

Open

Cabinet

Agenda

6pm
Tuesday, 14th March 2017
Council Chamber
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster



Cabinet

The Cabinet Members and their responsibilities:-

Councillor M J Hart	Leader of the Council & Strategy
Councillor I Hardiman	Deputy Leader & Planning & Economic Regeneration
Councillor R J Vale	Operational Services
Councillor N J Desmond	Resources
Councillor J Smith	Culture, Leisure & Community Protection
Councillor C Rogers	Housing, Health & Well-being

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 24th March 2017

Councillors wishing to "call in" a decision on this agenda should contact Lynette Cadwallader, Committee Services Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster. Telephone: 01562 732729 or email lynette.cadwallader@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.

Declaration of Interests by Members – interests of members in contracts and other matters

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 the Council's constitution for full details.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) / Other Disclosable Interest (ODI)

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 Lynette Cadwallader, Committee Services Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF. Telephone: 01562 732729 or email lynette.cadwallader@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

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* Unless there are no reports in the open session.

Wyre Forest District Council

Cabinet

Tuesday, 14th March 2017

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 7th February 2017.	8
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 To receive a petition from Councillor A Coleman from Bewdley regarding the increase in parking charges in Bewdley. The petition organiser will be given three minutes to present the petition at the meeting.	

7.		
7.1	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Councillor C Rogers</i></p> <p>Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan and Consultation Exercise</p> <p>To consider a report from the Strategic Housing Services Manager on the final version of the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan (WHPP) following the consultation period and subsequent amendments made to the plan.</p> <p>To also consider the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 2nd March 2017.</p>	14
7.2	<p>Community Housing Group – Review of Nominations</p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place regarding the future of Wyre Forest District Community Members on the Boards of Community Housing Group and to agree the approach to be taken from the Council's AGM in May where nominations are usually agreed</p> <p>To also consider the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 2nd March 2017.</p>	66
7.3	<p>Collective Switching Energy Scheme</p> <p>To consider a report from the Strategic Housing Services Manager which seeks permission for Wyre Forest District Council to initiate a Collective Energy Switching Scheme on behalf of residents.</p> <p>To also consider the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 2nd March 2017.</p>	73

8.		
8.1	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Councillor M Hart</i></p> <p>Leisure Centre Car Park</p> <p>To consider a report from the Cultural Services Manager to agree to the proposal to develop additional car parking spaces at the Wyre Forest Leisure Centre with 50/50 funding between WFDC and Places for People Leisure and that the planning application will be submitted by PfPL</p>	78
8.2	<p>Transfer of Play Area in Far Forest</p> <p>To consider a report from the Cultural Services Manager to agree to transfer the ownership of Far Forest Play area to Rock Parish Council with the remaining allocation of section 106 money to be transferred to the parish council to be spent on maintaining the play area.</p>	82

9.		
9.1	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Councillor N Desmond</i></p> <p>Budget Monitoring Third Quarter 2016/17</p> <p>To consider a report from the Chief Financial Officer to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003. • To inform members of the Housing Benefit Overpayment debt position as at 31st December 2016. • To inform members of the Sundry/Property debt position as at 31st December 2016. 	85

10.		
10.1	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Councillor I Hardiman</i></p> <p>Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4</p> <p>To consider a report from the Planning Policy Manager which seeks approval of Wyre Forest District Council's response to the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4 Consultation (March 2016).</p> <p>To also consider the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 2nd March 2017.</p>	107

11. <i>Recommendations from Committees</i>		
11.1	<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 2nd March 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worcestershire Partnership Plan • Changes to Community Housing Group Community Member Nominations • Initiating a Collective Energy Switching Scheme • Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4 	116

12.	<p>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council 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.</p>	
13.	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>To consider passing the following resolution:</p> <p>“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”.</p>	

14.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council 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.	

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

7TH FEBRUARY 2017 (6 PM)

Present:

Councillors: M J Hart (Chairman), N J Desmond, S E Fearn, I Hardiman, J D Smith and R J Vale.

Observers:

Councillors: H E Dyke, N Knowles, D Little and F M Oborski MBE.

CAB. 59 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

CAB. 60 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

CAB. 61 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 20th December 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB. 62 Call Ins

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

CAB. 63 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

CAB. 64 Results Of Budget Consultation, Alternative Budgets And Recommendations From The Cabinet Financial Strategy Advisory Panel

A report was considered from the Chief Financial Officer on the results of the budget consultation exercise launched following the presentation of the Financial Strategy 2017/20 to Cabinet on 20th December 2016, alternative budget proposals and recommendations from the Cabinet Financial Strategy Advisory Panel from their meeting on 26th January 2017.

The Cabinet Member for Resources led Members through the report and summarised the responses received from the consultation. He advised that a total of 229 respondents had accessed the consultation and overall the responses were supportive of the proposals. He highlighted that the proposal

which received the strongest support was for the Council to invest in the Green Street Depot Site, which would help develop the Council's commercial services. 86% of respondents either supported or strongly supported this proposal.

The Leader of the Council commented on the positive response to the Community Leadership Fund proposal, adding that the question had been rephrased from last year's consultation and now provided greater clarity.

A discussion ensued regarding the proposed Council Tax freeze for 2017/18. In answer to a Member's question, the Leader of the Council confirmed that the administration did not intend to propose a huge increase in Council Tax and added that the Government imposed a maximum increase of 2% or £5, whichever was greater, thus there would be no sharp increase in Council Tax payments at the end of the freeze.

The Cabinet Member for Resources commented that the Council faced difficult financial times and that the proposed budget would invest in the future of the district. He thanked members of the opposition groups that had provided an alternative budget and thanked Members for their constructive comments.

Decision:

The Cabinet NOTED the recommendations of the Cabinet Financial Advisory Panel on:

The results of the budget consultation exercise and the alternative budget proposal as detailed within the report to Cabinet and appendices.

Councillor R Vale left the meeting at 6.14 pm and returned at 6.15 pm

CAB.65 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017-20

A report was considered from Chief Financial Officer which updated Cabinet on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017-20 and made recommendations to Council on the proposed budget decision. It also considered the report of the Chief Financial Officer in respect of statutory duties placed on Local Authority Chief Financial Officers in relation to budget setting and monitoring.

The Cabinet Member for Resources commented that the report had already been fully debated at the Cabinet meeting in December 2016, therefore he highlighted salient issues, namely the confirmation of the Council Tax base and the confirmation of the asset transfer of St George's Paddling Pool to Kidderminster Town Council and Stourport Riverside Paddling pool to Stourport Town Council from April 2017. He further added that the Final Local Government Settlement was yet to be confirmed as were the Final New Homes Bonus Allocations. The Cabinet Member for Resources confirmed that the delay in receiving the Final Local Government Settlement was unusual and the matter had been raised with the Member of Parliament. It was hoped that the settlement would be received in time for the Council meeting on 22nd February.

Decision:

Recommended to Council:

The CABINET having re-considered the Financial Strategy 2017-20, the results of the Council Tax consultation exercise and recommendations of the Cabinet Financial Strategy Advisory Panel RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL that it:

1.1 THREE YEAR BUDGET, CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND POLICY FRAMEWORK 2017-20

1.1.1 APPROVES the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017-20;

1.1.2 APPROVES the Cabinet Proposals – taking into account the impact on the Council's Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2017-20 as shown in Appendix 3 in the report to Cabinet including:

- a) Approval of the new Council Policy on Loans to Third Parties to support our corporate priority of regeneration and economic development as set out in Appendix 3/1 of the December report;**
- b) Approval of the new Council Policy to create a Capital Portfolio Fund to support our corporate priority of regeneration and economic development and to create a net revenue income stream as set out in Appendix 3/2 of the December report;**
and that the approval of both in-principle decisions on a) Policy on Loans to Third Parties and b) Policy to create a Capital Portfolio Fund includes:
 - i) That an initial allocation of £10m to support progression of the policy on Loans to Third Parties and £25m to support progression of the policy of a Capital Portfolio Fund is made to the capital programme in 2017-18, this being a maximum sum in both cases. Expenditure will be subject to specific approval of the business case for each proposal by the Cabinet following consideration by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and due diligence.**
 - ii) That the financing of such expenditure be delegated to the Chief Financial Officer and that requisite amendments are made to the revenue budget to reflect potential financing costs (likely to be PWLB loan finance) and income streams to support the initial capital allocation in a) and b) above.**
 - iii) That subject to this approval, delegation is given to the Chief Financial Officer to make the requisite updates to the Financial Regulations and Treasury Management Service Strategy (TMSS) in due course.**

- 1.1.3 **APPROVES** the fees and charges in line with this Strategy and the impact on the Council's Revenue Budget for 2017-20, as shown in Appendix 4- Part 2;
- 1.1.4 **APPROVES** the Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule as set out in Appendix 2, Parts 1 and 2;
- 1.1.5 **APPROVES** that any Final Accounts savings arising from 2016-20 over and above the target allowed for in the Council's Financial Strategy, together with surplus Earmarked Reserves, be allocated by the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Leader;
- 1.1.6 **APPROVES** the Efficiency Strategy 2017-20 as set out in Appendix 6;
- 1.1.7 The General Fund Revenue Budget be **APPROVED** including all updates from the position in December 2016 as set out in the report to Cabinet.

1.2 COUNCIL TAX

- 1.2.1 **SETS** the Council Tax for Wyre Forest District Council on a Band D Property at £205.36 for 2017-18 (£205.36 2016-17) which represents a freeze on Council Tax from 2016-17.
- 1.2.2 **ENDORSES** the provisional Council Tax on a Band D Property in 2018-19 of £209.34 and £213.40 in 2019-20, being an increase of 1.94 % in both years.
- 1.2.3 **NOTES** the Chief Financial Officer's opinion on the budget proposals, recommended by the Cabinet in this report, as detailed in Appendix 5 of the report to Cabinet.

1.3 The Cabinet APPROVED:

- 1.3.1 Delegated authority be given to the Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Leader of the Council, to make any appropriate adjustments to the General Fund Revenue Budget recommended under paragraph 1.1.7 above, as a result of Central Government confirming the final Local Government Finance Settlement, including final New Homes Bonus Allocations and associated Specific Grants for 2017-18.
- 1.3.2 The additional schedule of Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix 4- Part 1 of the report to Cabinet

CAB.66 Disposal of Land at Lion Fields

A report was considered from the Head of North Worcestershire Economic and

Regeneration which sought to agree the process for the redevelopment and disposal of Parcel 1 of Lion Fields, Kidderminster which forms part of the Kidderminster Eastern Gateway Development Framework.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration led Members through the report. He explained the Council had instructed a team of Consultants from Savills to advise on the most appropriate way of securing development on Parcel 1 and develop a marketing plan to promote the site to developers. He added that three potential options for the site were considered, which were detailed in the report to Cabinet. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration confirmed that the Council set out its aspiration to attract a cinema and leisure hub onto Parcel 1 in the Development Framework, therefore Option 3 provided greater certainty and control to the Council as it was a mixed use option and would deliver a mix of retail and leisure uses alongside leisure and community uses.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration confirmed that steps had already been taken to demolish the former Glades Leisure Centre and anticipated that the site would therefore be more attractive to developers. He emphasised that it is important for the Council to maintain the momentum for the disposal of land at Parcel 1 to act as a catalyst for the wider development of the Lion Fields site and advised Cabinet that it is proposed to commence a developer procurement process to secure a developer that can deliver against the Council's ambitions.

The Leader of the Council reiterated that the demolition of the former Glades Leisure Centre was underway which demonstrated that the redevelopment of the site was moving at a pace. He confirmed the Council's aspiration to redevelop and work with a partner to deliver a redevelopment scheme and added that economic regeneration was one of the Council's flagship policies. He confirmed that he was hopeful that the Council would be able to attract the right partner and deliver something that the community would be proud of.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee commented that there had been a great deal of positive debate at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and was pleased at the amount of interest that had already been shown in the land. She confirmed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were happy to recommend that the restrictive procurement process be used.

Decision:

In line with the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 2nd February 2017.

- 1.1 To delegate to the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Regeneration, Solicitor to the Council and Chief Financial Officer, authority to take all necessary actions to procure a developer and to enter into a development agreement that includes, but isn't limited to, the detail as set out in paragraph 4.7 for the disposal of Parcel 1 of the Lion Fields re-development ensuring that the procurement process complies with the Public Contract**

Regulations 2015 including the finalisation of evaluation criteria to select the preferred developer following the Restricted procedure;

- 1.2 To delegate to the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Regeneration, Solicitor to the Council and Chief Financial Officer authority to agree the terms of a land owners' agreement between the Council and Worcestershire County Council which sets out the sharing of costs between both parties in bringing Parcel 1 to the market and returns a capital receipt to both parties in a fair and equitable way.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.59 pm.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14th MARCH 2017

Report on the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan and consultation exercise

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Chris Rogers - Cabinet Member for Housing, Health & Wellbeing
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Kate Bailey – Housing Services Manager
CONTACT OFFICER:	Kate Bailey – Housing Services Manager
APPENDICES:	Appendix One: Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan Appendix Two: Summary of consultation responses

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the final version of the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan (WHPP) following the consultation period and subsequent amendments made to the plan.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE that:

- 2.1 The WHPP be approved and work to develop detailed action plans commenced.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Strategic Housing Partnership (SHP) brings together a number of strategic partners to oversee the strategic direction of housing and interrelated health and social care services and commissioning. The group includes representatives from the Clinical Commissioning groups, Community Rehabilitation Company, Adult Social care, Children, Families and Communities directorate, Registered Providers and the six Local Housing Authorities (LHA).
- 3.2 In 2016 the Strategic Housing Partnership developed a WHPP that sets out how the partners will work together on jointly agreed priorities and will develop action plans and deliver on these in an integrated way. There are no new resources committed to delivery of the plan but it is hoped that by co-ordinating actions in a joined up way, then better use will be made of the existing resources.
- 3.3 The plan went out to consultation to a wide range of partners and elected members in October 2016 with the consultation period finishing at the end of December 2016. 34 consultation responses were received. The amended WHPP is included at Appendix One and the responses received (where those responses with detailed comments are included) are summarised in Appendix Two.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The vision for the Partnership Plan is “to create the right home environment for Worcestershire residents, that is essential to their health, wealth and wellbeing, throughout life”. This vision is supported by three key priorities;
 - 4.1.1 Create a partnership approach to enable people to live as independently as possible (early intervention and prevention)
 - 4.1.2 Drive the growth of the right type of homes (to promote opportunity)
 - 4.1.3 Improve homes and transform places
- 4.2 This vision has been broadly supported in all the consultation responses as have the high level actions, although the wording has been amended to make it clearer what we want to deliver and why.
- 4.3 High level aims previously included in the main body of the Partnership Plan have now been moved into the Memorandum of Understanding to make the WHPP clear and concise and remove duplication.
- 4.4 References to the Homelessness Inquiry have now been replaced with the Homelessness Reduction Bill as this has advanced significantly during the consultation period.
- 4.5 The actions in the WHPP remain unchanged. The consultation responses did suggest more detailed development of these actions is required to underpin the priorities.
- 4.6 Where required, data, wording and definitions have been amended to make the document easier to understand and more up to date and accurate.
- 4.7 20 respondents felt we had included the right information at a national and local level to reflect the reality with regards to housing in Worcestershire. There were suggestions to include or consider other documents such as the Fuel Poverty Strategy (when it is available) and this will be picked up through the ongoing work to develop the action plans.
- 4.8 15 responses felt we needed to take other local or national strategies into account such as the Fuel Poverty Strategy, Empty Homes etc as well as some detailed comments around other activities that can be included in the action plans.
- 4.9 24 of the respondents agreed with the high level actions with 10 disagreeing. Of those disagreeing with the actions there was still broad support but respondents wanted actions to be more concise or the action plans to be more developed.
- 4.10 21 respondents took the opportunity to make further comments around issues such as affordable housing delivery, homelessness, fuel poverty and wider issues around planning for infrastructure and government policies.
- 4.11 The SHP will organise an event to bring all the partners together to work on each action and to bring forward more detailed action plans for all organisations to support.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications in relation to the WHPP and the partnership event and development of the action plans will be met through existing resources.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no additional legal or policy implications in the approval of the WHPP.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 An Equality Impact needs Assessment is not required at this stage.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 The WHPP and action plans need to be committed to and delivered by all the partners within the Strategic Housing Partnership otherwise there will be a failure to tackle key issues around housing, health and social care in Worcestershire. Getting corporate and political support for the plan is therefore key to it's success.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 A number of partner organisations responded to the consultation on the WHPP and amendments have now been made to the Plan. These amendments have been agreed by the Strategic Housing Partnership.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 The draft WHPP was agreed in consultation with a number of partner organisations and was promoted through council websites across Worcestershire to give members of the public opportunity to also comment on the plan.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Worcestershire Memorandum of Understanding.

Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan 2017

About the Plan

The Housing Partnership Plan is the overarching document setting the strategic direction for housing across Worcestershire. It recognises that to maximise the health, wealth and wellbeing of the residents of Worcestershire and make the most effective use of existing resources, we need to work very closely with partner organisations across a range of sectors.

Creating the right home environment is not only essential for residents, but is vital to enable many other organisations to achieve their ambitions, policy objectives and duties, such as improved health and wellbeing, educational achievement of children and young people, employment, crime reduction and sustainable, resilient communities.

