rail halt at British Sugar Site Proposed improvements to Kidderminster Railway Station could bring connectivity benefits to the wider area
Energy	Some substations have limited capacity and require upgrades	High density, mix of uses offers potential to develop decentralised energy networks.  Potential to link with sewage treatment works and existing waste businesses
Green Infrastructure	River Stour and Wilden March SSSI	Opportunity to utilise the River Stour, the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and to provide better links to open spaces around the edges of the town centre such as Brinton Park and Puxton Marsh.  Opportunities to significantly 'green' the existing urban environment and also extend the existing green infrastructure into the town centre.
Water	Parts of the enterprise zone area are affected by flood risk.  River Stour classified as poor ecological status under the WFD; it is failing on a number of parameters, including phosphates & invertebrates  Site lies over a major aquifer and source protection zone.  Contamination therefore needs to be carefully managed.	Potential to reduce consumption through integrating attenuation and storage of water, through SuDS, into site at early stage.
Waste	LDO excludes waste businesses	Many waste and recycling businesses occupying parts of the enterprise zone. Opportunity of synergies with energy.
Broadband	TBC	TBC
Other	HSE Exclusion Zone restricts certain site uses Land in multiple ownership	Site is covered by an LDO

# 20. Malvern (including Qinetiq and Malvern Technology Park)



Site	Area	Number of dwellings	Employment land	Phasing	Use	Planning Status
Malvern Hills Science and Technology Park	4.08ha	<del>-</del>	4.08ha	Developed over 3 phases	Pupose-built high-tech laboratory office workspace. B1b occupiers (including Goodrich Aerospace, ZBD, Pismedica, Aurix)	Existing employment site. Owned in its entirety freehold by Worcestershire County Council. Currently 4 separate leases in place across the site, as granted by WCC.
QinetiQ (formally	25.3ha	Approximately 250 dwellings	4.5ha	ТВС	PDL arising from proposed site rationalisation.	Land allocated in emerging SWDP.
DERA south site)						Employment site (4.5ha) would become available
						following rationalisation. It will lie adjacent to existing residential area and the Qinetiq retained area
						Qinetiq = owns the whole of the Malvern Technology Centre (MTC).
Sixways Industrial estate	0.5ha	-	0.5ha	ТВС	B1 light industrial uses and some trade counters - Numerous occupiers including Spartan	As existing employment site.
					Clothing and Aldine Print	

	Challenges	Opportunities
Transport	Access to site – all routes go through Barnard's Green. location of the site in relation to major road and motorways is also an issue	The redevelopment of the Science Park and QinetQ would provide necessary highways improvements to the site
Energy	TBC	The redevelopment of land currently owned by QinetiQ (5ha) would lead to the creation of serviced land that would encourage further investment & expansion of high tech companies in Worcestershire.
Green Infrastructure	Local Wildlife Site in the area Right of way across site	Possibility to incorporate GI in to any redevelopment of the area and linking to green corridors i.e. common land in the south.
Water	TBC	As above. The development of the QinteQ site could enable the reduction in water consumption through integrating attenuation and storage of water, through SuDS, into site at early stage.
Waste	TBC	TBC.
Broadband	TBC	TBC.
Other	The existing tenure of the Science Park is complicated and will require rationalisation or "tidying up" in order that the Science Park	Release of land at QinetiQ would yield greater job densities on the site than are currently available and provide 'grow on space' for businesses emerging from the MHSP.
	company is able to properly invest in the future of the site, or attract external funding.	Goodrich would like to expand in 2013 and has the opportunity and intention to do so via the extension of the MHSP.  Significant potential for business growth within the cyber security industry
		Strong and dynamic indigenous economy and skills of existing employees
		Malvern Hills Science and Park in single ownership (Worcestershire County Council)

# Further work and next steps

- 20.1. Following completion of this consultation the Strategy will be adjusted to take account of responses, where appropriate. A final Infrastructure Strategy will then be published Spring / Summer 2013.
- 20.2. As part of developing the final Strategy, Worcestershire County Council with its partners will:
  - Further develop evidence of infrastructure needs and opportunities for the growth areas
  - Develop delivery plans and business cases for infrastructure investments
  - Develop more in depth topic specific strategies e.g. Renewable Energy Strategy,
     Green Infrastructure Strategy, Integrated Water Management Strategy
  - Continue to investigate and develop appropriate funding and delivery mechanisms
     with our partners, including CIL, PPPs, Joint Ventures, etc.
  - Develop a GIS tool that allows easy analysis of the infrastructure requirements of development sites

# **Annexes**

# 1. Annex A: Sustainability Statement

## Introduction

- 1.1. The way infrastructure is planned and delivered can have significant effects on Worcestershire's communities, economy and environment. Specific impacts will depend on growth patterns, timing and delivery methods.
- 1.2. It is inappropriate to consider the sustainability performance of specific infrastructure schemes at the strategic level of the Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy (WIS), and full Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal (SEA/SA) is not required<sup>8</sup>. The WIS is a long-term, overarching strategy which draws upon the plans and projects prepared as part of the statutory and non-statutory planning processes for each infrastructure theme. For certain plans, Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal (SEA/SA) will be needed, and this will allow for assessment of alternatives. Habitats Regulations Assessment, Equality Impact Assessment & Health Impact Assessment may also be needed, with project-level Environmental Impact Assessment for qualifying schemes.
- 1.3. While SA is not required, sustainability principles should inform the WIS to ensure that potential effects are recognised. This statement sets out, in very broad terms, some key issues that need to be taken into account in considering different approaches to delivery, and suggests how alternative options could lead to better outcomes for Worcestershire.

# How sustainable is the 'business as usual' approach?

1.4. Business as usual does not mean stagnation; new technologies can and will emerge, allowing better use of resources with lower environmental impacts. Such technological improvements may, however, be offset by an expansion of conventional resource-intensive

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The WIS is not a 'plan' or 'programme' under Article 2(a) of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive, and so does not require SEA (SEA), or Sustainability Appraisal (SA).

development in 'bolt on' additions to existing unsustainable infrastructure. Similarly, the way some infrastructure types (for example education) are funded and operated continues to evolve, and the current political emphasis is on reducing the size of state control and transferring powers to local communities.