Under a range of legislation there is a requirement for closer cooperation of services that support the health and wellbeing of those who may be in need of care and support. As part of a drive for more integration, a pioneering **national Health and Housing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** between government departments was signed. This supported joint action on improving health through the home.

The Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership (Partnership) developed their own local Memorandum of Understanding (local MoU) which expanded the range of partners (see below for list of partners) who have a shared commitment to joint action. The **local MoU** sets out how the Partnership will work together to address housing need and achieve the wider benefits to partner organisations. The aims in the local MoU underpin this Partnership Plan.

Members of the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership



The Vision

To create the *right* home environment for Worcestershire residents that is essential to their health, wealth and wellbeing, throughout life

DEFINITION: the 'right home environment' is not the same for all. However, generally it should be:

- Affordable
- In good repair
- Well insulated and energy efficient
- Accessible, well planned and designed
- Not overcrowded
- In a safe neighbourhood with good infrastructure and access to amenities

The right home environment will:

- Meet local housing need and prevent homelessness
- Improve health and wellbeing and prevent ill-health
- Enable people to manage their health and care needs
- Enable people to remain in their own home for as long as they choose
- Delay and reduce the need for health care and social care interventions
- Enable timely discharge and reduce hospital re-admissions
- Create family stability
- Create the foundations required for all people to access education training and employment
- Create thriving communities with attractive localities which draws in investment to the local economy
- Reduce the dependency on the welfare state

Current and Future Issues

The following are the headline issues affecting Worcestershire. Please see **Section 2 National and Local Picture** for more detailed information.

Welfare reform and changing legislation

(For more detailed information Welfare Reforms please see Section 3)

We are in the midst of large-scale changes to the welfare system and the implementation of new legislation nationally. Many of these will have a significant impact on local people on low incomes, many of whom will be in work. We are yet to feel the full affect in Worcestershire of some these welfare reforms and legislation. The key areas are highlighted below.

- **People aged 35 and under** will only able to claim housing benefit at the single room rate in both social and private rented housing, making self contained accommodation unaffordable. Worcestershire has 1395 people under 35 on the housing waiting list and 331 of which are homeless as of May 2016, making up 33% of the homeless households on the waiting list.
- Due to the **1% reduction in rent levels**, the implementation of **Universal Credit**, the **future funding of supported housing** and the de-regulation of their activities, Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) need to focus on the financial viability of their business plans, whether they will keep developing and whose housing needs they will be meeting.
- The **Homelessness Reduction Bill** will significantly reform England's homelessness legislation. It places a duty on local authorities to help all eligible people at risk of homelessness to secure accommodation, and at a much earlier stage (56 days before they are threatened with homelessness).

Inadequate supply of housing including affordable housing

- Worcestershire RSLs are committed to current delivery and investment plans. Stock Transfer RSLs delivered 1343 new homes over the past two years, and have plans to develop a further 638 this year, and a further 695 in 2017/18. They face a changing environment with a number of delivery challenges. These challenges to increasing housing stock will further be compounded by the Voluntary Right to Buy for housing association tenants which will be implemented in 2017.
- We need to ensure that there are a sufficient number of good quality homes for the population to address the housing shortage and support economic growth ambitions. **Worcestershire needs to develop between 2228 and 2408 homes a year** according to the South Worcestershire Development Plan, North Worcestershire Housing Needs Assessment and the Wyre Forest Objectively Assessed Housing Needs document.
- The Economic Strategy for Worcestershire 2010 – 2020 acknowledges that “failure to meet future housing need/demand, including affordable housing will have an impact on the county's economy” and will impact on the housing growth targets for the County.

Supporting vulnerable groups and preventing homelessness

- There is **rising homelessness across Worcestershire**, with a 10% increase in people seeking homeless assistance from their local authority since 2010 and a 25% increase in homelessness acceptances.
- Local Authorities aim to prevent homelessness where possible and the numbers prevented from becoming homeless have been increasing over recent years. However, the results of the Worcestershire homelessness review show that **the overall increase in homelessness**

is between 15% and 55% with the highest increases in Wyre Forest and Wychavon and the smallest increases in Bromsgrove and Malvern.

- However, the profile has changed and it has been reported that there is a **higher number of households with more complex needs** including mental health, physical health and other support needs. These households are typically harder to sustainably rehouse. This is compounded by the identified current gaps in services for some vulnerable groups both generally and in terms of geographical inconsistencies. It should also be highlighted that some services may be at risk due to uncertainty around future funding.
- Of huge significance is the **Government's new housing costs funding model for supported housing**. The Government is currently consulting on the design of the new model of funding for supported housing which will be critical in continuing to meet the housing and support needs of vulnerable people locally and nationally.

Poor condition and affordability in the private rented sector

We have increasingly relied on the growing private rental sector to meet housing need, but it is a more insecure tenure, properties can be in poor condition and affordability is an issue. The following issues highlighted below make it a sector that needs to have the focus of our attention.

- The ending of private rented tenancies is consistently one of the top three reasons for homelessness in the County, which is comparative to the national picture.
- At 29%, national figures show that the private rented sector had the highest proportion of non-decent homes (ie, is in a reasonable state of repair, has reasonably modern facilities and a reasonable degree of thermal comfort) while the social rented sector had the lowest (14%)¹
- Some 9% of private rented dwellings had some type of damp problem, compared with 5% of social rented dwellings, and 3% of owner occupied dwellings.
- It is the least affordable tenure (housing costs) with 35% of the Worcestershire population unable to afford the rent for one bedroom accommodation.

Housing and Health

- It should be highlighted that one in five homes presents a risk to health, the majority of these are in the private sector with 15% homes nationally in poor condition with a cost to the NHS of £1.4bn p.a. The cost to society is estimated to be £18.6bn including costs to education and employment².
- Fuel poverty (where a low income household is struggling to pay heating costs - this may be due to an inefficient heating system and/or poor insulation) is significantly worse in

¹ English Housing Survey Headline Report 2014-15

² BRE, Briefing Note: The cost of poor housing to the NHS

Worcestershire than the England average affecting around 11.2% of households compared with only 10.4% of households in England as a whole.

- Excess winter deaths (all ages) 2010-2013 are again higher in the County. There are 17.4 deaths for England compared to 18.6 for Worcestershire.³

Priorities

These jointly identified priorities will be delivered to provide a cost effective solution which will focus on system change to meet customer need in the best way.

- Drive the growth of the *right type* of homes (to promote opportunity)
- Improve homes and, "transform places"
- Create a partnership approach to enable people to live as independently as possible (prevention/early intervention)

Actions – what we are going to do

The following high level actions set out how we will deliver on the priorities identified above. Project plans and/or proposals will be developed by the Partnership to deliver on the actions below, adding value and targeting gaps, whilst recognising that customer needs will continue to be addressed within a range of other plans and strategies.

- **Maximise the delivery of good quality housing** *of the right type and tenure* by co-ordinating the activities of housing developers, providers and support agencies to meet existing and future housing need in a sustainable way.
 - Build new homes
 - Investigate alternative models of affordable housing delivery to meet the housing and support needs of specific groups and sectors of the housing market.
 - Attract funding opportunities to support delivery of identified housing development priorities.
- **Improve existing homes** to tackle the personal, social, economic, mental and physical health, and community impacts of poor quality and inaccessible housing (and cold homes) across the private sector.

³ Public Health Outcomes Framework

- **Improve collaboration, coordination and integration of healthcare and housing** in the planning, commissioning and delivery of homes and also services that focus on early intervention.
- **Develop an integrated approach to enable people with multiple and complex needs** to receive the services they need (not limited by existing practice or legislation) to change and support them to achieve resilience, health and well being and independence within their communities in Worcestershire.
- **Create a simpler and more accessible pathway for *all* matters relating to disability and vulnerability**, empowering people to make the right choices to enable them to live independently.
- **Promote the strategic and operational impact of the housing sector** and ensure it influences key business planning processes in Worcestershire.

Please see **Section 6** for information on what are we doing now and **Section 8** on current resources.

From Strategy to Action

The Plan is a high level document setting out how we will work together to meet the housing and housing related support needs of households in Worcestershire. This new approach is conditional to the way we work together and the development of a truly integrated approach. Housing has to be recognised as a fundamental component of creating a whole systems approach. The high level strategic actions contained in this plan will be owned and led by the Partnership and identified organisations to create detailed action plans setting out how we will achieve the high level actions and the desired outcomes. The appropriate links will be inserted into this document taking you to each of the project plans relating to the high level actions. The Plan and delivery of the associated actions will be monitored through the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership and through other relevant strategic groups as required.

A refresh of the Plan will take place annually. This will also be overseen and approved by the Partnership.

SECTION 1 – LOCAL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

WORCESTERSHIRE STRATEGIC HOUSING PARTNERSHIP MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BACKGROUND

The right home environment is essential for delivering outcomes which support other strategic objectives, such as improved health and wellbeing, educational attainment, economic prosperity due to increased employment, crime reduction and sustainable communities.

The aims of the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership (WSHP) is to ensure that a wide range of high quality housing and related services are available across all sectors of the house market, which is secure, affordable, of a high standard and meets varying and changing needs and aspirations.

Poor and unsuitable housing circumstances affect our physical health and mental health. Providing the right home environment protects health and wellbeing, reduces hospital admissions, aids rapid recovery from periods of ill health and enables people to live at home longer. Under the Care Act 2012 there is a requirement for closer cooperation of services that support the health and wellbeing of those who may be in need of care and support.

Housing also plays a fundamental role in contributing to the attractiveness of localities which draw in investment by business and supports the local economy. The accessibility of housing, including affordable housing, enables effective labour markets increasing and supports mobility to access employment.

Housing has an important role to play across a wide range of services and this Memorandum of Understanding sets out our shared commitment to joint action and the principles of joint working for better outcomes in a cost effective way.

OUR AIMS

Working together we will seek to address housing need and achieve the wider benefits to partner organisations.

- Effective partnership working to deliver housing outcomes which will in turn support other strategic objectives, such as improved health and wellbeing, educational achievement of children, employment, crime reduction and sustainable communities
- Improved collaboration, coordination and integration of healthcare and housing in the planning, commissioning and delivery of homes and services
- Promotion of the housing sector contribution towards addressing the wider determinants of health, social exclusion and re-offending.
- Maximising the delivery of housing by co-ordinating the activities of housing developers, providers and support agencies which will support economic growth

- Addressing the housing needs of specific groups and sectors of the housing market
- The provision of good quality housing to improve health and wellbeing.
- Integrated health, care and support and housing solutions to make best use of budgets across the NHS, local authorities and partners to achieve outcomes for less; for example, drawing on the Better Care Fund to support service transformation.
- A co-ordinated response to long term changes in the population
- Better use of existing housing stock
- Co-ordinated support for vulnerable people
- Increasing availability of affordable homes

PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

- To have the skills, knowledge, expertise and statutory tools necessary to make successful and complimentary interventions in the housing market.
- A shared vision and culture of cooperation and coordination working closely with public, voluntary and private sector providers to improve services
- A whole systems and outcomes-based approach to meeting the needs
- To make decisions based on a robust understanding of the needs of individuals, their carers and families now and in the future
- Solutions to meet local needs based on evidence of 'what works'.
- To have an innovative approach
- Sharing information and good practice.

WHAT WE WILL DO TO ACHIEVE THESE AIMS

- To have a shared plan setting out the priorities for housing and how they will be delivered.
- Initiate joint training opportunities.
- Exploring opportunities for pooled funding that can bring added value to partners involved.
- Develop, lead and drive the Worcestershire strategies and strategic plans which relate to housing, housing related support needs and the growth and economic success agenda to ensure a joined up approach across the county
- To work together for the mutual benefit of Worcestershire by considering and addressing strategic issues relevant to the provision of housing and related support services.

- To act as a key consultative group for the Chief Executives Panel, the Local Authority Leadership/Management Teams, the Health & Well-being Board, or any successor bodies and the Local Enterprise Partnership. .
- To enable feedback to be given from other relevant county-wide groups.
- To ensure adequate needs information is made available in relation to all client groups
- To ensure that the benefits of good quality housing are recognised by all other bodies / and that all related initiatives are co-ordinated by the group
- To develop ideas for joint working and to engage across the partnership to achieve joint objectives in a cost effective and efficient way.
- To explore new housing and related support initiatives.
- To raise awareness of the housing and support needs within Worcestershire to help support partnership working.
- To establish joint protocols where relevant.
- Develop the workforce across sectors so that they are confident and skilled in understanding the relationship between where people live and are able to identify suitable solutions to improve outcomes
- Ensure that all stakeholders understand the needs of their customers and communities; their knowledge and insight can enable housing partners to identify and target those who are most in need.

ORGANISATIONS THAT ENABLE THE RIGHT HOME ENVIRONMENT

At a local level the right home environment is enabled by a range of stakeholders (not exhaustive):

- Local housing and planning authorities private sector, prevent homelessness, Home Improvement Agency.
- Housing providers' knowledge of their tenants and communities, and expertise in engagement, informs their plans to develop new homes and manage their existing homes to best meet needs.
- Voluntary and community sector offers a wide range of services, from rent deposit schemes for homeless people to information and advice to housing support services.
- Local Health and Wellbeing Boards have a duty to understand the health and wellbeing of their communities, the wider factors that impact on this and local assets that can help to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities. The inclusion of housing and housing circumstances, e.g. homelessness in Joint Strategic Needs Assessments, should inform the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and local commissioning;

- Housing, care and support providers provide specialist housing and a wide range of services to enable people to re-establish their lives after a crisis, e.g. homelessness, or time in hospital, and to remain in their own home as their health and care needs change. Home improvement agencies and handy person services deliver adaptations and a wide range of other home improvements to enable people to remain safe and warm in their own home;

OVERSIGHT AND DELIVERY OF THIS AGREEMENT

Membership

This comprises of a range of strategic partners to include; Adult Services & Health, Children's Services, Quality Leads from the Clinical Commissioning Groups, CRC, Homes & Communities Agency, 2 reps from Registered Social Landlords, Local Authorities Strategic Housing Officers, Community Safety Partnership Lead, Chair of the Worcestershire Delivery Group, Third Sector representative, Department of Works and Pensions,

- WSHP will engage with service users via relevant Service User Groups as required.
- WSHP will engage with Provider representatives via the Provider Forum as required
- Contract / Commissioning Leads and other guests to be invited for relevant Agenda items as required.

Frequency and Venue of Meetings:

Meetings shall be held bi-monthly, usually in Bromsgrove offices.

Confidentiality

WSHP members will respect the need for confidentiality, when discussing matters that affect the group. Agreement about the release of information that may be sensitive, for broader audiences will be determined by the group.

Chairmanship, Agenda setting and Minute Taking

- The positions of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary will be determined on an annual basis, effective from April each year.
- The Secretary shall be responsible for producing and circulating:
 - the minutes of the WSHP meeting within 7 days of taking place
 - An update of the Forward Plan to be circulated along with the minutes
 - An agenda 7 days before the date of the next WSHP meeting

Voting

There will be no formal voting arrangements for the WSHP. The intention of the Group is to work on a consensual basis and to recognise the autonomy of the individual member organisations.

Reporting arrangements

The Secretary will ensure that agendas and associated paperwork are forwarded to the Housing Lead of the Worcestershire Chief Executives Panel

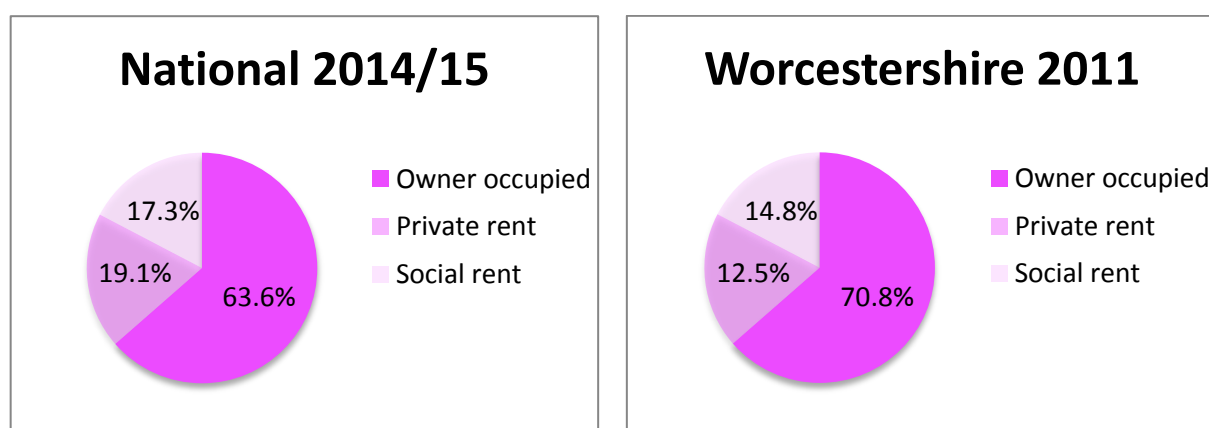
SECTION 2 - NATIONAL AND LOCAL PICTURE

THE POPULATION

There is a population of 575,400 in Worcestershire and this figure is expected to increase by a further 21,579 over the next 10 years with the biggest increase in the older population. The County has a higher proportion of older people than nationally which presents some on-going challenges.

HOUSING STOCK AND AFFORDABILITY

The charts below illustrate the breakdown of property by tenure nationally and the comparison in Worcestershire. Worcestershire has a significant proportion of households within the private sector, which has the highest number of unhealthy homes.