- 1.5. Delivery of the infrastructure themes in the Strategy will have wide-ranging implications, and will be governed by accepted business models at the time. As examples:
- 1.6. Delivery of the *communications* theme will impact not just on the economy (through improved business opportunities), but will also reduce environmental impacts (through facilitating reduced travel and remote working) and improve social conditions (through availability of electronic access to goods and services, and as a means of staying in touch with family and friends).
- 1.7. Delivery of the *energy* scheme will have sustainability effects across all three spheres, but risks environmental degradation (including beyond the county) through generation and transmission networks and the burning of fossil fuels; economic impacts (through power restrictions in weak grid areas); and social impacts (fuel poverty and associated health concerns for off-grid areas).

# A more sustainable approach to infrastructure

- 1.8. Impacts of conventional, 'business as usual' ways of delivering infrastructure can be assessed against those of new, innovative approaches. While infrastructure planning operates within an extensive legal and policy framework, this does not preclude new ways of working, and the challenges of growth bring opportunities for more 'localist' approaches. This could mean increased community/business self-sufficiency through decentralised services delivered closer to the point of use. As examples:
- 1.9. Businesses could potentially link part of their waste arisings with their need for electricity and heat through symbiotic processes, such as anaerobic digestion. This is currently the exception, rather than the rule, but with a supportive policy framework, this sort of innovation could become more commonplace.

- 1.10. Treatment of waste water could be through methods that minimise the need for conventional disposal. Embracing new technologies offers environmental enhancements, and can reduce the stress on the mains sewerage network.
- 1.11. New ways of planning and delivering infrastructure could help to change people's perception of the services they need and the way they receive them. By embracing greater self-containment, which could involve adopting methods common in other countries, people can be re-connected to their services. Community perception will be critical, as bringing previously 'hidden' infrastructure closer to people's homes and workplaces (for example local heat and power generation), must be carefully managed to avoid mistrust and misunderstanding. Future methods may involve engaging communities and businesses to take control of their own infrastructure (for example through inclusion of local projects in Neighbourhood Plans), allowing a greater degree of ownership and improving individual and collective responsibility. Such approaches also allow for greater local customisation; instead of the 'one size fits all' approach to infrastructure, facilities planned locally may be better able to respond to local needs and constraints.
- 1.12. This local control could also involve new mechanisms for funding, drawing on models that move away from the idea of public authorities and statutory undertakers being the only agencies capable of delivery. Examples of businesses in Worcestershire developing their own infrastructure can help pave the way for further such developments. Such models extend not only to technologies, but also to different funding methods and models, with the potential for communities to be more actively engaged through share options, or local ownership schemes.
- 1.13. Opportunities for new infrastructure to achieve carbon reductions must be explored. Rather than being seen as a further burden on development, the opportunities afforded by lower-carbon alternatives to conventional provision should be embraced, including new income streams for local businesses, communities and public sector bodies (e.g. Feed-in Tariffs). Reducing carbon through the use of more sustainable infrastructure can improve business efficiency and help support emerging markets, such as local woodfuel production.

1.14. Climate-proofing infrastructure can be a cost-effective way of adding value. A green infrastructure approach, for example, could be used to help alleviate flooding, whilst also providing a landscape, biodiversity and recreational resource.

## **Recommendations**

1.15. Alongside the planning of conventional infrastructure, the strategy should consider the benefits and drawbacks of moving to new and innovative options for delivery. An open dialogue should be maintained between infrastructure planners and representatives of the economy, environment and local communities. This could be used as a sounding board to explore the potential implications of moving towards alternative methods of delivery.

# 2. Annex B: Statement of Cooperation

# Introduction

- 2.1. For the first time, Worcestershire County Council's Strategic Planning Team is preparing a county-wide Infrastructure Strategy, in consultation with public and private sector partners (including representatives of the Local Enterprise Partnership<sup>9</sup>, the Place Shaping Group of the Local Strategic Partnership, local authorities and infrastructure providers).
- 2.2. The preparation of a county-wide Infrastructure Strategy builds upon the work undertaken to inform the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy<sup>10</sup>, to ensure an integrated, strategic approach to infrastructure planning. Changes to the planning system, including the move to revoke Regional Strategies, mean that local authorities now have the autonomy to set their own development targets through local strategies. The Infrastructure Strategy does not replace the work that the districts are undertaking on their Infrastructure Delivery Plans, but is informed by and will inform them. This Strategy aims to clarify the infrastructure required to deliver economic growth in Worcestershire. It will co-ordinate activity to enable the accelerated delivery of important but yet to be programmed infrastructure, and will prioritise strategic locations for delivery.

# **Purpose of the this Statement**

2.3. Preparation of the Infrastructure Strategy is not a one-off exercise; needs, funding arrangements and other circumstances change over time. Maintaining communication with those who have detailed knowledge of infrastructure is therefore critical to success. With the loss of the RSS and through s33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, local planning authorities are required to demonstrate wider co-operation with adjoining

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> All references to "the LEP" include both the Worcestershire LEP and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP (of which the three north Worcestershire councils are also part).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> In 2008 Worcestershire County Council commissioned Baker Associates and Transport Planning International (TPI) to undertake an Infrastructure Requirements Study, to identify the infrastructure requirements arising from the development targets set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) Phase Two preferred option

authorities and other organisations in relation to plan-making for cross boundary issues. Although the Infrastructure Strategy does not need to comply with the Localism Act, it has been prepared in the same spirit, demonstrating a continuous engagement process by Worcestershire County Council (WCC) with key stakeholders. This Statement identifies the cross boundary working that has been and continues to be undertaken in order to inform the preparation of the Infrastructure Strategy. It sets out who has been involved and in what way, and details how this engagement has informed the Strategy.