As can be seen below, the quality and affordability of housing varies between the different tenures.

Social/Affordable Rent	Private Rent	Owner Occupation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14.8% homes in Worcestershire Shrinking tenure & will continue Healthiest homes Highest % accessible homes Most overcrowded & least under-occupied Second most affordable tenure (housing costs) Higher proportion of older households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12.5% of homes in Worcestershire Growing tenure & expected to continue Highest prevalence of unhealthy homes Second most accessible homes Second most overcrowded & least under-occupied Least affordable tenure (housing costs) Higher proportion of working age and family households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 70.8% homes in Worcestershire Shrinking tenure: future unknown? Highest number of unhealthy homes Least accessible homes Least overcrowded & most under-occupied Most affordable tenure – if you are able to put down a deposit or are if you are already a home owner Highest number of older households

Owner Occupation

The Government's drive is towards affordable home ownership, using the rented sector as a short term solution. However, home ownership is not an option for all. In Q4 2014, the mean house price in the county had increased by 7.6% on the previous quarter to £226,259.⁴ The average household income in Worcestershire is £37,000 (2013) which makes average house prices more than six times the average income.

Although house prices had increased across Worcestershire there were some district variations. For example;

- The greatest increase in house prices was in Wychavon, which saw a rise of 12.0%.
- There was a decrease in house prices in Malvern Hills of -1.6%.

There were also variations across the districts in terms of property sales. The number of property sales in Q4 2014 was 3.4% higher than in Q4 2013. However Malvern Hills and Wyre Forest saw a decrease in sales of -5.6% and -7.0% respectively whilst Worcester saw the greatest increase in sales of 13.8%⁵.

Private Rental Sector

We have increasingly relied on the growing private rental sector as the social sector continues to decline, but affordability is an issue and properties can be in poor condition. The ending of private rented tenancies is consistently one of the top three reasons for homelessness in the County, which is comparative to the national picture. These issues make it a sector that needs to have the focus of our attention.

The average rents per month nationally are shown below.

Private Rents monthly	Room	Studio	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Worcestershire	£355	£346	£452	£578	£699	£1,064
Annual Income needed ⁶	£17,040	£16,608	£21,696	£27,744	£33,352	£51,072
England	£362	£555	£606	£677	£771	£1,348

Source – Private Rental Market Statistics 2013/14

The annual income for Worcestershire shown below highlights how at least 12% of the population would not be able to afford to rent a room at average rent in the private rental sector and, 35% of the population could not afford to rent one bedroom accommodation.

⁴ Source: Land Registry, 2014.

⁵ Source: LandRegistry,2015

⁶ The annual income required to be able to afford to access this sector has been calculated so that the rent makes up no more than 25% of the annual income including benefits.

Annual Income - Worcestershire	Proportion of Population
Less than £10,000	12%
Between £10,000 and £20,000	23%
Between £20,000 and £30,000	17%
Between £30,000 and £50,000	24%
Over £50,000	24%

Source – Worcestershire Atlas (2013)

Social Sector

Social housing is affordable housing provided by either registered providers e.g. Fortis Living and Wyre Forest Community Housing or local authorities who have retained their own housing stock – within Worcestershire this is only Redditch Borough Council. A key function of social housing is to provide accommodation that is affordable to people on low incomes.

Social Rents (housing association) monthly	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Worcestershire	£299	£331	£356	£393
Annual Income Needed ¹	£14,352	£15,888	£17,088	£18,864
England	£328	£375	£419	£504

Source – RSR Guide to Local Rents 2011 for Worcestershire and Core Data 2014/15 for England

As well as open market housing being unaffordable to many, we are finding it increasingly difficult to ensure that social housing for rent remains affordable to those on low incomes. Government wants to increase the rate of new house building and housing associations have an important role in contributing to this. Funding the delivery of more affordable homes for rent and homeownership, whilst maintaining affordable rent levels, is a continuing challenge. As can be seen in the table below, affordable rents are becoming increasingly unaffordable to those working and non working households on lower incomes.

Affordable Rents monthly	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Worcestershire	£364	£455	£540	£733
Annual Income Needed ¹	£17,472	£21,840	£25,920	£35,184
England	£508	£519	£567	£709

Source – RSR Guide to Local Rents 2011 for Worcestershire and Core Data 2014/15 for England

Housing Shortage

In order to address the housing shortage within Worcestershire and ensure there are a sufficient number of good quality homes for the population, Worcestershire needs to develop between 2228 and 2408 homes a year according to the South Worcestershire Development Plan, North Worcestershire Housing Needs Assessment and the Wyre Forest Objectively Assessed Housing Needs document.

This mismatch in supply and demand contributes to:-

- Affordability and suitability issues nationally and locally.
- Migration from more expensive areas.
- Increasing number of working households across Worcestershire needing Housing Benefit. The number of claimants has risen from 30,837 in April 2009 to 34,139 in April 2016.
- Rising homelessness across Worcestershire, experienced by all households with a 10% increase in people seeking homeless assistance from their local authority since 2010 and a 25% increase in homelessness acceptances.
- Lack of specialist independent living e.g. people with learning and other disabilities who are placed out of county or remain living with families.

HOMELESSNESS IN WORCESTERSHIRE

- Results from the Worcestershire Homelessness Review 2016 confirmed that levels of homelessness applications have increased over the last 5 years. However, the top three reasons for homelessness remain unchanged:-
 - Family and friends being unable to accommodate
 - End of assured short hold tenancies
 - Breakdown of relationships, both violent and non violent
- The proportion of people becoming homeless due to private rented tenancies ending has increased over the past 5 years and if trends continue it will become the biggest cause for homelessness. Previously it has been breakdown of relationships with family and friends.

- Local Authorities aim to prevent homelessness where possible and the numbers prevented from becoming homeless have been increasing over recent years. However, the profile has changed and it has been reported that there is a higher number of households with more complex needs including mental health, physical health and other support needs. These households are typically harder to sustainably rehouse.
- The Review also highlighted how choice is being limited as the private rental sector is becoming more risk averse towards clients on low income or on housing benefit. This is compounded by the data which shows that Housing Associations are letting a smaller proportion of their properties to households in receipt of Housing Benefit (this warrants further research), a drop of 5% of the proportion of lettings to households in receipt of Housing Benefit since 2010 throughout Worcestershire. This may force households to move or live in poor, unsuitable, unstable homes.

HOUSING AND HEALTH

In addition to the complexities above, it should be highlighted that one in five homes presents a risk to health, the majority of these are in the private sector with 15% homes nationally in poor condition with a cost to the NHS of £1.4bn p.a. The cost to society is estimated to be £18.6bn including costs to education and employment⁷.

A household is in fuel poverty and lack thermal comfort if they are on a low income and struggle to pay heating costs e.g. this may be due to an inefficient heating system and/or poor insulation. This consequently contributes to health and social inequalities. It has a direct effect on heart attack, stroke, respiratory disease, flu, falls and injuries and hypothermia⁸

- Fuel poverty is significantly worse in Worcestershire than the England average affecting around 11.2% of households compared with only 10.4% of households in England as a whole.
- Excess winter deaths (all ages) 2010-2013 are again higher in the County. There are 17.4 deaths for England compared to 18.6 for Worcestershire.⁹

There is strong evidence for the positive social impact of better housing (Friedman 2010); for example, the Marmot Review (2010) cites housing as one of the key social determinants of health inequalities alongside education, employment and standard of living.

The highest risks to health in housing are attached to cold, damp and mouldy conditions; cold conditions are statistically associated with early winter deaths, being four times more likely in the coldest homes (Marmot, 2011).

⁷ BRE, Briefing Note: The cost of poor housing to the NHS

⁸ JSNA: Fuel Poverty 2016

⁹ Public Health Outcomes Framework

Tackling fuel poverty and cold and damp homes is important for improving health outcomes and reducing health inequalities. Local housing authorities and Health and Well-being Boards should provide partnerships which can work together to tackle these issues effectively, in line with the recommendations of the Worcestershire Fuel Poverty Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2016.

DISABILITY ACCESS

Government statistics show that there are currently more than 11 million disabled people in Great Britain. Our ageing society means that there will be an increase in the number of older disabled people as time goes on, rising from 2.3 million in 2002 to 4.6 million in 2041.

The vast majority of existing housing has poor access standards: government research shows that 91.5% of homes are not even fully 'visitable' by disabled people (including wheelchair users) as they don't have four very basic features that would allow adequate access. These four basic features are level access, flush threshold, toilet at entrance level and sufficiently wide doors and circulation space.

The legacy of building properties with poor accessibility means that many people are faced with the need to adapt their home if they are disabled or become disabled. The demand for Disabled Facilities Grant's (DFG's) is increasing with more than 1 in 10 adults saying that they are either unable, or find it difficult, to move, walk or stand independently and a further 1.25 million people in England are living with significant sight loss. As the population ages the number of people with disabilities is rising. However, only 5% of the housing stock is fully accessible and few accessible homes are being built. This means that potentially demand is more than ten times greater than the funding available.

Analysis shows that on average DFG's help about 40,000 people a year with adaptations to their homes on a national basis. Within Worcestershire 408 DFG's were completed during the financial year 2015/16. This equates to a total spend on completed adaptations of just over £2 million. The value of cases diverted to another solution or decided not to proceed was £2,291,312. The majority of grants were paid to 60+ households and, with Worcestershire's growing number of ageing people this figure is predicted to increase.

Age	Number of grants
60+	257
20-60	116
Children and young people	35
Total	408

EXTRA CARE HOUSING

The Extra Care Commissioning Strategy 2012-26 has identified a need for 4703 units of extra care accommodation of which 3450 are for sale and 1253 for rent. To date 709 units for sale and 688 units for rent are either in use or under development. There remains a gap of 2676

units. Extra Care provides a cost effective way of maintaining an individual's independence for longer and reducing isolation.

Supported living for people with learning and other disabilities is a key priority, enabling people to live independently close to families and social circle. Housing needs to be varied and include cluster flats, shared houses and specialist ground floor accommodation for people with complex physical needs.

The Transforming Care Agenda expects local authorities to work to move people currently locked in step down accommodation into supported living.

SECTION 3 - WELFARE REFORMS

We are in the midst of large-scale changes to the welfare system nationally, and significant reductions in welfare related spending, which is having an impact on local people on low incomes – many of whom will be in work. For example:

- **Local Housing Allowance** rates - on which housing benefit is calculated - are based on the lowest 30% of rent levels across Worcestershire and will be frozen for 4 years.
- The **spare room subsidy** was introduced in April 2013. Working age social housing tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit with one spare room had their housing benefit cut by 14% and those with two or more spare bedrooms have seen a reduction by 25%.
- An **overall benefit cap** was also introduced in July 2013, and from November 2016 this will be reduced to £20,000 outside of London in benefit nationally (£13,400 for single adults with no children). This puts particular pressure on larger families who have much higher housing and living costs. The two child limit on benefit payments will also have a huge impact on larger families.
- **People aged 35 and under** will only be able to claim housing benefit at the single room rate in both social and private rented housing.
- The introduction of **universal credit**, which is currently being rolled out across the country, will see all working age benefits, (excluding Disability Living Allowance and Carer's Allowance) made in one single monthly payment, paid directly to the tenant. Tenants will be responsible for paying their rent to their landlord themselves, with exceptions made for some vulnerable tenants on a case by case basis.

HOUSING & PLANNING ACT 2016




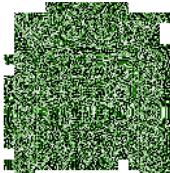

Further reforms within the Housing & Planning Act 2016 such as the **-1% rent reduction** per year to social housing rents over the next four years, that housing associations are required to make, will have a positive short term affect on low income tenants. However, due to the implementation of Universal Credit and the de-regulation of their activities, Housing Associations need to focus on the financial viability of their business plans, whether they will keep developing and whose housing needs they will be meeting.


There has been a clear message from Housing Associations that single person's accommodation will continue to be delivered. However, due to Welfare Reform changes, the level of benefits for people under 35 will make self contained accommodation unaffordable for people under 35 without employment or on a low income. Housing Associations will continue to support needs of the community but they will need to look at the impact of these changes as there will be risks and challenges to providing accommodation to under 35s. Worcestershire has 1395 under 35 on the housing waiting list and 331 of which are homeless as of May 2016, making up 33% of the homeless households on the waiting list.

All of the above issues will create a significant gap in provision for affordable housing in general. It is therefore essential that a new and alternative model of delivery to meet housing and support needs is created.

SECTION 4 - NATIONAL POLICY DIRECTION

The national direction is being driven by a range of Government strategy, legislation and new requirements. The most significant to this Plan are identified below:

 Care Act 2014	<p>The Care Act 2014 introduced a general duty on local authorities to promote an individual's well being. Under the Act, there is an expectation that well being should be supported in a more 'joined up' way, through greater integration of health and care provision.</p> <p>The suitability of living accommodation is clearly listed as part of the definition of well being.</p>
 Welfare Reform Act 2012	<p>The Act introduced major changes to the social welfare system. It has a huge impact on tenants who claim benefits, their landlords, local housing markets and a range of agencies including strategic housing authorities and those providing money and benefits advice.</p> <p>Please see the Worcestershire Homelessness Review 2016 for detailed information on the impacts of these changes for Worcestershire.</p>
 Housing and Planning Act 2016	<p>The Housing and Planning Act 2016 has now received Royal Assent. It provides the necessary legislation for Government to implement the sale of higher value local authority homes, starter homes, pay to stay and a number of other measures, mainly intended to promote homeownership and boost levels of housebuilding in England.</p>
	<p>On 28th October 2016 the Homelessness Reduction Bill was voted through to the next stage in Parliament, winning unanimous support from MP's across political parties. The private members bill is now one step closer to becoming law, likely by Spring 2017 with enactment from September 2017. It places a duty on Council's to prevent homelessness at a much earlier stage and expands the categories of people eligible for support.</p>
	<p>The way we work together and the lack of suitable housing can influence, and impact on health. The NHS 5 Year Forward View published in October 2014 noted that a key condition for transformation across local health economies is about providing care in people's own homes, with a focus on prevention, promoting independence and support to stay well.</p>



The **Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STP)** are a key element on the NHS Shared Planning Guidance and the local implementation of the **Five Year Forward View**. It outlines a new approach to help ensure that health and care services are built around the needs of local populations

The STP will cover better integration with local authority services, including, but not limited to, prevention and social care, reflecting local agreed health and wellbeing strategies.


Supporting people with a learning disability and/or autism who display behaviour that challenges, including those with a mental health condition

October 2015

The Transforming Care National Service Model (2015) provides guidance to Councils and partners on supporting people with a learning disability and/or autism who display behaviour that challenges, including people with a mental health condition.


LOCAL DIRECTION

Delivering on the national agenda, the key Worcestershire wide local documents are set out below:-



As part of a drive for more integration, a pioneering **Health and Housing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** has been signed up to between government departments. It includes agencies such NHS England, Public Health England and the Homes and Communities Agency.

A Worcestershire MoU also sets out this shared commitment, but to an extended range of agencies.



Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board have signed up to the Charter for Homeless Health which works towards tackling health inequality among people who are homeless. In summary, the Charter will:

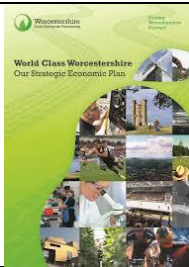
- Provide leadership to address homelessness health
- Work with homelessness services and people to ensure the needs of homeless are included in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- Provide local health services meet the needs of people who are homeless

Agenda Item No. 7.1 Appendix 1



BETTER CARE FUND PLAN 2016/17

Since 2014, all local areas are required to pool elements of health and social care funding into a **Better Care Fund Plan** which includes funding for disabled facilities grants. This is to enable local areas to work more closely based on a plan agreed between the NHS and local authorities'. Its aim is to move "away from a 'sickness service', and towards one that enables people to live independent and healthy lives in the community for as long as possible by joining up services around the person and their individual needs".



Worcestershire Strategic Economic Plan sets out the strategic ambitions to consolidate business growth and create jobs in Worcestershire over the next 20 years.

"To enable business growth will require good quality, reasonably priced housing to enable a thriving sustainable economy."



Worcestershire's Extra Care Strategy sets out the strategic direction for the development of a range of extra care housing across Worcestershire



Worcestershire County Council's Housing and Support Commissioning Plan sets out the range of housing required in Worcestershire for people with learning and other disabilities.

The HCA/CIH Accelerating Prosperity through Housing in the West Midland (due mid Jan 2017)

Warmer Worcestershire – Fuel Poverty Plan for Worcestershire (available soon)

SECTION 5 - WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW

Below are some highlighted areas of current work being undertaken and challenges/plans for the future.

- **JOINT WORKING AND WORCESTERSHIRE STRATEGIC HOUSING PARTNERSHIP:** Our joint working relationships are being continually developed and improved to deliver services more effectively and efficiently. There are some excellent examples of effective partnership working in the County. For example, the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership (WSHP) brings together a wide range of organisations at a strategic level and will oversee the work on this Plan.

Challenge: To continue to work in an integrated way across health, social care, housing and other agencies.

- **JOINT WORKING AROUND YOUNG PEOPLE AND HOMELESSNESS:**

1. **Worcestershire Young Persons Pathway Workers.** District councils and Children's Services jointly commission a housing support model, known as the Positive Pathway, to prevent young people from becoming homeless.

Young Persons Pathway Workers, based in homeless teams across the County, provide an integrated advice, mediation, referral and assessment service in conjunction with Children's Services. The model also includes supported accommodation for 16 to 17 year olds, young families and 18-23 year olds and a floating support service.

2. **Nightstop schemes** across the county work closely with the young people's pathway workers, Children's Services and the local housing authorities in crisis intervention: it provides homeless 16-25 year olds with emergency accommodation until more suitable accommodation can be found and also in prevention: It provides a mediation service for young people and their parent/ carer to improve their relationship thus preventing homelessness.

3. **Worcestershire Joint Protocol for Young Homeless People (16 and 17 year olds and Care Leavers):** District Councils and Children's Services have an extensive history of working together on a young persons protocol to prevent homelessness and secure positive outcomes for young people. The Protocol enables all partners to understand their roles and responsibilities and to engage more effectively in joint working to safeguard young people.

It ensures that young homeless people do not fall through the net of statutory agencies and do not become vulnerable to street homelessness or exploitation.

Challenge: To continue to align existing statutory services to provide better outcomes for young people

- **CARE AND REPAIR AGENCY:** Worcestershire has a jointly commissioned Care & Repair service to provide a range of assistance to enable independence for older and vulnerable people including benefit and energy advice, a handy man service, minor adaptations and disabled facilities grants. This type of service is essential to meeting the needs of the changing population and provides a range of assistance for older and vulnerable people across the different health, housing and social sectors focused on helping them to remain living independently in their own home.

Challenge: We are working to deliver this service in a more timely way and via a much simpler process to access the different services available.

- **HOMELESS SERVICES:** The Homeless Services across the county have been providing early intervention, identifying the root causes and working to prevent as many households as possible from becoming homeless for a number of years. This has also been enhanced with a new service preventing single people from spending more than a single night out on the street and ensuring that they do not become the entrenched rough sleepers of the future. Homelessness is not a situation anyone would wish to find themselves in, but for the majority of families the system is straightforward and either prevents them from becoming homeless or seamlessly takes them through the homeless system.

Challenge: The countywide Homelessness Review 2016 highlighted that the homeless service does not adequately meet the needs of families and single people with complex needs. The number of single people approaching as homeless with an identified vulnerability has now exceeded the number of families. A different and more integrated approach needs to be developed to address the needs of these households. We need to work together better to end homelessness and the on-going impact this has on people's lives. There is also concern around the ability to re-house single people who have housing related debt, particularly as a result of the benefit cap and shared accommodation rate.

- **MODELS OF HOUSING WITH SUPPORT:** The Worcestershire local authorities have always worked with partners who commission housing support services or, they have directly commissioned the services themselves.

Challenge: With no revenue funding following the demise of Supporting People, reduced levels of supported accommodation and, higher access thresholds for social care support provision this creates the "perfect storm" along with the changes imposed by welfare reform. This will be further impacted by the changes to the benefit system. From 2019/20 core rents and eligible service charges for supported housing will continue to be funded in the same way, but both new and existing tenants will be subject to the LHA cap. Supported housing will be exempt from the shared accommodation rate for single people under 35. However local authorities will be given control of a 'top up' fund to

cover the additional costs associated with providing supported housing, over and above LHA,

There is currently limited ability to deliver new models of housing with support or even sustain existing support for a need that will continue to exist. Therefore a cohesive and co-ordinated approach is required to maximise funding opportunities and continue to develop a range of housing with support across the county.

- **AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** We work with our partners including housing developers to deliver new affordable housing for rent and homeownership.

Challenge: It is becoming more difficult to deliver affordable rented housing in the traditional way e.g. local authority enabling. At the end of 2015/16, 454 new affordable homes had been delivered across Worcestershire. The future supply of affordable homes for rent will be impacted by the government emphasis for affordable homeownership which is the tenure prioritised to receive Homes & Communities Agency funding. New housing for homeownership and rent needs to be more affordable, maximising Worcestershire's share of national affordable housing funding.

- **PRIVATE RENTED HOUSING:** All the Worcestershire local housing authorities are using the private rented sector to house homeless households and many have set up their own in-house local lettings agencies to provide private rented accommodation. They also support deposit bond schemes by working with the voluntary sector and work with private landlords and letting agencies.

Challenge: Direct to landlord payments were used as an incentives to the landlords providing their properties to the local authority. The ability to use these as an incentive will no longer be possible due to Universal Credit being paid direct to tenants and therefore the ability to meet housing need using private rented sector accommodation is going to be far more difficult.

- **CONNECTING FAMILIES:** Connecting Families is a county wide approach to build relationships to influence systems to change from the service users point of view. Within the Connecting Families approach is the Connecting Families Family Support Team, who provide targeted family support following the same of approach of listening to the customer's needs and providing a bespoke package of support. Directly linked to the family support team are experts from outside services, called change champions, who support the family with their areas of expertise, and help the Connecting Families team understand and break down blockages within their own services which are preventing the families from meeting their needs.

Challenge: It will require significant transformation to the way in which public services are delivered.

SECTION 6 - EVIDENCE GATHERING/CONSULTATION

This Partnership document, the priorities, and actions have been developed through consultation with partner organisations, service providers and through other forms of consultation with residents e.g. Homelessness Customer Survey and the Worcestershire View Point Survey.

Our Evidence

The following background documents contain a detailed analysis of the issues affecting housing and health and were the key documents used to support this Partnership Plan.

- JSNA: Briefing on Homelessness 2015
- JSNA: Briefing on Fuel Poverty 2016
- JSNA: Domestic Abuse and Violence Needs Assessment 2016
- Worcestershire Homelessness Review 2016
- Worcestershire Health and Well-being Board Draft Joint Health and Well-being Strategy 2016-2019
- Housing Authority Stock Condition Surveys and Tenancy Strategy Frameworks
- South Worcestershire Development Plan 2016
- North Worcestershire Housing Need Assessment 2014
- Worcestershire Viewpoint Survey May 2015
- Stakeholder Engagement Consultation
- Housing Britain's Future - Some Home Truths: National Housing Federation – 2013 report on the consequences of not providing enough housing to meet the needs of our young people. <http://www.housing.org.uk/publications/browse/housing-britains-future-somehome-truth>
- Census Data 2011
- <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk>
- An Economic Strategy for Worcestershire 2010 – 2020
- Private Rental Market Statistics 2013/14
- CORE Data 2014/2015
- BRE, Briefing Note: The cost of poor housing to the NHS (2015)
- RSR Guide to Local Rents 2011
- Worcestershire District Profiles
- Housing Benefit Case Load Statistics
- Wyre Forest Objectively Assesses Housing Needs
- Homelessness P1Es and Rough Sleeper Data 2010 onwards
- English Housing Survey Headline Report 2014-15

SECTION 7 - RESOURCES

Detailed below are current and future funding sources identified for the provision of housing and housing related support both nationally and locally. This funding is in addition to the core housing/homelessness function provided through the six district housing authorities.

National Funding

- The recent comprehensive spending review has promised a continued Disabled Facilities Grant funding stream through the Better Care Fund for the next 5 years, from £395m in 2015/16 right through to £500m in 19/20, providing a vote of confidence and trust in that what we are doing is preventing pressure on acute services and supporting independent living. With this investment there is a duty amongst stakeholders to administer the fund in an efficient and customer friendly way.
- Since 2010 the number of people regarded as homeless has increased by 33%, 69,000 people are living in temporary accommodation, with more than a million on local authority waiting lists. To help overcome this Government has increased central funding to tackle homelessness over the next 4 years (2016 onwards) to £139 million and protected homelessness prevention funding for local authorities at £315 million by 2019 to 2020.
- Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme 2016-2021 £4.7bn; Starter Homes: Unlocking the land fund 2016-2020 - £1.2bn.
- In October 2016, The Department of Health has announced an investment of £25m over the next two financial years (£10m in 2016/17 and £15m in 2017/18) in technology and housing for people with learning disabilities.

Worcestershire Funding

- Single homeless and childless couples support service funding of £300,000 per annum over three years (subject to future resources).
- Fusion - a housing led Voluntary and Community Sector Consortium, was successfully awarded a £965,200 contract aimed at producing better outcomes for residents in need of help moving into secured paid employment (many of which live in social housing). This programme will commence on the ground in October 2016.
- Worcestershire Young Persons Pathways Workers are jointly funded, until 31 March 2018, by the local housing authorities and Worcestershire County Council who provide a match funding contribution of £70,000.
- With funding via the DCLG, a hospital and prison leavers' project currently operates across the county. In total the project received £242,968 in funding and is due to continue through to April 2017.

Agenda Item No. 7.1
Appendix 1

- £5M capital funding available from Worcestershire County Council to develop Supported Housing, of which £2.3M currently remains unallocated.

Appendix Two – Consultation Responses

Some organisations chose to respond directly without using the survey monkey tool and these are included first. The survey monkey responses are then included (1 – 20) which were anonymous.

Responses that were received that just agreed with the WHPP questions and didn't include any comments summary of responses to the questions have not been included below .

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
BDHT, CHG, Rooftop and Fortis Living joint response	General comments	<p>The following note is made on behalf of the stock transfer housing associations in Worcestershire (Fortis Living, Rooftop Housing Group, Bromsgrove District Housing Trust and Community Housing Group) and is in response to the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan (WHPP). We are the largest social housing landlords in Worcestershire and collectively own the majority of the c34k housing association homes in the County.</p> <p>In summary our comments to the WHPP are as follows:</p> <p>(i) We welcome the initiative to develop a Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan with other key partners.</p> <p>(ii) The key to extending the housing options and choices for our communities is to increase the investment in new and existing housing stock and we are disappointed that the WHPP doesn't</p>	<p>This is a summary of the Registered Provider response – only included are elements pertinent to the consultation regarding the Partnership Plan and other issues raised will be dealt with separately.</p> <p>This is a key priority included within the plan. Detail about delivery will be included in the action plans.</p>

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
		<p>reflect the contribution made by the housing association providers and hasn't set more ambitious plans for the delivery of new homes.</p> <p>(iii) We particularly support the proposal to work closely with partners in social care and health and believe the stock transfer housing associations as the main delivery partners and the largest providers of social housing in the County should have a key role in these discussions and the development of joint strategies and policies.</p> <p>(iv) We are disappointed that the proposed actions and outcomes lack ambition, meaningful targets and don't clearly identify the key role for local authorities and other partners in achieving these objectives.</p> <p>In addition to this joint response, each housing association will individually respond to the consultation on the WHPP.</p>	<p>The Registered Providers are represented at the SHP by Fortis Living and CHG.</p> <p>This will be picked up through the development of the detailed action plans.</p>
St Pauls Hostel	General Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As I read the document I keep trying to be clear of the purpose of it? Are you clear on the purpose of the document? Seems to me you are trying to do three things; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sets the context of national policies 	<p>Agreed although this is a countywide plan.</p> <p>This will be picked up in the</p>

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	Specific comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides the analysis that underpins the argument good housing contributes to healthy population ○ Gives a framework for 'collective' local action of organisations that City Council does not control but need to be 'on the same song sheet' • Homelessness Does it have to blur the line between Statutory and non-statutory homeless? They are both important but the legislation (and resources) and different for each category. I'd much rather see the delineation made much clearer. • I thought the Single Person's Homeless Service was £250k per year (2 years with 1 year option) not £300k. • Owner occupation. It's not clear what point is being made here? The Government emphasis on owner occupation is not a good strategy (yes..)? • PRS The document talks of PRS requiring 'focus of our attention' – possibly – but it would be helpful to say more precisely what? • Diagram on p14 This diagram is a bit fiddly and I am not sure this add value to the document <p>Outcomes These seem fair enough outcomes</p>	<p>more detailed action plans.</p> <p>The £300k relates to the overall funding received.</p> <p>Owner-occupation doesn't meet all housing need due to affordability.</p> <p>This will be covered by the more detailed action plans.</p> <p>Now removed</p> <p>Agreed.</p>

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
		<p>but might be better placed higher up in the document (following the analysis) to allow the reader to focus on them from the get-go?</p> <p>Help. Homelessness people that we serve are at the nexus of 'complex needs', poor physical and mental health. The partnership does not have a specialist like St Paul's amongst its numbers. I can envisage my Trustees agreeing to St Paul's taking a role in the partnership – if that's an offer you want to make then just ask.</p>	
Worcestershire County Council (Public Health)	<p>1. Have we included the right information on the National and Local Picture to reflect the reality with regards to housing in Worcestershire?</p> <p>2. Are there any other National or Local strategies/policies that we need to take into account?</p>	<p>Yes but see 2 below in terms of keeping information up to date.</p> <p>Yes (Please provide more information about these)</p> <p>There is a constant stream of legislation and guidance that affects housing and related areas and very broad strategic documents such as the plan need to be kept refreshed as they can become dated quite quickly. I would have thought a quick annual refresh by officers via the</p>	Agreed

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	3. Do you agree with the joint high level Actions for this Partnership Plan?	<p>housing partnership (without needing to consult wider) would be useful in that regard. This equally applies to the data in the document which will be changing.</p> <p>Under Housing and Health, the STP has developed since the drafting of the Plan and although there is a debate about how housing should be reflected in this, it is probably worth a couple of sentences stating something along the lines that housing will support this work as necessary (its all still evolving). You have of course noted STP on page 12, but maybe this should now go into the "Local Direction" section as initial outline plans are developed?</p> <p>It may also be worth specifically referencing that housing has a strong role to play in supporting Public Health ambitions and duties and that would for instance include supporting the JSNA process (you have referenced this) and taking account of the annual reports by the Director of Public Health.</p> <p>Yes.</p> <p>However would note - there are "our aims" on page 3; the "vision" p 14 ; "key priorities" p 17; followed by "high level actions" p18 and then outcomes on p19. Looking at these together it might be getting a bit clunky and overlapping? It needs to provide some clear overarching messages that all partners can easily</p>	<p>Agreed and PP now restructured to take these comments into account.</p> <p>Agreed</p>

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	4. Do you have any further comments to make on the Plan, which are not covered in the previous questions?	<p>understand and relate to.</p> <p>Last bullet –perhaps change of wording to for example?</p> <p>"Promote the strategic and operational impact of the housing sector and ensure its influence in key business planning processes in Worcestershire.</p> <p>Before publication you may want to refresh any data that has been superseded – only if it can be done easily and quickly!.</p> <p>The resulting action plan needs to be short and sharp and its much better to hit a smaller number of outcomes than try to do too many. A lot of work is business as usual and doesn't necessarily need to be captured in action plans and will be reported elsewhere.</p>	
1.	1. as above	No. More statistics Yong homeless people- what about Vulnerable people that have been evicted ? they are not then classed as Priority- high level of vulnerable people not been counted on homeless statists- Numbers of people sofa surfing in Worcestershire? need information on them	This data is not currently collected locally or nationally other than through the P1Es.
	2. As above	Yes	

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	3. As above 4. As above	No need to consult more with front line staff-partners about the issues & barriers that homeless people face. Supported housing, we need more in the areas-why is this not on the action plan and increased amounts of Supported housing for all vulnerable groups.	This will be addressed in the Partnership event to develop more detailed action plans. Please see above.
2.	1. 2. 3. 4.	No. Mention is made of Worcestershire Young Persons Pathways Workers. South Worcestershire Nightstop also works very closely with Pathways Workers, Children's Services and the local housing authorities in crisis intervention: it provides homeless 16-25 yr olds with emergency accommodation until more suitable accommodation can be found and also in prevention: It provides a mediation service for young people and their parent/ carer to improve their relationship thus preventing homelessness. No Yes I would love the opportunity to explain more about the services of South Worcestershire Nightstop and how we work collaboratively at present, with a view to expanding this.	Nightstop reps will be invited to the Partnership event.
3.	1	No. Statistical section needs amending for accuracy and timeliness throughout. need clear data on key stats with time and national comparison.	Amended.

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	2	Yes more reference needed to strategies from organisations that deal with rurality and to specific VCS organisations	Please let us know what strategies should be included.
	3	No - need to be clearer and focused. Smaller number with clear accountability and targets.	Amended & will be picked up in Partnership event.
	4	Too long. Would be great to a short data-driven and accurate statement of the local problem, with a sharp actions section including accountabilities and next steps.	Amended & will be picked up in the action plans.
4.	1.	Yes	
	2.	No	
	3.	No. Action on private landlords, living conditions, caps on rents and an extension to right to buy in to the private sector. Overall cap on the number of properties a private landlord can buy up. Cap on house prices, conversion of spaces above shops to become homes.	More detail on tackling conditions will be picked up in the action plans but many of the issues here are beyond the scope of local government.
	4.	Less planning more action be bold and ambitious, deliver fairness.	Amended.
5.	1.	No. I am getting the impression that this is the way of going away from council owned firstly partner then agency	Not sure what this point relates to.
	2.	Yes Better policing more actual action	Noted
	3.	No. If you want a job done right do it yourself	Noted

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	4.	Use the budget wiser less waste info on what it is being used for.	Noted
6.	1. 2. 3. 4.	Yes Yes. Schooling, we need new local schools where larger estates are built and these should be included in the planning. Our present schools are already over subscribed at all levels. Yes Infrastructure, our current road system isn't coping.	School places are a WCC issue and not covered by the plan. Infrastructure is WCC issue / National Government issue and not covered by the plan
7.	1. 2. 3.	Yes Yes Improved delivery of housing through increased funding, tax relief, and streamlined planning process. Yes Respondent didn't answer 4	Noted
8.	1. 2.	Yes Yes. Accessible Housing by Design New housing should be visitable, adaptable, accessible, universal planning for a longer term of usage for people as they age	Noted

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	3.	Yes Respondent didn't answer 4	
9.	1.	No. You make it clear in the plan what the required new build programme is ie 2228 to 2408, but make no reference to what the current annual build programme is ie how much of an increase it is? I feel the importance of housing to the growth of the economy is downplayed.	This number refers to housing need rather than new build numbers.
	2.	Yes. The answer is probably no as so many are listed. Although I cant see reference to any HCA plans. However, is it really possible to deliver a housing programme that meets all of these? Surely the focus needs to be on building new homes and improving existing ones.	Noted
	3.	No. I don't think the Vision is a Vision at all. It is more a statement of intent. Surely a vision would be something along the lines of "A quality home for all". The actions need to focus on an action rather than a perfectly reasonable ambition like 'maximise the delivery of good quality housing..'. The question should be how will this be achieved, by whom and by when? What is being done to address the unhealthy homes being run by private landlords?	Amended These will be picked up in detailed action plans
	4.	You need to examine why we appear to have poor fuel poverty and excess winter death indicators rather than simply state the fact. I	Noted.