# The process

- 2.4. **Baker Review:** In 2008 Worcestershire County Council commissioned Baker Associates and Transport Planning International (TPI) to undertake an Infrastructure Requirements Study. The purpose of the commission was to identify the infrastructure requirements arising from the development targets set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) Phase Two preferred option. The report identified the existing capacity of infrastructure (a baseline) and then assessed the impacts of additional development on the requirements for infrastructure.
- 2.5. **Creation of an Infrastructure Steering Group:** A multi-disciplinary steering group of senior County and District Council officers was established in the autumn of 2010 to advance the infrastructure strategy. Organisations were invited to join the steering group to become more directly involved in that strategy's initial preparation. The group meets quarterly and has heard from industry experts on water resources, waste water and flooding; health; broadband; emergency services; transport; energy; and green infrastructure. The meetings also provide an opportunity to discuss deliverability, funding methods, and associated issues.
- 2.6. In September 2010 WCC informed a range of organisations of the new initiatives arising from changes to the planning system, and what they could mean for Worcestershire. The organisations were told of WCC's intention to respond through a strategic approach to preparing a county-wide Strategic Infrastructure Plan, and were invited to join the steering group. As well as internal WCC departments, letters were sent to representatives of West Mercia Police, Central Networks, Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, Severn Trent, BT, Centro,

National Grid, Environment Agency, NHS Worcestershire, Worcestershire Partnership, Worcestershire Royal Hospital Estates, Worcester Diocese and the Highways Agency.

- 2.7. **Updated evidence from Baker Review:** Using data from the Baker study, information gained through liaison with the Infrastructure Steering Group, 1-2-1 meetings, email communications, presentations and telephone calls with stakeholders (as detailed below), the following research papers were produced:
  - Infrastructure Needs and Issues
  - Development Viability
  - Infrastructure Funding Mechanisms
  - Prioritising Worcestershire's Infrastructure Needs
- 2.8. Key stakeholders were invited to comment on these papers during a consultation in March/April 2011 in order to gain further information and to verify that collected to date.
- 2.9. **Critical Friend:** In May 2011 Hewdon Consulting and SKM Colin Buchanan were commissioned to provide a 'critical friend' review of the infrastructure work completed to date. The review was completed in September 2011. It identified information gaps and offered ways to strengthen the four research papers produced. The consultants' final report helped to inform and update the evidence base.
- 2.10. **Strategic Options Consultation:** In June 2012 the 'Planning for Infrastructure: Strategic Options' consultation was produced. The purpose of the consultation was to find out people's expectations and requirements of the Infrastructure Strategy. WCC worked in partnership with key stakeholders, building upon their knowledge and expertise to help shape the options paper. The consultation was preceded by a fact-check with stakeholders in April/May 2012.
- 2.11. The consultation was published on WCC's website and was raised at meetings of the Place Shaping Group (PSG), Community Infrastructure Levy Group (CIL) and Worcestershire Planning Officers Group (WPOG). Preparation of the Infrastructure Strategy was a standing item on the agendas of PSG and WPOG throughout 2012 and will continue to be throughout 2013.

2.12. **Infrastructure Strategy:** Using all the information gathered through the various methods as described above, WCC has produced a draft Infrastructure Strategy for consultation in January 2013. Continued engagement with key stakeholders throughout the process has been essential in providing challenge and new ideas to inform the Strategy.

# Cross boundary and joint partnership relationships

2.13. Alongside continuing to develop its long-standing relationships with stakeholders who have an interest in/are impacted upon strategic infrastructure, WCC has developed new relationships in the preparation of the Infrastructure Strategy. Listed below are the key stakeholders that WCC has worked with in developing the Strategy. Appendix One documents the methods used to engage with stakeholders.

### 2.14. Stakeholders include:

# **Infrastructure Providers (Public and Private)**

- Emergency Services
- Highways Agency
- Utilities Companies (Severn Trent Water, Western Power Distribution, National Grid Gas)
- Network Rail
- WCC Highways
- WCC Education
- WCC Adult and Social Care
- NHS
- Telecommunications Companies (British Telecom)
- Environment Agency

#### **Public Sector**

- District Council Officers and Members
- County Council Officers and Members
- Worcestershire Planning Officers Group
- Neighbouring Authorities

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# **Local Strategic Partnership (Worcestershire Partnership)**

Place Shaping Group

### **Private Sector**

Local Enterprise Partnership

Local Businesses

## **Third Sector**

Voluntary and Community Organisations (contacted via WCC)

### **Conclusion**

- 2.15. To date WCC has sought, and has received, a high level of co-operation with various stakeholders, resulting in a robust strategy and enhanced working relationships. The studies undertaken and the evidence base amassed to inform the strategy has been shared with and utilised by District Council partners in producing their own Infrastructure Development Plans. Continuation of these positive working relationships will be essential if the infrastructure required to support Worcestershire's proposed development is to be funded and implemented. Co-operation between parties in helping to prepare the Infrastructure Strategy should provide a good foundation for agreeing priorities for expenditure of revenues from any future Community Infrastructure Levies or other funding opportunities.
- 2.16. Effective communication will ensure those involved in delivering and managing infrastructure investment are fully engaged and able to respond when changes or opportunities arise. Alongside maintaining contact with those providing technical evidence, it is also important to keep other stakeholders up to date on the strategy's progress and on what it could mean for them.

# Annex B: Appendix 1

# Methods used to engage with stakeholders

Stakeholder	Nature of Joint partnership working
Infrastructure providers	Initial meetings were set up with infrastructure representatives to determine the best methods of working together.  Subsequent face-to-face meetings, email and telephone updates have been used as required. Meetings take place to develop relationships and to capture and share information.  Providers invited to steering group meetings as and when necessary to give presentations on their area of infrastructure. To date, NHS and Emergency Services, Western Power Distribution, Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water have attended; other providers will be invited as the process develops.  Providers have been consulted on all documents for publication (following sign-off from public sector
District Council Officers County Council Officers	partners for wider circulation).  Email/telephone exchanges and face-to-face meetings to share evidence and knowledge at operational officer level.  Senior representatives from all districts attend quarterly Infrastructure Steering Group meetings.
District Council Members County Council Members	Email/memo to Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economy and Infrastructure. Other councillors notified when Strategy completed through 'Councillor Portal', seminars, etc.  Councillors invited to sit on the Steering Group by exception, should a specific issue be identified either by the councillor(s) or Steering Group members.
Worcestershire Planning Officers Group (WPOG)	Each of the planning authorities is represented at WPOG, which meets monthly and allows for regular updates on development of the Infrastructure Strategy.
Neighbouring Authorities	Neighbouring authorities are included in all consultations. WCC officers have attended meeting with Herefordshire and Staffordshire Councils on this subject.
Worcestershire CIL Project	WCC officers are involved in this work and provide regular updates on the Infrastructure Strategy.

Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP is made aware of all Infrastructure Strategy consultations and is invited to comment.	
	Regular face-to-face meetings with the LEP are not anticipated, but could be arranged should the need arise.	
Statutory Agencies	Attendance of Infrastructure Steering Group meetings as necessary. Inclusion in consultations at key stages of development.	
Local Strategic Partnership	Regular face-to-face meetings with the LSP are not anticipated, but can be arranged should a need arise to clarify particular issues. Regular updates on the development of the Infrastructure Strategy are provided at Place Shaping Group meetings.	
Third Sector (voluntary and community groups)	WCC officer to include third sector representatives in wider consultations (via LSP links).	



### North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration Section

### Planning Policy teams - Bromsgrove / Redditch / Wyre Forest

## Combined response to 'Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy - Consultation Draft, January 2013'

The following consultation response has been prepared by the Planning Policy teams of Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest in collaboration with the North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration team. The three authorities welcome the opportunity to comment on what is considered to be a key strategic level document that will help to shape infrastructure priorities and investment decisions within the County over the next 15 years. With this in mind, the three authorities have some shared concerns about the current format and content of the emerging strategy, which are set out below. In addition to these strategic comments, where there are common concerns from the three authorities, suggestions are also made in relation to the District / Borough specific issues.

Whilst our comments are intended to be pro-active and helpful to you in producing the final version of the Strategy, the three North Worcestershire authorities would welcome the opportunity to discuss the format and content of the Infrastructure Strategy with the County Council in greater detail. Ideally, we would like to work in partnership to help produce the final version of the strategy, given the clear synergies between work being undertaken at a District / Borough level and the information that will be included in the final Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy.

#### **Combined North Worcestershire Comments**

As identified above, the three North Worcestershire authorities have appraised the consultation document collectively and would offer the following shared comments:

#### North Worcestershire Comment 1 - Overview

Overall, the North Worcestershire authorities are concerned that, at present, the document does not provide a clear and coherent Strategy that will help to guide future investment decisions in infrastructure. There does not appear to be a clear indication of what the document is attempting to achieve and how it will help to deliver strategic infrastructure within the County in a targeted and specific manner. Furthermore, it is considered that the document does not currently pick up on some of the key strategic infrastructure requirements and constraints that exist within the North Worcestershire area. As currently drafted there is a concern that the Strategy is attempting to cover too many areas and should be more focussed in its approach. This could be achieved through an increased emphasis on the 'game changer sites', although there are other areas that the North Worcestershire Councils would also like to see referenced in some capacity.

The North Worcestershire Councils consider that the focus of the Strategy should be on the delivery of key strategic projects within the County. It should be noted that information already exists at the District level and this could therefore be included within the Strategy without the need for any extra resources to be provided in relation to evidence gathering and feasibility work. Given the synergies between this piece of work and various projects already being undertaken at a more local level, it is felt that there should be consistency in the approach being undertaken.









### North Worcestershire Comment 2 – Structure of the Strategy

Although the background information included within the Strategy (Part A of the document) is useful for setting the context in which the Strategy is based, it is felt that the document should focus more on prioritising projects and delivery and not look to tackle a wide range of infrastructure issues. The background Needs and Issues paper is very detailed and articulates the infrastructure issues for the County in a clear and coherent manner. Therefore, it is felt that a better approach may be for this Strategy document to refer back to the Needs and Issues paper for the main content and focus more on the strategy to provide key infrastructure within the County, including issues such as:

- Identifying key projects;
- Identifying issues and constraints;
- Prioritising areas; and
- Identifying potential funding opportunities and mechanisms.

This would then provide a clear indication for public and private stakeholders to understand the constraints and opportunities that exist within the County, and enable resources to be targeted accordingly.

#### North Worcestershire Comment 3 – Priority Setting

It is considered that there should be a greater focus on priority setting within the document as a whole. There needs to be a clear strategy and focus for what will be fairly limited resources in the future. It is considered that a useful approach may be to include the background paper titled 'Establishing Priorities' as a key chapter within the Strategy, rather than left as a supporting document. This piece of work is considered to be central to the success of the Strategy and will enable a clear picture to be created of infrastructure prioritisation linked to actual projects.

In terms of other priorities, the Strategy as currently drafted does not pick up on some of the key projects that exist within North Worcestershire that are considered to be of strategic importance (for example Churchfields Masterplan Transport Improvements and Stourport Relief Road are not referenced in the document). Furthermore there is a real concern regarding whether or not a number of objectives included within the document are 'strategically important' and whether they warrant inclusion. For example, the following objectives and proposed solutions appear to be of less strategic importance, when compared to some of the other areas covered in the document:

- Promote increased uptake of low emission vehicles
- Investigating the ability of bus shelters to include solar PV to supply surplus energy to the grid
- Using GI within transport routes
- Using SuDS for highways drainage
- Encourage the uptake of farm-based energy generation

Whilst we consider that a number of these topics / objectives are important measures to consider for the future development of the County, it is felt that this document should focus more on the key strategic issues rather than some of these more detailed areas of work, which could be implemented without the need for inclusion within the Strategy. By focusing more on known projects of strategic









importance, and prioritising these areas accordingly, it is felt that a more targeted Strategy could be created.

There is also some concern that there is going to be a conflict between the priorities for the infrastructure for the 'Game Changers' versus the District / Borough's infrastructure required to deliver the strategic sites.