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
		would also like to see more challenge to national housing policy, particular around affordable rent. The Plan appears to focus more on the social side of the housing equation, which is hugely important, but appears to play down the importance to the economy of building new homes for sale. Is this being driven elsewhere? Also how are welfare reforms affecting Worcestershire? Are we suffering disproportionately? If so why and what is being done to address this.	
10.	1. 2. 3.	Yes Changes to funding will impact on services stated in the report for tackling and/or preventing homelessness Yes Respondent did not reply to question 4	Noted
11.	1.	No. The number of homeless people in each council are missing. The failure of all county councils to provide sheltered/community housing to old people so they could vacate 2, 3 & 4 bedroom houses missing. The identification of Brown Field sites to allow the use of quick fix solutions such as affordable mobile homes. Brown Field sites could also be used for new housing. The use of district heating schemes in Worcestershire missing, opportunity lost with new Hartlebury incinerator. Wrong people in	Noted. More information on Homelessness is contained in the Worcestershire Homeless Strategy. The majority of these issues are covered by Local Plans.

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	<p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>jobs within council they should be replaced by people with vision. Promote infill building in towns & villages.</p> <p>Yes (and repeat of above)</p> <p>No. Lots of words but will lack results new fresh ideas required.</p> <p>(repeat of answer from Q1)</p>	
12.	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>The entire housing strategy is driven by the change in population (I'm not referring to migration or immigration, but 'population') and it's going to take a brave politician to be robust enough to drive a policy where population should stop growing: as a Biologist, I can categorically tell you that we will soon approach the point of no return, where the population will become unsustainable. I suggest you engage with 'Population Matters', London E4 for some ideas.</p>	This is beyond the scope of the WHPP.
13.	1.	No . Generally yes but in the table on P4 of the different tenure you have stated owner occupation (if you have sufficient deposit) is the most affordable. I do not (think) that is correct. You later talk about how the average price is	Affordable once you have accessed it e.g. mortgages are cheaper than LHA rent levels.

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	2. 3 4.	<p>over six times average income so it isn't affordable as people can't access it. If people can't access homeownership because it's too expensive how can it be the most affordable.</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>It is concerning to see that the number of housing associations taking tenants on HB has declined especially when the number of working people having to have support from HB is increasing. I think this shows a concerning trend of Housing Associations moving away from being social housing providers and if this trend continues it increases the difficulty for people to access housing if on lower incomes.</p>	Noted.
14.	1. 2.	<p>No. National Policy Cutting the Cost of Keeping Warm: the government's fuel poverty strategy for England, with a target 'to ensure that as many fuel poor homes as is reasonably practicable achieve a minimum energy efficiency rating of Band C, by 2030.' Also, the fuel poverty figures in the Housing and Health are a bit out of date (Latest available are for 2014- may have been released since the plan was drafted. The latest figure for Worcestershire is 10.8% and England 10.6%.</p> <p>Yes. Local Direction Worcestershire Fuel</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Not available in time to be</p>

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	<p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>Poverty Plan, which highlights the issue of fuel poverty and the impacts of cold, damp homes on the health of Worcestershire residents and identify actions to tackle fuel poverty in the County. What are we doing now Include WARMER WORCESTERSHIRE Heather Lammas from County is going to draft something and send in a response separately on behalf of the WW network. Wonder if the stats page 4 would be helped if had (difference from) local housing allowance available included? Is it worth including the WFDC Health Impact Assessment in the evidence base on page 13?</p> <p>No. Page 12 “Develop a strategy to address health consequences of cold homes including: identifying people whose health is at risk from cold and damp homes. “ Shouldn’t this be identifying vulnerable people and addressing cold homes that lead to health consequences ?</p> <p>The PP now needs to include more detail around the Homeless Reduction Bill and impact on LHAs</p>	<p>included.</p> <p>Amended.</p> <p>Amended.</p>
15.	1.	No. More detail is needed on how funding cuts at County and District level will impact on Housing. Also: how does Worcestershire perform against national DFG targets? Worcs spent £2 million on DFGs, what is this as a percentage of the overall budget? I would like to	<p>Included where known.</p> <p>No national targets exist.</p>

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	<p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>know the waiting time from the customers first enquiry, not length of time from the OT assessment. What plans have Worcestershire to respond to the increased demand in DFGs. Would you consider joint- funded OT posts to carry out assessments and decrease waiting time?</p> <p>Yes. NHS Alliance</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>I'd like to see some emphasis on pooled budgets and how these can be used to evidence a joint strategy involving Housing and Health which could address some Health Inequalities.</p> <p>What plans and priorities do you have for the £2.5 million currently unallocated?</p>	<p>OTs are being recruited funded by the Local Housing Authorities.</p> <p>Please provide more details..</p> <p>This will be considered further as action plans are developed.</p> <p>Please clarify.</p>
16.	1.	<p>No. More information needed on the condition of UK housing. the variance in health outcomes, particularly excess winter deaths, between UK and much colder European countries is stark. The fact that the UK has the oldest housing stock in Europe is a real problem (The Cold Man of Europe) The UK has among the highest rates of fuel poverty and one of the most energy inefficient housing stocks in Europe." Countries with more energy efficient housing have lower excess winter deaths even those with colder climates. (the health impacts of cold homes and</p>	Noted

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	<p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>fuel poverty) Worcestershire is predominantly rural county. Rural properties are more than twice as likely to have poor levels of energy efficiency.</p> <p>Yes. Warmer Worcestershire will shortly be publishing a fuel poverty plan for the County which links to the NICE guidance quality symbols to target delivery. the aim is to improve home energy efficiency in line with the National Fuel poverty plan to get as many properties as reasonably practicable to an EPC C rating.</p> <p>No reference to working with to Warmer Worcestershire network for housing when considering cold homes. Existing work already ongoing around discharge from hospital to a warm setting.</p> <p>Respondent didn't add anything for Q4.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
17.	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>	<p>No. There does not appear to be any mention of vacant homes.</p> <p>Yes. Bringing vacant homes back into use could be quicker and cheaper than building new and this potential needs to be quantified.</p> <p>No. I do agree with everything that has been stated, but I believe there is more that can be done. For instance, most poor housing is in the</p>	<p>Empty Homes will be addressed in the detailed action plans.</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted. Advice and guidance is available through Private Sector Housing teams.</p>

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	4.	<p>private sector, but apart from assistance through Care & Repair for the elderly, there is nothing to assist private owners to improve their homes. Now that renovation grants have gone how is this to happen? Maybe this comment should be directed at national level, but at the local level some practical advice and guidance is needed even if finance is not available from the public bodies</p> <p>Extension of the right to buy is detrimental to the retention and future provision of affordable social housing and should be strongly resisted</p>	This is a government policy issue.
18.	1. 2. 3. 4.	Yes No Yes Gives a clear overview of the local and national position	
19.	1.	No. The report gives at best a very sketchy overview of the current housing position in Worcestershire and the implications for the future. It uses a mix of national and local information and data some of which is out of date, used in an inconsistent way and in some areas it makes broad statements without any evidence, data or forecasts. As a result the report fails to provide a reasoned argument about the current problems, what is currently	Detailed action plans will be developed.

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	2.	<p>being done, the future implications, options, potential solutions and who the lead organisations are.</p> <p>Yes. The Worcestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment</p>	<p>The SHMA have been replaced by OAHN within each District</p> <p>Noted.</p>
	3.	<p>The WCC Extra Care Strategy</p> <p>The NHF Homes Truths report 2015/16 The HCI/CIH report</p> <p>'Accelerating Prosperity through Housing in the West Midlands' - Jan 2017 The Worcestershire Next Generation Plan</p>	
	4.	<p>No. One of the problems with the report is that it contains too many key priorities, outcomes, high level actions and 'other' actions. Fewer more ambitious aims and targets with clear organisational leads is needed. While I broadly support the high level actions (pages 15/16), I don't think they address the key issue which is the need to provide more affordable housing and include the delivery providers who are critical to its success.</p>	<p>This will be picked up by the detailed action plans.</p>
		<p>One of the fundamental omissions in the report is that it doesn't make the need for more affordable housing its key priority. If you deliver more homes this will go some way to address many of the other issues, including homelessness. It also needs to recognise the key role for the housing providers in delivering</p>	<p>This is an action included in the WHPP.</p>

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
		<p>this.</p> <p>The proposals to work more closely with social care and health is welcomed but its similarly important that the housing associations are involved in these strategic discussions as equal partners.</p> <p>I also have concerns a regarding the accountability of the WHP and its ability get the district councils and councils to support the plan.</p>	<p>Housing Associations are represented on the Strategic Housing Partnership (SHP) who developed the WHPP.</p> <p>These organisations developed the plan and are represented on the SHP.</p>
20.	1.	<p>No. P3. Aims - promotion of the housing sector towards addressing.... should include family stability. P4.The Population - I think this should say 'higher proportion' not greater number of older people. P4. Reference is made to 'unhealthy homes' can you define what this means? P4. Owner occupation is referred to as affordable - how if you need 6 x average salary? P6. Do you need to put an Affordable Rent heading halfway down? Does the table refer to Affordable Rents at 80% or social housing rents? P7. Under Homelessness in Worcestershire 2nd Para - proportion of people becoming homeless due to tenancies ending is this the PRS or Social Housing or both...just need to clarify. P7 Final paragraph - I think you also need to look at other reasons why RPs are letting a smaller number of properties to households in receipt of HB - are they on UC and therefore not able to claim HB - are more households generally more likely to be in some</p>	Noted

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
		<p>form of employment because of welfare reform? The final sentence here about forcing families to live in poor, unsuitable or unstable homes needs to be substantiated or watered down as 'This may...' P9 Need to clarify that the overall benefit cap of £20k applies outside of London. Also need to add something about the 2 child limit as this will impact on child poverty and affordability and potential homelessness from the PRS. P10. The Transforming Care Agenda expects....'locked step' down...what does this mean? P10. Housing and Planning Act 2016</p> <p>- First paragraph needs re working as it is saying that it will impact on people on low incomes - how and also isn't the 1% reduction a good thing for tenants? But a bad thing for RP's who may find it harder to grow due to changing financial projections. P11. Need to make reference to the homeless reduction bill. P14. The right home environment will.... Can you replace 'allow' for Enable? P15 under 'Worcestershire Joint Protocol...can you include some clarity around the role of the Young Persons Pathway Worker. P16. Homelessness is not a situation anyone would wish to find themselves for the majority of families....this needs re-wording or removal of the last 5 words. P.16</p> <p>Homeless Services - Challenge - I think we</p>	

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	<p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>need to include a reference to the issues of Intentionality relating to the Benefit Cap and Spare Room Subsidy. It is going to be difficult to secure housing solutions for those with housing related debts. P16 and 17 - Private Rented Housing - Challenge - need to refer to affordability issues relating to the Benefit Cap and 2 Child Limit P20 homeless has increased to 33% - where (national, local) and when. Need to include date as this figure will be out of date very quickly.</p> <p>Yes. Homeless Reduction Bill</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>I would prefer a vision statement that includes the word home..'An affordable home with the right environment for health, opportunity and well being throughout life'... or similar.</p>	<p>Amended</p> <p>Vision amended</p> <p>.</p>

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14th March 2017

Council Membership on Community Housing Group (CHG)

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Chris Rogers – Cabinet Member for Housing, Health & Wellbeing
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Mike Parker – Director of Economic Prosperity & Place
CONTACT OFFICER:	Mike Parker – Director of Economic Prosperity & Place
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1: Current structure of CHG boards and committees Appendix 2: Current Member positions on CHG boards and committees

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the future of Wyre Forest District Community Members on the Boards of Community Housing Group and to agree the approach to be taken from the Council's AGM in May where nominations are usually agreed.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to RECOMMEND to Council :

- 2.1 **That from May 2017 the Council no longer makes any nominations to the roles of Community Member on any of the Community Housing Group boards or committees;**
- 2.2 **That the Council considers the outcome of the governance review commissioned by Community Housing Group when it is received and makes necessary changes to nominations to positions on the Community Housing Group as a result of any re-structure, as invited to;**
- 2.3 **That delegated authority if given to the Solicitor to the Council to terminate the Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and Community Housing Group relating to Community Member Nominations**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Since the Council's housing stock was transferred in 2000 to the then newly established Wyre Forest Community Housing Ltd there have been Council Members on the boards and committees of what is now CHG. Every year at the Council's AGM in May, Members would be nominated to be on the CHG's boards and committees.
- 3.2 Historically Members carried what was referred to as the 'golden vote'; a single collective Council vote on significant constitutional issues such as re-structures and governance reviews. This is because the balance of representation on such matters

(currently carried by the CHG Membership – see attached structure chart at Appendix 1 which came into effect in 2012) is three representatives from each of the District Council, tenants and parent board (independent) members. The District therefore holds a third of the voting share and in order for any Special Resolution relating to important issues to be passed it requires 75% approval; the Council therefore holds the key to constitutional changes of any significance being agreed (such as those that were proposed in 2012 for example (see below).

3. 3 In 2012 CHG implemented changes to their structure following recommendations from their Regulator, the Homes & Communities Agency, to ensure that they complied with new regulatory framework that came into effect in April 2012. This brought about changes to the way in which the Council placed its Members on their boards and committees. Since that time the Council has had the right to propose three Members to sit on the CHG Membership but has been invited to propose up to six Members to sit on other committees in the newly created position of Community Members. Beyond the CHG Membership the same 'mandating' does not apply to Community Members, they sit in their own right and not as Council representatives.
3. 4 The creation of the Community Member role recognised the value of the potential contribution of a wider group of people within the local community. Although the Council secured the rights to first nomination of its Members to fill six of these of these Community Member roles, they were not exclusive to Council Members and could be taken by non elected individuals if the Council chose to nominate such people or indeed could be filled by other people if the Council chose not to make any nominations.
3. 5 CHG sought three year memberships of their committees based on the suitability of candidates to meet a specific job specification. This opened up the possibility that CHG could reject a nomination from the Council if it was not appropriate for a particular Community Member role (although this has never happened). In response to these changes the Council adopted a rolling programme of nominations on a three year cycle so that CHG could have more certainty of longevity of role to assist with training and developing expertise within its members (see attached at Appendix 2 which shows memberships since the new structure was put in place). There are currently two vacancies for Community Members on the Wyre Forest Community Housing and Oakleaf Committees.
3. 6 However, there are now new drivers for change that will in all likelihood affect the current arrangements.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 In 2015 the Office for National Statistics (ONS) undertook a review of the statistical classification of "private registered providers" i.e. Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) of social housing in England (PRPs). The conclusion of this review, announced on 30 October 2015, was that PRPs should be reclassified as Public Non-Financial Corporations rather than Private Non-Financial Corporations as formerly. The review focused on the existing legislative and regulatory environment, specifically measures introduced in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.
- 4.2 The Government began to address the ONS concerns through the Housing and Planning Act which received royal assent on 12 May 2016, but the deregulatory

measures would not have effect until the necessary commencement order was laid before Parliament.

- 4.3 On 30 January 2017 a commencement order was laid (SI 2017/75) which brings into effect most of the deregulatory provisions of the 2016 Act; including that from 3 February 2017, the Secretary of State is formally empowered to issue regulations limiting the influence of local authorities over RSLs.
- 4.4 In considering its response to the ONS concerns, the Government identified particular concerns relating to large-scale voluntary transfer organisations (LSVTs). The risk is that if these issues are not addressed, it is possible that the ONS may continue to regard these associations as public even if the rest of the sector is reclassified as private.
- 4.5 Accordingly, the Government included measures in the Housing and Planning Act to address these concerns. Although these provisions apply in theory to the sector as a whole, they are unlikely to have any practical impact except for LSVTs.
- 4.6 The Act gives the Secretary of State power to make regulations in the following areas:
 - 4.6.1 Reservation of board places for persons nominated by the local authority. This is significant because one of the main tests applied by ONS is whether a state body (such as a local authority) can make appointments to the board. Section 93 of the Housing and Planning Act allows the Secretary of State to issue regulations restricting the ability of local authorities to make appointments, possibly that the proportion of council nominees on a registered provider's board should not exceed 24%. Any limit will not prevent RSLs from recruiting members or officers of local authorities to the board, but anyone recruited in this way would serve on the board purely in an individual capacity like any other board member. The power relates to appointments (including reappointments) so it will not stop a local authority appointee from serving out his or her current term of office, but the Secretary of State has a further power to make regulations allowing an association to remove a local authority appointee before the end of his or her term.
 - 4.6.2 Local authority voting rights and constitutional veto. Some LSVT constitutions confer special voting rights on the local authority, potentially including a veto on constitutional changes. By virtue of the Council's representation on the CHG Membership (see 2.2 above) this applies to the District Council. The Secretary of State has power to require local authorities to reduce or eliminate these rights, and to refrain from obtaining them in future.
- 4.7 Hitherto, Registered Social Landlords (RSL) have generally required consent from their regulator, the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) before undertaking certain organisational changes, including mergers, acquisitions and restructures. With effect from 6 April 2017, this requirement will no longer apply but there will be a requirement for them to notify the regulator of significant changes.
- 4.8 Whilst it is not known when the Regulations will be issued or what exactly they will say, it appears that in all likelihood the Secretary of State is going to bring about

changes that will mean the Council's relationship with CHG and the District Council Members role on CHG is going to change such that the ties through Council nominations will most likely come to an end.