### North Worcestershire Comment 4 – Local Enterprise Partnerships / Local Transport Boards

It is considered that further reference is required within the Strategy in relation to the role of the Local Enterprise Partnerships and the emerging Local Transport Boards (both Worcestershire and Greater Birmingham and Solihull). These bodies have the potential to be key contributors to the provision of infrastructure funding within the County and given the increasing status and potential powers that the LEPs may have over the next 15 years, it is felt that their role should be afforded greater recognition within the Strategy.

It should also be noted that the authorities in the North of the County are currently identifying key infrastructure projects to inform funding priorities for the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP. For consistency, it is felt that these projects should also be highlighted within this Strategy. Please see projects detailed later within this response.

### North Worcestershire Comment 5 - Funding

The chapter on funding is considered to be a useful part of the Strategy but it is considered that it may benefit from further detail being included. This table could also link with actual projects that these funding mechanisms may help to provide for. At the very least it is considered that the chapter on funding should be linked with the final section on the 'game-changer' sites. This will enable a greater appreciation of what types of funding mechanisms may bring forward the implementation of infrastructure in these four key areas of the County. Whilst it is appreciated that funding mechanisms are difficult to identify with certainty it is felt that the 'game changer' sites should provide a list of potential funding mechanisms and identify what schemes may be brought forward via the different funding opportunities. This will help to provide further clarity to the strategy.

In terms of other sources of funding, it is considered that both of the Local Enterprise Partnerships should be identified within the table at page 82. There has already been assistance provided by the LEPs in terms of the Growing Places Fund, and it is highly likely that in the future other potential sources of funding will be made available via these bodies.

# North Worcestershire Comment 6 – Transport

Improving the existing transport network is the major infrastructure issue for the North Worcestershire Authorities, so there is concern that this section within the Strategy is brief and lacking in detail, especially when compared to other sections of the Strategy. It is also concerning that this section does not include clear objectives in relation to road improvements, which are considered to be vital to delivering the future economic growth and success of development within the area. Transport is the key infrastructure priority for North Worcestershire Councils and therefore this should be expressly reflected within the Worcestershire wide Infrastructure Strategy.









There are concerns that the section on transport does not currently pick up on any of the following schemes:

### **Wyre Forest**

- Stourport Relief Road
- Re-dualling of A449 / A456
- Kidderminster Ring Road Improvements (including Churchfields Masterplan)
- Kidderminster Railway Station upgrade

## **Bromsgrove and Redditch**

WCC's Transport Policy and Strategy team have completed a significant amount of work for both Bromsgrove and Redditch (beginning in 2010) and are currently completing Transport Infrastructure Delivery Plans, to support both Authority's emerging plans. This work will detail the highway infrastructure and sustainable transport infrastructure schemes needed to support both plans. An example of significant improvement required to support both plans includes enhancements to the Brockhill Drive corridor in Redditch. When complete, this work should be fully referenced within this wider infrastructure strategy.

Whilst it is recognised that not all projects have available funding and that decisions on priorities need to be made, it is felt that these schemes should all be referenced within the Strategy. This is because they are all considered to be of strategic importance and their implementation would have an impact over a number of administrative boundaries and are therefore of importance to Worcestershire as a whole. It is suggested that it may be worth considering including the chapter on Transport as a 'Game Changer' in its own right, given the strategic impacts that transport infrastructure improvements will have across the County.

### North Worcestershire Comment 7 - Green Infrastructure

Whilst acknowledging the importance of Green Infrastructure Provision, we would question whether this is a strategic level infrastructure priority and whether it should be afforded such prominence in this Strategy. In light of a separate Green Infrastructure Strategy being produced by the County Council, a cross-reference to this document should be sufficient and the detail retained in the issue specific document. There could be the opportunity to include further information in relation to Green Infrastructure through the Game Changer sites but there is a real concern that at present this element of infrastructure has more prominence than other crucial areas such as transport.

Furthermore, a lot of work has already been undertaken at District level in terms of strategies for Green Infrastructure, and implementation of schemes. Therefore, it is felt that there are already other mechanisms and work areas that are covering this area and the inclusion of this element of infrastructure should be more targeted to Strategic priorities.

# North Worcestershire Comment 8 – Special Purpose Vehicle

On page 72, at paragraph 14.7, the document states that the County are considering developing a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for delivery of utility infrastructure. It would be useful for this section to be expanded to provide further details on the type of SPV intended; how it will be funded; and









how it will bring forward infrastructure investment across the county. Reference to the Best Practice would be helpful.

### North Worcestershire Comment 9 – Four Economic Growth Areas (Game-Changers)

Whilst the approach to focussing the Strategy to four key economic 'game-changer' sites is generally welcomed and supported, the North Worcestershire authorities are very concerned about the lack of information included within this chapter. Furthermore, there are also concerns about the accuracy of some of the information that is provided within this section. Further work is considered to be required in order to outline what the priorities are within these areas and to provide further context and more detailed information to inform the strategy. The Planning Policy teams of North Worcestershire along with the NWEDR service are willing to assist in this process.

The following comments are made in relation to the game changer sites that have been identified within North Worcestershire.

### **Redditch Eastern Gateway**

The designations on the map are incorrect and show a mixture of existing and emerging / proposed allocations with no differentiation being shown on the key.

It does not define what the 'Areas of Search' means. The 'Eastern Gateway' consists of Winyates Green Triangle and the Gorcott land north of the Coventry Highway with the Bromsgrove ADR land, however this is not defined.

The ADR boundary is incorrect – the ADR is a continuous strip from the south of Winyates Green Triangle to Icknield Street Drive / Birmingham Road. The land within Stratford on Avon District to the west of the A435 is **not** ADR (it has no designation). However, in the forthcoming draft Local Plan No.4 certain parts of the ADR have been identified for residential or employment use. This would affect the sites listed in the table on Page 89.

The A435 road is the Green Belt boundary – not the County / Borough boundary as appears to be shown in one part.