- 4.9 Alongside all of the above the CHG commissioned its own independent review in November 2016 and appointed consultants Campbell Tickell to undertake the work. This followed a HCA In Depth Assessment (IDA) which categorised CHG as G2 status for its overall governance (out of a G1-G4 rating). Part of the reason for this G2 status related to the perceived complexity of the Group structure and concerns about whether risk was being satisfactorily dealt with. Part of the Campbell Tickell brief therefore is to review the corporate structure of CHG, their boards and committees as well as the membership of them. The outcome from this review is not anticipated to be formally announced until late spring 2017 but it is understood that Campbell Tickell will be making recommendations to simplify the current structure as well as taking account of the likely impact of the Housing and Planning Act.
- 4.10 Until such time as there is any definitive direction from the Secretary of State and or the CHG Review it is not possible to say whether there will be any decision making role for the Council to undertake in this change process. It is conceivable that the Regulations will override existing nomination rights and prevent future nominations (or even allow existing ones to be ended early). However, in recognition of the close partner relations between the Council and CHG it is hoped that any new structure will recognise this relationship and make suitable provision accordingly for the Council to remain represented in some way as an interested 'shareholder' of CHG.
- 4.11 With the prospect of changes being brought about through the CHG governance review as well as through the likely actions of the Secretary of State (and recognising the current vacancies already on the CHG boards) it is proposed that at the Council's meeting of 10th May 2017 that no further nominations are made to the roles of Community Members on the CHG committees and boards from that date and at that meeting that the Council only continues to make nominations to the CHG Membership if required, or else considers any alternative representation that might arise from the potential changes. Those serving Community Members will continue to serve in the role until such time as any new changes come into effect, most likely at the CHG AGM in September 2017.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications for the Council as a result of these proposals.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 As authorised by Council at the meeting on 20th June 2012, a Memorandum of Understanding was entered into between the Council and CHG dealing with Council nominations to the role of Community Member. If the Council is no longer to nominate to that role, the Memorandum will need to be terminated.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 There are no risks to the Council as a result of this proposal; any current and future arrangements or undertakings with CHG will not be affected by these proposals.

9. CONCLUSION

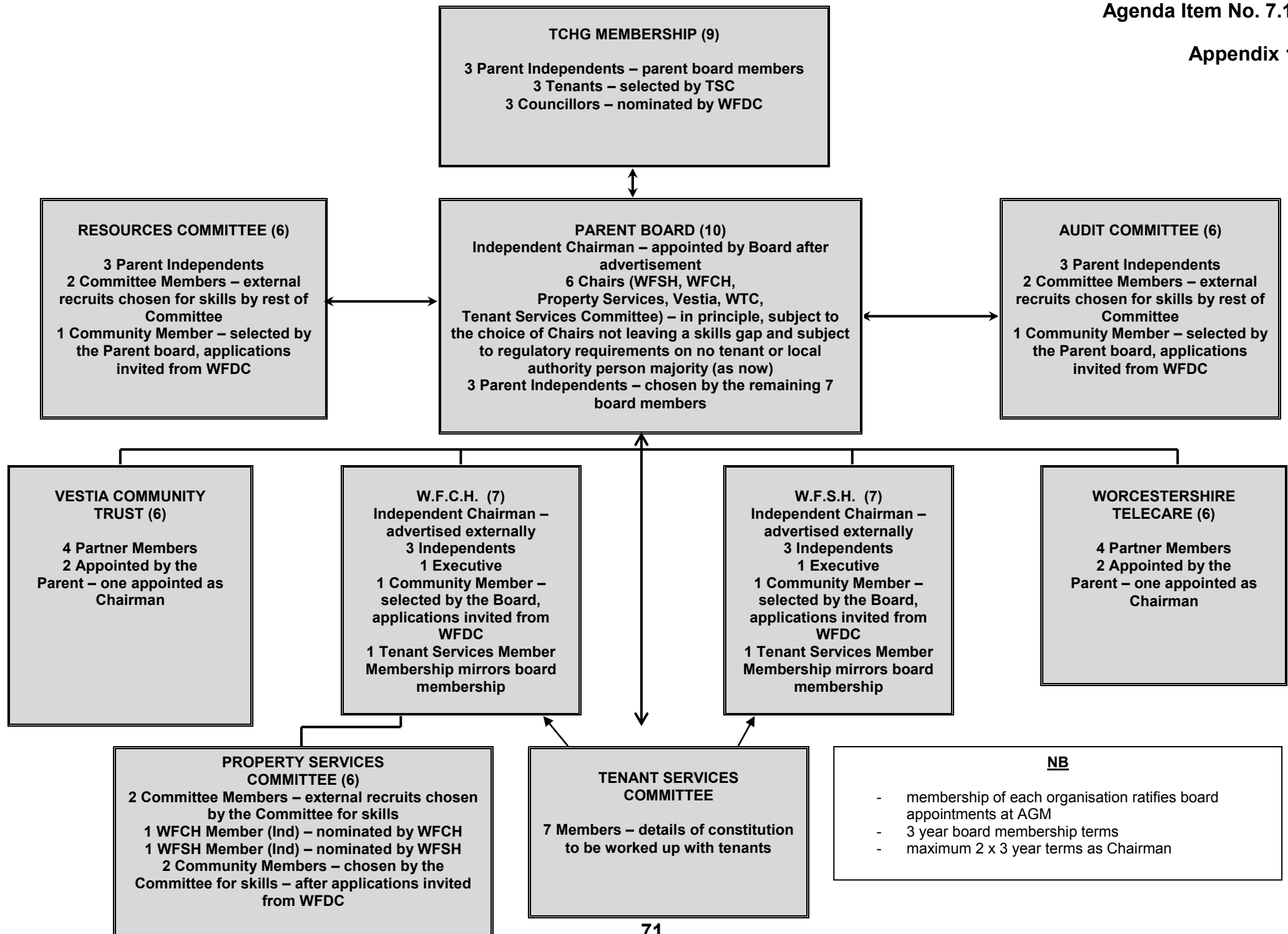
- 9.1 Since 2000 the Council has had Member representatives on the CHG; the Housing and Planning Act, the HCA as Regulator of RSLs and/or changes that CHG is already considering as part of its governance review are likely to bring into question the continued arrangements where the Council makes nominations to the roles of Community Member on CHG and it is recommended that from May 2017 the Council no longer makes any further nominations to these roles. The Council is recommended to continue to make nominations to the CHG Membership until such time as this is no longer a requirement of the CHG structure or to make future nominations to any new structure if invited to do so.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 Corporate Leadership team

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Report to Council 20th June 2012



Wyre Forest District Council Member Nominations to CHG Boards

	2012	2013	2014	2015 All Council Elections	2016	2017 No District Elections	2018	2019 Change to 4 Yearly Elections
CHG Membership	Barry McFarland (1 year)	Barry McFarland (3 years)		Nigel Knowles ⁽⁰⁾ (1 year)	Shazu Miah ⁽⁰⁾ (3 years)			Cllr to be appointed (3 years)
CHG Membership	Mary Rayner (2 years)		Mary Rayner ⁽²⁾ (3 years)			Cllr to be appointed (3 years)		
CHG Membership	John Hart (3 years)			John Hart ⁽³⁾ (3 years)			Cllr to be appointed (3 years)	
Audit	Nicky Gale Community Member (1 year)	Nicky Gale (3 years) Held office to May 2014	Chris Rogers ⁽⁰⁾ (2 years)		Chris Rogers ⁽²⁾ (3 years)			Community Member to be appointed (3 years)
Resources	Douglas Godwin Community Member (3 years)			Juliet Smith ⁽⁰⁾ (3 years)			Community Member to be appointed (3 years)	
Wyre Forest Community Housing	Fran Oborski Community Member (3 years)			Tony Muir (2 years) ⁽⁰⁾ } M E R G E D	Vacant	Community Member to be appointed (3 years)		
Wyre Forest Sheltered Housing	Jenny Greener Community Member (2 years)		Jenny Greener (3 years)					
<i>Oakleaf (formerly Property Services)</i>	Gordon Yarranton Community Member (2 years)		Gordon Yarranton (3 years)	Helen Dyke ⁽⁷⁾ (2 years)	Vacant	Community Member to be appointed (3 years)		
Vestia	Steve Clee Community Member (1 year)	Steve Clee ⁽²⁾ (3 years)			Steve Clee ⁽⁵⁾ (1 year)	Community Member to be appointed (3 years)		Community Member to be appointed (3 years)

NB: ^(x) = no. of years served at that date

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14TH MARCH 2017

Collective Energy Switching Scheme

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Chris Rogers - Cabinet Member for Housing, Health & Wellbeing
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Kate Bailey – Strategic Housing Services Manager
CONTACT OFFICER:	Jennifer Moreton – Principal Health & Sustainability Officer
APPENDICES:	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is to agree to initiate a Collective Energy Switching Scheme on behalf of residents.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE that:

- 2.1 WFDC initiates a Collective Energy Switching Scheme on behalf of residents.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Many people are not on the best value energy tariff and pay more than they need but are reluctant to switch. Collective energy switching is promoted as a way of helping to address this situation.
- 3.2 Ofgem allow energy companies to offer special tariffs for CESSs and supports them as a way of 'activating' people who are unlikely otherwise to switch. A CESS provides one of the few opportunities energy suppliers have for creating bespoke tariffs. Ofgem promote the involvement of Local Authorities in this process for enabling customers to be helped and supported through the process by an organisation that is already known to them and with whom they have an existing relationship.
- 3.3 Many LAs are now supporting the development of such groups with the help of a specialist switching partner who negotiates a favourable tariff for participating consumers by carrying out a 'reverse auction' with energy suppliers. This one day event provides interested suppliers with an opportunity to bid with their best offer of an energy tariff for the collective. Throughout the day, suppliers can improve their offers until the auction closes at the end of the day. The supplier with the best offer for the collective is then chosen. There may be different winning suppliers for the best dual fuel, best prepay and green tariffs etc. Individual consumers can then decide if they want to accept the offered tariff and the switching partner then arranges this on their behalf.
- 3.4 Such a scheme can provide a cost effective way for LAs to help people lower their fuel bills and reduce fuel poverty. A referral fee is paid to the specialist switching

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partner by the energy supplier for each person who switches to the newly agreed tariff and there are no costs to the Council for the support and services they receive from the switching company. Furthermore, specialist switching companies will often pay a proportion of their commission to the LA. The switching partner provides an online system for people to use to sign up to the scheme, carries out the negotiation process with energy suppliers, and arranges the actual switch of supplier for the customers. The LA is responsible for publicising the scheme and providing support for residents without internet access or ability to register for the scheme (if they so choose).

3.5 Potential Switching Scheme Partner :iChoosr and the process followed

- 3.5.1 iChoosr is an established collective energy switching operator that currently works with over 160 LAs in the UK. Locally this includes Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and the Health and Sustainability team have received positive feedback from them regarding both the operator and the scheme itself. iChoosr was founded in the Netherlands in 2008 and has been running CESSs in the UK since 2012. iChoosr appear to be the only company offering this model of switching service and also appear to be involved with all the schemes in England that involve LAs, despite these sometimes being promoted under different banners.
- 3.5.2 iChoosr's auction cycle is typically 1-2 months to allow people to register, the actual auction is always a day, and registrants have about a month to decide whether to accept their offer. Relevant dates are set by iChoosr to benefit from the joint bargaining power of the sum of all the involved LAs participants. Their 2017 auctions will take place in February, May and October. Registration to participate is free and it is up to the individual to decide whether to accept the collective energy switch offer that is made. The Council is able to apply on behalf of those who do not have access to the internet or family or friends who are willing to do this on their behalf, and support in the registration process can also be provided. Each individual receives an offer which compares their estimated current spend with estimated future spend after switching. People with pre-payment meters can apply, as can those who are renting properties, as long as the bill is in their name. The deal offered is a minimum one-year fixed price contract.
- 3.5.3 iChoosr's freely provided services include an IT platform, project management, supplier management, communication support and a customer helpdesk. They create a council-branded environment for interested customers to access that contains a Council logo etc so that it is clear they are involved. Individual councils are provided with an analysis of results data after each auction cycle.
- 3.5.4 The winning utility company pay a fee to iChoosr and a percentage of this is passed on to the council. Reports compiled on behalf of other councils suggest that iChoosr might receive in the region of £20 for each consumer that switches iChoosr's standard agreement indicates that the council will receive £11 (eleven pounds sterling) in respect of each resident that enters into a dual fuel contract or two single fuel contracts with the energy supplier that wins the auction, or £5.50 in respect of each resident that enters into a single fuel contract.

- 3.6 To date, 650,000 households in the UK have taken part in iChoosr's collective switching schemes, with an average potential saving of £243 per household. The onus is on the applicant to provide information on their current energy use/ tariff and decide whether switching through the scheme will be a better option. Around a third of applicants registering typically go on to switch tariffs through the scheme. Just by way of example, if 600 Wyre Forest residents registered and 200 went on to switch, this could generate an income of approximately £1-2k for WFDC and collectively save participants around £50k on their energy bills. No minimum number of applicants from the Wyre Forest would be required to progress the scheme as the same offer applies nationally across all participating Councils. Councils participating in an auction are also able to participate in future auctions.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 According to the latest government figures, 11.1% of Wyre Forest's households (4830 households) are thought to be in fuel poverty. Fuel poverty is usually a result of three interacting factors: low incomes, high energy prices and energy inefficient housing. Action on fuel poverty can improve people's lives and the links between poor health and fuel poverty (such as exacerbation of cardio-respiratory illness) are well documented. Helping households to reduce their energy bills by switching tariffs is one way that councils can help those at risk of fuel poverty.
- 4.2 Many energy customers don't change suppliers for a variety of reasons, including the perception that switching is too much hassle and that all suppliers/ tariffs are the same. In England, 21% of energy customers have had the same energy supplier for ten years or more. People who wouldn't otherwise consider switching may be encouraged to do so through a council promoted scheme.
- 4.3 WFDC's role in the process
- 4.3.1 If WFDC agree to set up a CESS with iChoosr a contract will need to be signed by both parties. A copy of the standard agreement is currently being reviewed by the legal section. Once in place, the main role for WFDC will be in publicising the scheme and dealing with any queries. Health and Sustainability officers would co-ordinate this with Media team colleagues to promote the scheme through channels such as Wyred In, Wyred Weekly, press releases and through social media. Participating councils can also apply to iChoosr for resources to support the promotion of their schemes (e.g. posters, leaflets, newspaper adverts, prize draw). WFDC works closely with the charity Act on Energy on energy schemes and would also engage them in promoting the scheme through their helpline, at energy advice surgeries and via front line worker training, as part of an existing service level agreement. iChoosr have customer helpdesks (telephone and email) which would be promoted as the first point of call for any queries. Relevant colleagues (e.g. Hub staff) and Members would be briefed on the scheme in case they receive any queries about the scheme. The whole process, from registration to actually switching, can be carried out online and it is anticipated that the majority of participants would take this approach. Opportunities for assistance with the scheme for those not able to take part online (e.g. at energy advice surgeries) would also be promoted. Whilst promotions would be aimed at Wyre Forest residents, participants do not have to live within the district's administrative area. This would

allow others to benefit from the scheme, for example WFDC staff who live outside of the district.

4.3.2 The Council would be required to contribute £1.50 per participating individual who registers using the 'offline' process towards the cost of printing offer letters and documents by post to, checking responses and amending/processing the confirmation forms (including calls backs). This contribution would be deducted from the Council's commission for the corresponding switch.

4.3.3 The Council would primarily have a signposting role and helping those, without internet access, to utilise iChoosr. The Council would not be responsible for the decisions individuals might take to switch to an alternative provider or for the service provided by the new utility company and this will be made clear on publicity materials.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no additional costs to WFDC as the Council would not have to pay to set up the CESS with iChoosr and services such as project management and ICT are provided by them for free.

5.2 The main cost to WFDC would be in terms of staff time in promoting the scheme. Promoting this scheme would fit into the wider remit of the Climate Change Strategy approved by Cabinet in 2014 and the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) requirements (please see 6.3). Promotion would be through existing staff resources and budgets and through an existing service level agreement with Act on Energy. WFDC could also apply to iChoosr for a grant towards additional promotional materials.