It should be made clear that the identified 'Strategic housing / mixed use / employment Area's are *proposed* in the draft plan only and should differentiate between Redditch, Stratford's and Bromsgrove's Plans. Also the land at Gorcott between Ravensbank ADR and the Winyates Green Triangle should be 'purple' on the map to adjoin with the adjacent uses.

An introduction or some context to the tables on pages 89 and 90 is needed.

It should be noted that some of the 'Eastern Gateway' area lies within Stratford, and this will need to be picked up in the final version of the Strategy.

Given the difficulties in producing the detail for this site, it would be beneficial to have a face to face discussion with WCC regarding the site, not least so that is can be understood what the section is trying to show and to enable the Councils to provide more details for the table on page 90.









#### Kidderminster

The following comments are made in relation to the chapter on the Kidderminster 'Game Changer' Site:

- The map title is 'Kidderminster (including the Enterprise Zone)'. This is factually incorrect as Kidderminster does not benefit from an Enterprise Zone;
- The map covers a large area of Kidderminster and therefore it will be important to pick up on all of the key opportunities and constraints that exist within this corridor. It should be noted that the map is larger than the area already defined by the District Council in Statutory planning documents as 'South Kidderminster Enterprise Park'. This in itself is not a problem if the objective of the map is to usefully show other key project areas. However, if this is to specifically focus on the SKEP area, the differences between the two geographical areas need to be articulated in the Strategy in order to avoid confusion and provide clarity.
- The table included at page 92 is difficult to understand as there is no introduction or context in relation to what it is trying to show, which results in the table being unclear in its function. The first three sites identified in the table are clear regeneration opportunities and link well with the District Councils Local Planning Documents. However, the other four sites are existing established employment areas that probably do not require inclusion within this Strategy. Of more concern, however, is the lack of detail included within this table in relation to all the sites and the information that is still required to be confirmed. This information is readily available from the District Council and we would be willing to help draft this section in conjunction with the County;
- The following comments all relate to the Table on Page 93:
  - Again, there is no context or introduction in relation to what the table is trying to achieve or show and the information included is fairly sparse and in some areas inaccurate;
  - The table often refers to 'The Site'; however it is difficult to understand which 'site' is being discussed. For example, under the 'other' heading the following is written "Site is covered by an LDO" However, the LDO does not cover the entire area as identified on the map at page 91 and therefore this sentence causes confusion. The Game Changer area is a collection of sites and therefore the terminology in this table needs to be clear and precise in its phrasing;
  - o In terms of transport challenges, the table rightly identifies the Hoobrook link road as a key priority, although it should be noted that "Hoo Brook" should be one word. However, it is unclear as to how schemes have been separated between the challenges and opportunities section. For example Hoobrook is identified as a challenge due to the funding required, but the same could be said for Kidderminster Railway Station, which is listed as an opportunity. It is considered, therefore, that there should be consistency in the approach;
  - The challenges under Energy suggest that some substations have limited capacity and require upgrades. Are you able to identify which ones and are these of strategic concern, or will improvements be made to accommodate development planned within this area?









- Under Green Infrastructure there is a typo and incorrect name used, "River Stour and Wilden <u>March</u> SSSI" should be "River Stour and Wilden <u>Marsh and Meadows</u> SSSI"
- Under the Water heading, reference to the area being an Enterprise Zone should be removed as this is incorrect.
- O Under the Waste heading, it identifies that one of the challenges is that the LDO excludes waste businesses. This is not considered to be a challenge, as the same could be said about a number of development uses excluded by the Order. In fact, the areas zoned employment within this corridor are identified as potentially being acceptable for waste developments and therefore it is not considered to be a 'challenging' area to consider waste applications.
- Overall, it is considered that the Game Changer section requires an overhaul in order to provide clear, concise and correct information about the area in question.

It is noted at Paragraph 16.4 that further work is anticipated to take place in relation to this section and the North Worcestershire authorities would welcome the opportunity to help draft this section of the Strategy in conjunction with the County Council, in order to benefit from combined expertise and knowledge at the different authority levels.

# North Worcestershire Comment 10 – Further work and next steps

The final chapter in the Strategy refers to further work and next steps, with a view to publishing the final document in Spring/Summer 2013. The North Worcestershire Councils are pleased to note that the strategy will be finalised this year and look forward to working with the County Council in its preparation. The elements of work listed under section 20.2 are considered to be key to the success of the document, especially the following:

- Further develop evidence of infrastructure needs and opportunities for the growth areas
- Develop delivery plans and business cases for infrastructure investments
- Continue to investigate and develop appropriate funding and delivery mechanisms

These three areas of work will be vital to help underpin the strategy and enable it to help shape and improve the fortunes of infrastructure within the County as a whole.

### **Wyre Forest District Specific Comments**

The following comments on the Infrastructure Strategy relate purely to Wyre Forest matters. However, there are clear links between the above strategic comments and the following more detailed comments for the District, and therefore they should be read in conjunction with each other.

### **WFDC Comment 1**

The District welcomes the County's recent Pinch Point funding bid for the Hoobrook Link Road Phase 2 and whilst this priority project is identified within the document as being a major transport scheme, it is considered that other District priorities need to be recognised at a County level (as identified in the strategic comments above). The District's priority needs with regard to improved









road and rail links and improved access to the motorway network must also be recognised in the Countywide Infrastructure Strategy.

#### **WFDC Comment 2**

Under Paragraph 8.8, reference is made to the County's successful record in bidding for funding for transport schemes over the past 5 years, with a total of £48.28 million being received. It is therefore disappointing to note that none of this funding helped to deliver schemes within Wyre Forest district. Building on the momentum of the recent Pinch Point funding bid submission for Phase 2 of the Hoobrook Link Road, it is hoped, that Wyre Forest district will see a significant proportion of future transport funding towards its identified priority transport projects.

#### **WFDC Comment 3**

As mentioned in comment 1, the District Council would welcome the recognition of the Kidderminster Railway station enhancement project within the railway objectives included at Page 37. Kidderminster is the second busiest station in the whole of the County, with approximately 1.3 million passengers and is in urgent need of refurbishment and enhancement. As mentioned at the previous consultation stage, the background Needs and Issues Paper produced to support this consultation document stated that the greatest growth in rail passenger demand over the period 2004/5 – 2010/11 occurred at Kidderminster (+563,862). It is therefore considered that the scheme should be included within the Infrastructure Strategy, given the strategic importance of the station to the County as a whole.