5.3 As detailed above, the CESS could potentially generate a small income for WFDC whilst delivering fuel bill savings for our residents. This may be reduced through the requirement to contribute towards costs for residents who apply "offline".

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The CESS has been discussed with colleagues in Legal Services and Finance with regards to procurement. They have advised that the scale of the scheme, the level of potential income and the limited number of companies offering this service, means that we should be able to go ahead with setting up a CESS with iChoosr without any procurement implications.

6.2 iChoosr have provided a template of their standard legal agreement but have indicated that this can be adjusted if required. This has been considered by the legal section; some change will be sought if the decision is made to progress the scheme.

6.3 The Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) requires WFDC to report on its activity to tackle fuel poverty and assist householders with energy efficiency. Participation in the CESS would be included in the next HECA report, due in March 2017.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 There is no requirement to complete an equality impact assessment for this service.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 The council would seek to minimise any potential reputational damage caused by residents switching to an alternative provider and then becoming unsatisfied, by making it clear that there is no obligation to switch and the council are not recommending any one provider.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 A CESS would allow the Council to assist local residents to negotiate potentially lower energy tariffs, reduce their energy bills and thereby potentially reduce fuel poverty. The Council would incur some costs in terms of officer time but this might be offset, to some extent at least, by commission payments received from the switching specialist.
- 9.2 It is recommended that WFDC initiates a CESS that can be clearly associated with them by local residents and that we participate in iChoosr's auction in May 2017 subject to the legal team being satisfied with the applicable legal agreement.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 Legal and Finance

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 N/A

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

14th March 2017

Additional car parking spaces at Wyre Forest Leisure Centre

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Marcus Hart
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Linda Draycott
CONTACT OFFICER:	Kay Higman
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 – plan of car parking spaces

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To agree to the proposal to develop additional car parking spaces at the Wyre Forest Leisure Centre with 50/50 funding between WFDC and Places for People Leisure and that the planning application will be submitted by PfPL.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:

- 2.1 To agree submission of a planning application by Places for People Ltd for additional spaces at the Wyre Forest Leisure Centre car park in accordance with the plan in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 To agree that costs of the works should be shared 50/50 with Places for People Leisure Ltd and that the contract with PFPL be varied to allow PFPL to procure the work on this basis.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Wyre Forest Leisure Centre was opened to the public on 6th July 2016 with 171 car parking spaces and 9 disabled spaces, 180 in total. This is the full extent of parking spaces proposed by PFPL's architects, and found to be acceptable based upon the usage figures provided to support the application.
- 3.2 The centre has proved to be exceptionally popular with an average of 35,000 users per month rising to 47,000 in January which is 4,000 more than the combined sites of Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre and Stourport Sports Centre in the equivalent month in previous years.
- 3.3 The car park has therefore proved to be exceptionally busy and there have been many neighbour complaints and users parking on double yellow lines around the centre. This appears to have been resolved with communication to users and placing cones along the prohibited areas. More car parking spaces are required to cope with the demand for the centre particularly during weekday evenings but the

car park is often full on Wednesday and Friday mornings and at the weekend on Sunday mornings.

- 3.4 The Council has worked with PfPL to try and alleviate the problem and the outdoor pitch football bookings have been changed to stagger the demand within the car park area.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The most cost-effective option for providing additional car parking spaces is to increase the number of spaces within the existing site. The proposed design attached at Appendix 1 involves removal of 16 existing spaces and loss of some areas of landscaping, and provides a net additional gain of 31 spaces. The total number of spaces would therefore rise from 180 to 211.
- 4.2 The work would require planning permission and it is proposed that PfPL will submit a planning application for determination at the first available Planning Committee. If this planning application is approved then the works are expected to be completed in May.
- 4.3 The additional car parking works will be procured and managed by PfPL which will ensure that the existing warranty for the car park area will cover the additional works.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council and PFPL have obtained an estimate for the works which is contained within a budget of £100,000. PfPL has agreed to lead on the works to create these additional car parking spaces on the basis that the Council and PFPL will each contribute 50% of the cost. The Council's 50% contribution (up to £50,000) will be met from the capital contingency reserve for this project. Therefore, no additional allocation of resources is required; there will be no impact on the capital programme and no additional impact for Council tax payers.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 As the land is subject to a lease in favour of PfPL giving them exclusive possession, they will procure the work for the additional car parking spaces which will also ensure that the existing warranty for the work to create the car parking area covers the new works. The Council will prepare a variation to the contract to cover the additional works and the cost contributions.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required for this project.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 There is a risk that the use of the centre will decline if more car parking spaces are not made available.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The new leisure centre has proved to be exceptionally popular and there is excess demand for car parking. The most cost effective option is to develop additional spaces on the existing site and the proposal within this report will represent a net gain of 31 spaces. A number of additional options were investigated to deal with the demand for parking and having considered all of the options it was evident that the plan to redesign and expand parking places within the existing footprint of the leisure centre would be the most cost effective. It is hoped that the extra 31 spaces will satisfy demand; however, the matter will be monitored and reconsidered after 12 months if there is still an issue.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 CLT
10.2 Cabinet

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Agenda Item No. 8.1
Appendix 1

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rev.	date	description
A	31/01/17	ISSUED FOR COMMENTS

171no. Standard Parking Spaces	
9no. Accessible spaces	
9no. Motorcycle Spaces	
18no. Bicycle Spaces (9 Hoops)	
FA U9/U10 7-a-Side Football Pitch 2	
60x46 yards (inc. runoffs)	
Total Original Car Parking Spaces	180
Car Parking Spaces Lost	16
Car Parking Spaces Added (including additional Disabled Spaces)	47
Revised Total	211no.
Additional Spaces	31no.
1 Existing Spaces Lost	10
New Spaces	20
Additional Spaces	10
Subject to Tracking for deliveries and turning as well as access to sub station -Relocated Weld Mesh Fence	
2 Existing Spaces Lost	6
New Spaces	17
Additional Spaces	11
3 Disabled Spaces Relocated	2
New Spaces In Total	10
Additional Spaces	10

Roberts Limbrick
ARCHITECTS

project
WyreForest Leisure Centre

client
PiP Leisure

drawing

Revised Site Layout
Additional Car Parking

status
FOR COMMENT

ROBERTS LIMBRICK LTD

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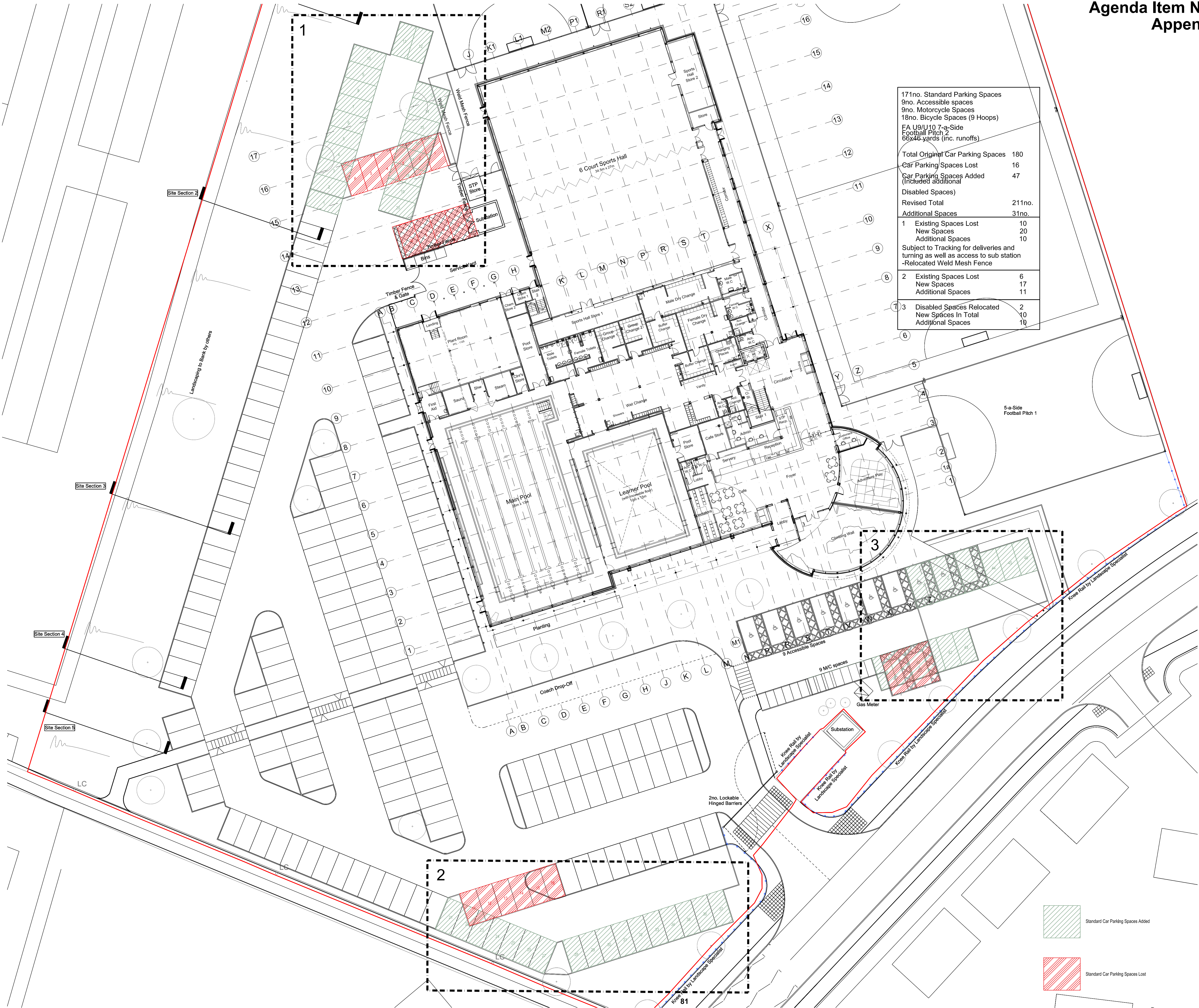
date
26/01/17

author
BK

project
7305

drg no.
L(9)050

rev.
A



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14 March 2017

Transfer of Far Forest Play area, Oakleaf Drive to Rock Parish Council

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Marcus Hart
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Linda Draycott
CONTACT OFFICER:	Kay Higman
APPENDICES:	Plan

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To agree to transfer the ownership of Far Forest Play area to Rock Parish Council with the remaining allocation of section 106 money to be transferred to the parish council to be spent on maintaining the play area.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **The Cabinet is asked to decide in principle to transfer the Far Forest play area to Rock Parish Council for nil consideration, and to transfer the balance of the associated section 106 contribution, subject to a binding legal requirement that it continue to be used as a play area and that the section 106 monies only be used towards its maintenance**
- 2.2 **The Cabinet is asked to give delegated authority to the Director of Community Well Being and Environment and the Solicitor to the Council, in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Operational Services, to advertise the proposed transfer of land as shown on the attached plan as required by section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972; to consider any objections made as a result of the advertisement; and to take the final decision on disposal in the event of objections.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council received a sum of £35,000 in 2010/11 from the developer Bryant Homes as a section 106 contribution in connection with the development in Far Forest as well as a small equipped play area on Oakleaf Drive. The contribution was only to be spent towards the replacement of equipment and ongoing maintenance of the play area.
- 3.2 The Council has maintained the play area since 2011 and to date this has cost the Council £4,284
- 3.3 The Council was approached by Rock Parish Council to express interest in the Parish Council taking over the play area from the Council. Rock Parish Council unanimously agreed at its meeting in September 2016 that a formal approach be made to WFDC for transfer of the play area and the balance of the section 106 contribution for this site. £4,284 has been spent from the original amount, plus an additional amount of up

Agenda Item No. 8.2

to £500 for the advert from the original sum of £35,000. Further costs may be incurred before the date of transfer and the amount to be transferred to Rock Parish Council will be adjusted accordingly but is expected to be approximately £30k taking into any costs incurred prior to the official transfer.

- 3.4 The Parish Council currently owns and maintains another play area in Rock and therefore has experience in managing and maintaining such facilities. The Parish Council believes this is a well supported and popular facility.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The transfer is fully consistent with the localism agenda and the play area will continue to be maintained for the use of the local children in Rock.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is no immediate revenue implication as the costs of maintenance are met from the s106 monies. However, if the transfer was not progressed, at some point in the future, the play area would have a net additional cost for the Council. The transfer therefore ensures that the cost would be met locally by the parish council.
- 5.2 A nominal value applied to this site at the time it was transferred from Bryant Homes to the Council. There will be a continuing obligation to retain it as open space , which will reduce its value. Therefore the value is estimated to be less than £10,000.
- 5.3 £4,284 has been spent from the original amount, plus an additional amount of up to £500 for the advert from the original sum of £35,000 and therefore the balance to be transferred to Rock Parish Council will be approximately £30,216.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Under section 123 Local Government Act 1972, the approval of the Secretary of State is required for a disposal of land at an undervalue unless the disposal falls within the General Disposal Consent (England) 2003 ("the Consent"). In order to fall within the Consent, the disposal must assist in the promotion of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area and the difference between the unrestricted value and the consideration accepted must be £2 million or less. The value of the play area is very much lower than £2m and therefore the Council can take this decision without reference to the Secretary of State.
- 6.2 Under Section 123 (2A) and 127 (3) Local Government Act 1972 and section 233 (4) Town and Country Planning Act 1990, there is a restriction on the disposal of land held as open space. If considering disposal or transfer of this type of land, the Council must advertise its intention to dispose or transfer the land in a local newspaper for two consecutive weeks and must consider any objections received prior to making a final determination in respect of disposal.
- 6.3 To ensure that the Council is complying with the terms of the original s106 agreement, an obligation will need to be imposed on the Parish Council to continue to use the site as a play area and to use the s106 monies only towards its maintenance. The transfer of the play area will be by way of a covenant in the transfer deed.

- 6.4 There will be a right of pre-emption in favour of the District Council in the event that the Parish Council wishes to dispose of the land at a future date.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 There are no equality impact issues to be addressed as the play area would continue to be available to its users.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 There is no perceived risk to the Council in the proposed transfer as it will make appropriate provision to ensure future use of the play area and appropriate use of the s106 monies.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposed transfer supports the Council's policy on asset transfer and localism.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 Corporate Leadership Team.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Asset transfer policy

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**CABINET**
14th March 2017**Budget Monitoring Third Quarter 2016/17**

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor N J Desmond, Cabinet Member for Resources
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Chief Financial Officer
CONTACT OFFICERS:	Tracey Southall Ext. 2100 Tracey.southall@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Kath Pearsall Ext.2165 Kathryn.pearsall@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 2016/17 Appendix 4 – Wyre Forest Forward/ Cabinet Proposal Progress Report Appendix 5 - Budget Risk Matrix <i>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)</i>

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 inform members of the Housing Benefit Overpayment debt position as at 31st December 2016.
- 1.3 To inform members of the Sundry/Property debt position as at 31st December 2016.