#### **WFDC Comment 4**

Whilst there is support for the strategic sites identified for Wyre Forest District (South Kidderminster Enterprise Park and surrounds) there is concern that major development sites within Stourport on Severn have not been identified. There are a number of key transport infrastructure issues within Stourport that need to be addressed, such as the delivery of the relief road. The Countywide Strategic Infrastructure Strategy appears to be the most logical place for these needs to be identified and options for overcoming these constraints and implementing schemes addressed.

# **Redditch Borough Council Sepcific Comments**

#### **RBC Comment 1**

Para 3.4 – RBC does have a timetable for Local Plan No.4 (detailed in the LDS No.5), with adoption scheduled for September 2014.

#### **RBC Comment 2**

Figure 2, Page 8 - The development requirements for Redditch Borough (due to be approved for public consultation by Council in March 2013) for the plan period 2011 – 2030 are:

- 6,380 dwellings; 3,000 dwellings within Redditch and 3,400 cross-boundary in Bromsgrove District
- 55ha employment land; 27.5ha within Redditch, 15.5ha in Bromsgrove District and 12ha in Stratford on Avon District









• 30,000sqm retail floorspace

These figures will also need to be updated in the 'Needs and Issues' Paper.

### **RBC Comment 3**

Para 5.13 – It should be noted that Priest Bridge Sewage Treatment Works (STWs) only has capacity to receive waste water but no capacity to treat it. Both of the STWs in Redditch (Priest Bridge and Spernal) and the local sewer infrastructure will have to be upgraded to accommodate development. Severn Trent Water is currently assessing the potential sewerage implications of both development within Redditch and potential cross-boundary development.

We trust that these comments are helpful and clearly set out the views of the north Worcestershire Authorities. As mentioned at the beginning of this letter, we hope that these comments will provide a useful basis for further discussions in relation to the production of the final Strategy, and we would welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively with the County Council in its production.









### **CABINET**

# 26<sup>th</sup> March 2012

# **Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

#### 14 March 2013

# Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy – Consultation Draft (January 2013)

The Committee received a report on the Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy – Consultation Draft (January 2013). The Strategy references a number of key areas that are important to the future sustainable development of the District. Moreover, infrastructure is of critical crosscutting importance across Worcestershire as it provides the support services necessary to ensure sustainable and long term economic and social growth, as well as creating quality places where people want to live and work.

### **Recommended to Cabinet**

That Director of Economic Proposperity & Place be given delegated authority to submit representations the principles of which are set out in Appendix 2 of the report to Overview and Scrutiny to Worcestershire County Council following feedback from a working group of members to ensure a response in the strongest possible terms.

# CABINET 26<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2013

# **Recommissioning the Home Improvement Agency**

OPEN			
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:	Improving Health & Wellbeing		
CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITY:	Improving Community Well Being		
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor A T Hingley		
DIRECTOR:	Director of Economic Prosperity & Place		
CONTACT OFFICER:	Kate Bailey, Ext.		
	Kate.bailey@wyreforestdc.gov.uk		
APPENDICES:	None		

# 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek agreement to the process and timetable for recommissioning of the Home Improvement Agency.

# 2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:

- 2.1 To agree the process and timetable, for recommissioning the Home Improvement Agency.
- 2.2. That authority is delegated to the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place, in consultation with the Director of Resources, officers leading on the procurement process and the Cabinet Member for Place Shaping to agree the evaluation model for the appointment of a new contractor to deliver the Home Improvement Agency Service and to award the contract to the successful tenderer.

# 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In March 2009 Cabinet agreed to commission a Countywide Home Improvement Agency Service. This brought together two existing Agencies, one provided by Redditch BC in the north and one provided by Festival Housing in the south. A decision was taken to directly negotiate with Festival and the process was led by the County Council procurement team and this was approved in February 2010, with delegated authority to the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place to agree the final contract.
- 3.2. The new service commenced in mid 2010 (known as Worcestershire Care and Repair) and since then Festival have worked with the seven authorities to bring the two services together, relocate staff to a central office, restructure the teams and

- develop unified paperwork and processes as well as delivering Disabled Facilities Grants, Home Repairs Assistance and Equity Release services to residents.
- 3.3 The service within Wyre Forest has so far delivered the following (the data below relates to Quarters 1 -3 2012 13).

### **Table One: Demand for services**

Number of applicants	Service applied for
73	Disabled facilities grants
2	Home repairs Assistance
5	Hospital Discharge Re-enablement
68	Housing options service
114	Hospital liaison service
188	General enquiries

# **Table Two: Satisfaction levels**

Service aspect	% Very satisfied or satisfied
Improved quality of life	95%
Attitude of contractor	96.3%
Satisfaction with work	92.5%
HIA explaining everything clearly	100%
HIA advising what help was available	85%
HIA arranging works	95%

Table Three: Timescales to complete work by value

Value of works	Timescale in weeks
Under £5k	20
£5 – 15K	32
£15 – 30k	49

- 3.4 It is proposed to continue the services offered by recommissioning a new contract. The new joint contract will be entered into by all seven Local Authority Partners. Any other funding streams from other partners or for additional services will be agreed separately.
- 3.5 The Council has a mandatory duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) to eligible residents and may provide other discretionary assistance through Its Housing Assistance Policy.

# 4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The revenue funding for Worcestershire Care & Repair is made up of a number of different sources including £239,997 from the six local authorities, £187,381 from Supporting People and a further £270,000 as the projected fee income earned from the capital work undertaken.
- 4.2 In addition to this further funding has been obtained from the Department of Health (paid to and accounted for directly by the County Council) for Hospital Discharge Enablement (an additional £50k in Wyre Forest) which is used to undertake mainly DFG works to category 3 clients, Foundations First Stop funding for a Housing Advice

- Service (which runs out mid 2013) and funding from Supporting People for the Hospital Discharge Workers (which runs out in March 2013).
- 4.3 The Council's contribution is £50k revenue and 10% top sliced fee of the capital spend. The Council has agreed funding for 2013/14 at the level it has previously provided i.e. The Council has agreed funding for 2013/14 of £731,000 and discussions are currently progressing with partners about future funding arrangements for 2014/15 and beyond. Depending on the outcome of those discussions, the Council might decide in future to spend less on DFG support for the district as a whole and consequential discussions with the HIA regarding resources will have to be undertaken.
- 4.4 A Countywide Recommissioning Group has been established to lead the process which includes the following partners;
  - Worcestershire Local Authority Representatives, from Housing and Procurement
  - Worcestershire County Council Commissioning Officer
  - Occupational Therapy
  - Foundations (overarching national body covering Home Improvement Agencies).
- 4.5 The group has met to set out the scope for recommissioning the service with priority given to the following three principles; effective customer delivery, cost effectiveness and consistency in service provision.
- 4.6 It has been agreed by the Procurement Officers that Worcester City Council's Procurement Manager leads the procurement process.
- 4.7 The contract with Festival is due to expire at the end of March, however each Local Authority has agreed to extend the current contract for a further 12 months to enable the procurement process to take place and the new contract will commence April 2014.

### Timetable

Task	Deadline	
Partnership event to agree draft spec	30 <sup>th</sup> April (tbc)	
Agree final specification	May 2013	
Finalise Tender Documents	Feb – April 2013	
Advertise in accordance with Public Contract	May 2013	
Regulations 2006		
Evaluate PQQ	June 2013	
Hold open day for interested contractors	June 2013	
Shortlist Submitted Tenders	July 2013	
Interview	July 2013	
Award contract	August 2013	
TUPE staff ( if required)	September – April 2014	
Contract Start	April 2014	

# 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The current service is funded through a revenue contribution of £50k and capital grants to pay for the works (2012/13 £800k). The capital amount is set to reduce by

April 2014 when the minimum grant sum received from the Department of Communities & Local Government of £444,000 has been included in the Capital Programme for 2014/15. Depending on the outcome of the funding discussion with partners who have a direct interest in the benefit of DFGs, this figure could be increased.

# 6. <u>LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS</u>

- 6.1 The Council must have a Housing Assistance Policy in place to utilise Disabled Facilities Grants flexibly and to offer other funding assistance. This policy has also been reviewed and will receive recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet to consider on 26<sup>th</sup> March.
- 6.2 The Council will need to enter into a contractual arrangement with the provider of the new service from April 2014.

# 7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has indicated that there are no negative outcomes from this proposal.

# 8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 It will be critical to identify an appropriate service provider to deliver this service at the same or reduced cost whilst still maintaining a high level of customer satisfaction. This risk will need to be managed through the specification and contract. Not entering into a new contract would mean that the delivery of the services within statutory timescales would be at risk.

# 9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The Home Improvement Agency is an essential service that is well utilised by residents in Wyre Forest and enables the Council to discharge it's mandatory function with regards to Disabled Facilities Grants and recommissioning, following the proposed process and timetable, is recommended.

# 10. CONSULTEES

10.1 All relevant stakeholders will be consulted at an event currently planned for the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

# 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 N/A.

## **CABINET**

# 26<sup>th</sup> March 2012

# **Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

### 14 March 2013

# **Recommissioning the Home Improvement Agency**

The Committee received a report from the Strategic Housing Manager seeking agreement on the process and timetable for recommissioning of the Home Improvement Agency.

# Agreed:

# To recommend to Cabinet

- 1. That the process and timetable contained within the report, for recommissioning the Home Improvement Agency is acceptable.
- 2. That authority be delegated to the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place, in consultation with the Procurement Officers at Worcester City Council to agree the evaluation model for the appointment of a new contractor to deliver the Home Improvement Agency service and to award the contract to the successful tenderer.

### **CABINET**

# 26<sup>th</sup> March 2012

# **Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

### 14 March 2013

# **Housing Assistance Policy Review**

The Committee received a report from the Principal Environmental Health Officer that set out a number of issues in response to the review of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) undertaken by the Housing Review Panel; the need to undertake to the Council's Housing Assistance Policy to implement those recommendations and changes requested in response to external factors as set out in the report.

# Agreed:

# To recommend to Cabinet

- 1. That the Housing Assistance Policy be amended to incorporate the following amendments as detailed in paragraph 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 of the report to Overview and Scrutiny;
  - To remove any reference to Kick-Start due its closure, thus enabling the promotion of alternative provision.
  - That loans are provided for essential repairs where the property owner has not been able to raise their own finance or they can be demonstrated to be on a low income with less than £150 a week available (following a financial assessment).
  - Discretionary Adaptation Assistance would be payable, subject to conditions including a charge on the property recoverable upon sale or transfer.

### **CABINET**

# 26th March 2012

# **Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

### 14 March 2013

# **Delivery of Affordable Housing**

The Committee received the recommendations from the Housing Review Panel (7<sup>th</sup> February 2013) on the delivery of affordable housing, including the need to include clawback clauses in planning conditions. Moreover, an affordable housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) should be developed to include more detailed guidance on thresholds, on and offsite contributions, the size of units including the amount of parking and to encourage the use of modern methods of constructions.

# **Recommend to Cabinet:**

- 1. To develop an affordable housing SPD to include more detailed guidance around thresholds, on and off site contributions, size of units, design (including parking) and encouraging the use of modern methods of construction. To refer this document to the Local Development Framework panel for consideration.
- 2. To include, in standard planning conditions, the ability to claw back (contingent deferred obligations) and similar mechanisms (reassessment of S106 contributions) where we agree to a lesser S106 contribution due to economic viability but the scheme does not immediately get built out.
- 3. To review the Registered Provider Partnership Agreement and the list of Registered Providers with whom we support new housing development in light of changing funding regimes and markets.
- 4. To further explore the establishment of a Joint Venture or Local Housing Company approach to delivering housing and developing a revenue funding stream for the Council.