2 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 3rd QUARTER 2016/17

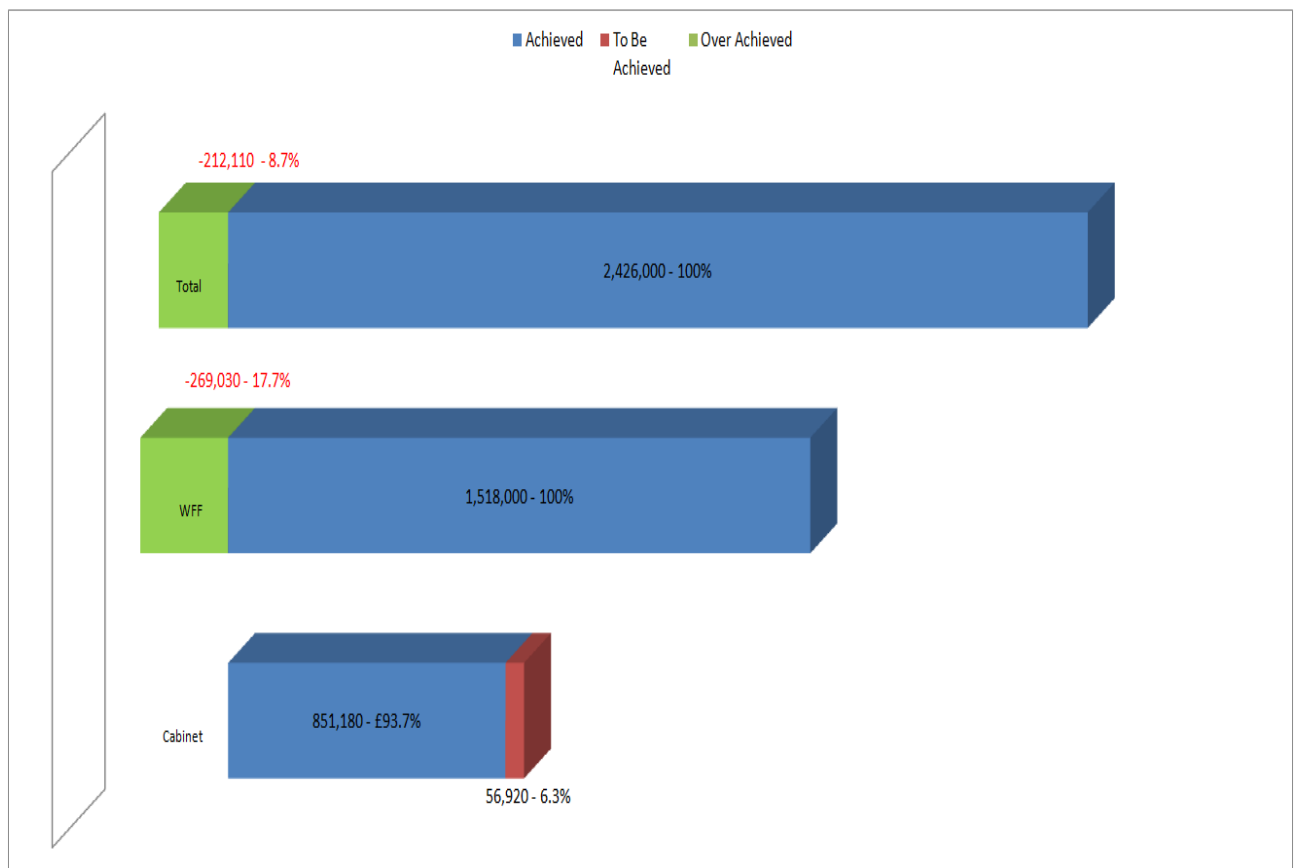
3.1 The projected outturn at 31st March 2017 is an under spend of £253,440. The details are in **Appendix 2** and the main variances are:

- **£193,440 Favourable:** Release of ear marked reserves - £100K due to improved forecast of pension liabilities following discussions with the actuary regarding the triennial pension fund revaluation, £58K Trade Waste VAT refund from HMRC and £35K efficient use of resources in Housing Benefits
- **£120,000 Favourable:** Corporate miscellaneous savings in pay and admin costs
- **£10,000 Favourable:** Increase in interest receivable due to deferment of capital projects
- **£40,000 Adverse:** reduction in forecast planning income
- **£20,000 Adverse:** reduced income at Kidderminster Town Hall due to refurbishment works
- **£10,000 Adverse:** Leisure Services Income target not achieved

3.2 Wyre Forest Forward Savings Programme/Cabinet Proposals

3.2.1 The review of all aspects of the Council to ensure we deliver a balanced budget and services of real value to our residents, has already achieved substantial savings. Already the target savings have been achieved for 2016-17, helped greatly by the savings from the new leisure centre and the good news on the rentals for Wyre Forest House. The current position in savings targets are detailed in **Appendix 4**. WWF savings and Cabinet Proposals of £2.638m have been identified against the target of £2.426m for 2016-17

Summary of 2016/17 Wyre Forest Forward and Cabinet Proposal Savings



3.3 Net Expenditure

The level of net expenditure represents the level of resource employed by the Council in order to undertake its statutory and discretionary services. This is because the Council's 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. The following table details the current outturn position against budget for each Directorate, also the net income from the Capital Account that determines the total net revenue expenditure. At the financial year end, the overall final position is forecast as follows :

Summary of main variances to budget

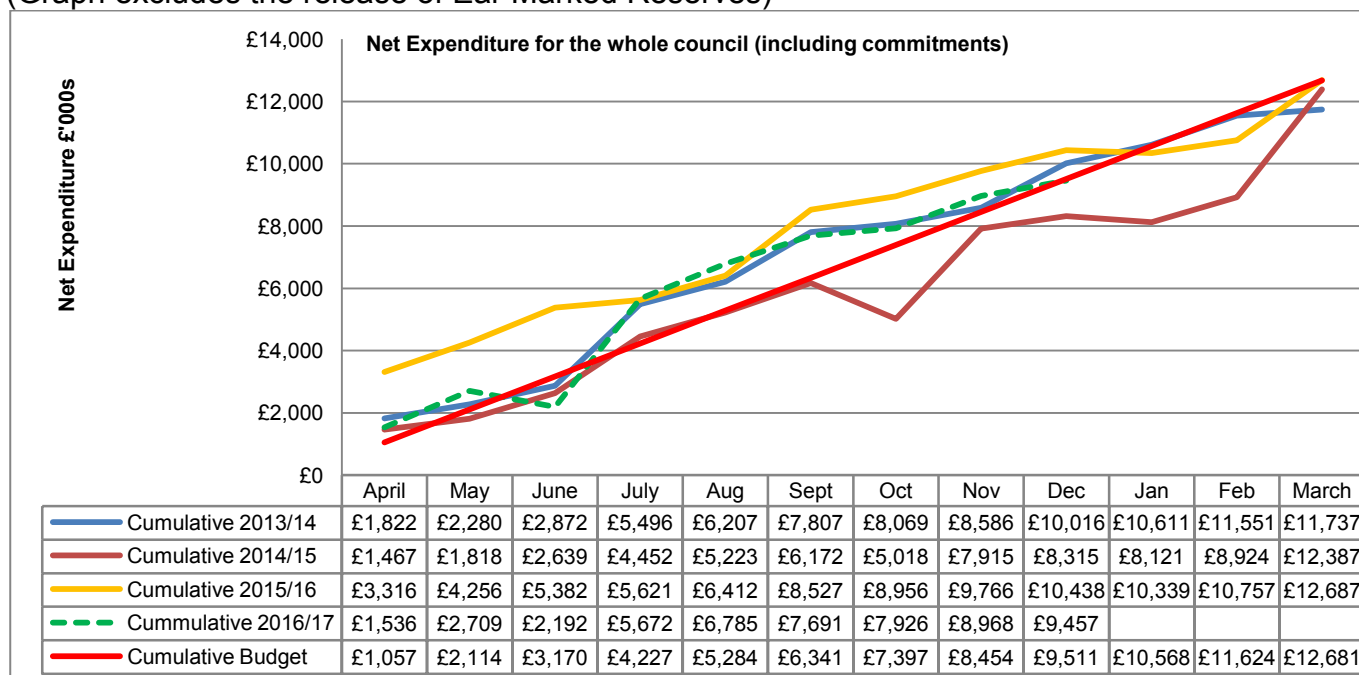
	Original Budget 2016-17	Revised Budget 2016-17	December 2016 position (including commitments)	Final Predicted Outturn	Variance against Revised Budget
Community Well-Being and Environment	£5,238,130	£5,009,580	£3,486,783	£5,000,480	Cr £9,100
Economic Prosperity and Place	£2,532,520	£2,717,220	£2,228,529	£2,757,220	£40,000
Chief Executive/ Corporate	£5,781,210	£5,944,620	£4,748,799	£5,863,720	Cr£80,900
Capital Account	Cr £692,630	Cr £990,280	Cr £1,006,675	Cr £1,000,280	Cr £10,000
Ear Marked Reserve release*	-	-	Cr£193,440	Cr£193,440	Cr£193,440
TOTALS	£12,859,230	£12,681,140	£9,457,436	£12,683,820	Cr253,440

*Ear Marked Reserve released have been shown separately and not against the Services

The profile of net expenditure varies against budget, not only because of the fluctuation in income, but also to reflect the seasonal variations in activity and the way that payments are made to, and received from organisations, including Government and other Councils. This is shown in the following graph:

Net Revenue Expenditure profile (including commitments) during 2016/17 compared against Revised Budget

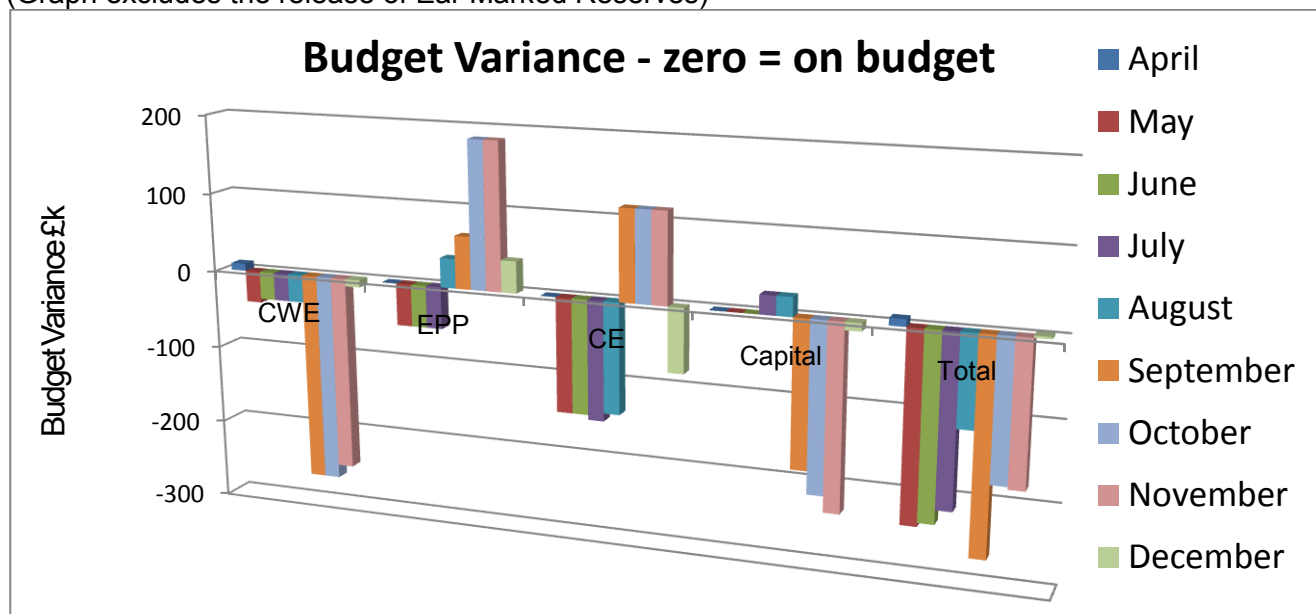
(Graph excludes the release of Ear Marked Reserves)



The Quarter 3 (December) position includes over £1,027k of commitments to cover expenditure for the whole financial year.

Changes in Final year Outturn based on monthly forecasts

Key: positive = increase shortfall against budget, negative = improved position against budget
(Graph excludes the release of Ear Marked Reserves)



CWE – Community Well Being and Environment EEP – Economic Prosperity and Place
CE – Chief Executive/Corporate

The budget revisions from May onwards were identified as a result of a CLT review of areas of consistent under spends; this has now been incorporated into the Revised Budget. The risks are identified in **Appendix 5**.

3.4 External Income

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 predicted for 2016/17 is £5.843m, against a 2015/16 actual performance of £5.531m.

Summary of income performance against budget throughout the year

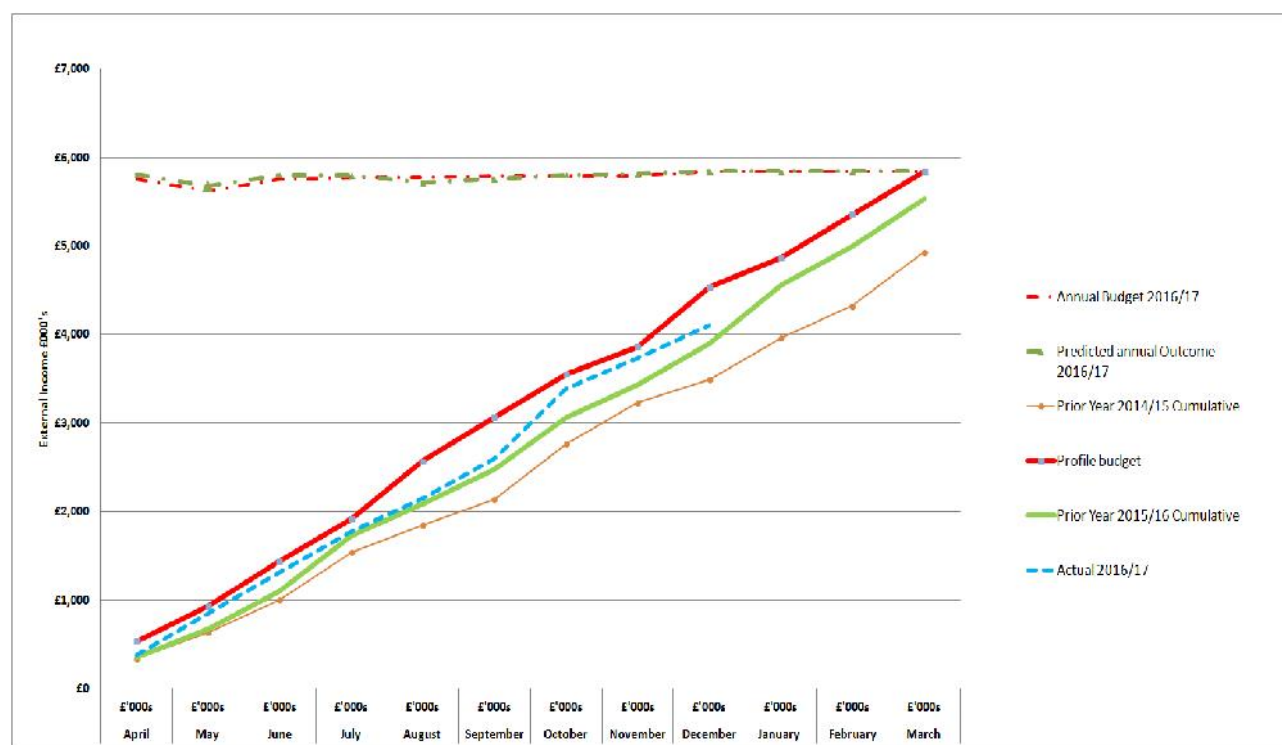
(Note all figures are cumulative £000's)

	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Annual Budget 2016/17	£5,755	£5,626	£5,755	£5,768	£5,768	£5,793	£5,793	£5,796	£5,843	£5,843	£5,843	£5,843
Predicted Annual Outcome 2016/17	£5,805	£5,680	£5,801	£5,795	£5,718	£5,758	£5,802	£5,814	£5,783	£5,783	£5,783	£5,783
Prior Year 2015/16 Cumulative	£353	£678	£1,105	£1,728	£2,091	£2,474	£3,064	£3,430	£3,902	£4,555	£4,995	£5,531
Prior Year 2014/15 Cumulative	£343	£637	£1,005	£1,544	£1,849	£2,138	£2,769	£3,230	£3,496	£3,964	£4,324	£4,931
Prior Year 2013/14 Cumulative	£625	£636	£953	£1,535	£1,963	£2,317	£2,709	£3,233	£3,522	£3,991	£4,252	£4,973
Prior Year 2012/13 Cumulative	£279	£713	£1,043	£1,469	£1,757	£2,047	£2,537	£3,117	£3,583	£3,974	£4,263	£4,848
Actual 2016/17	£380	£849	£1,314	£1,774	£2,151	£2,603	£3,390	£3,733	£4,110			
Profile budget	£536	£938	£1,439	£1,923	£2,571	£3,065	£3,553	£3,864	£4,536	£4,869	£5,356	£5,843

External Income achieved to date exceeds the position this time last year and all prior years since 2012/13, allowing some degree of confidence in the annual budget target.

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

Projection of External Income against Original Budget



Summary of Income Performance by Category – December 2016

Category All figures in £'000s	Revised Budget 2016/17 £000's	Projection as at Dec 2016 £000's	Actual Dec 2016 YTD £000's	% achieved of Revised Budget	Projected Year End Variance £000's	% achieved of projection
Fees and Charges	£3,982	£3,912	£2,827	71.0%	-£70	72.3%
Grants or Subsidies	£12	£12	£7	58.3%	£0	58.3%
Interest	£90	£100	£82	91.1%	£10	82.0%
Other	£142	£142	£142	100.0%	£0	100.0%
Rental Income	£775	£775	£585	75.5%	£0	75.5%
Shared Services income	£842	£842	£467	55.5%	£0	55.5%
Total	£5,843	£5,783	£4,110	70.3%	-£60	71.1%

Actual income is 70.3% of budget - and therefore 4.7% points below the target position as at December 2016, this amounts to a £272K shortfall at this stage of the year.

Based upon the income projection completed each month - the following variations to budget have been identified; all other income is expected to be on budget.

Full Year Income Generation Projection 2016-17 – Qtr3 (December)

Note – variances in external income do not always translate in to variances in the final outturn due to variances in expenditure.

Description	2016/17 Budget £	2016/17 Profiled Budget £	2016/17 Actual To Date £	Projection to Year End £	Variance Projection Less Budget £	Comment
SOME SECTIONS PREDICT EXTERNAL INCOME IN EXCESS OF ORIGINAL BUDGET						
Waste Services	-£804,920	-£631,294	-£632,614	-£830,520	-£25,600	Additional Garden and Trade contracts
Museum and TIC	-£70,490	-£60,739	-£87,666	-£88,020	-£17,530	Sales
Interest	-£89,800	-£67,359	-£81,541	-£99,800	-£10,000	Deferment of Capital Projects
SOME SECTIONS PREDICT A SHORTFALL IN EXTERNAL INCOME COMPARED TO ORIGINAL BUDGET						
Kidderminster Town Hall	-£88,000	-£66,109	-£46,190	-£64,000	£24,000	Reduced income due to refurbishment
Leisure Services	-£20,000	-£15,002	-£4,574	-£10,000	£10,000	Unachieved target
Planning	-£293,460	-£220,609	-£190,291	-£253,460	£40,000	Reassessment of Planning workloads
Building Control	-£121,000	-£96,502	-£90,017	-£116,000	£5,000	Shared Service

3.5 **Capital Programme**

The updated Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule for 2016/17, including slippage from 2015/16 are enclosed as **Appendix 3**.

3.6 **Risk Matrix**

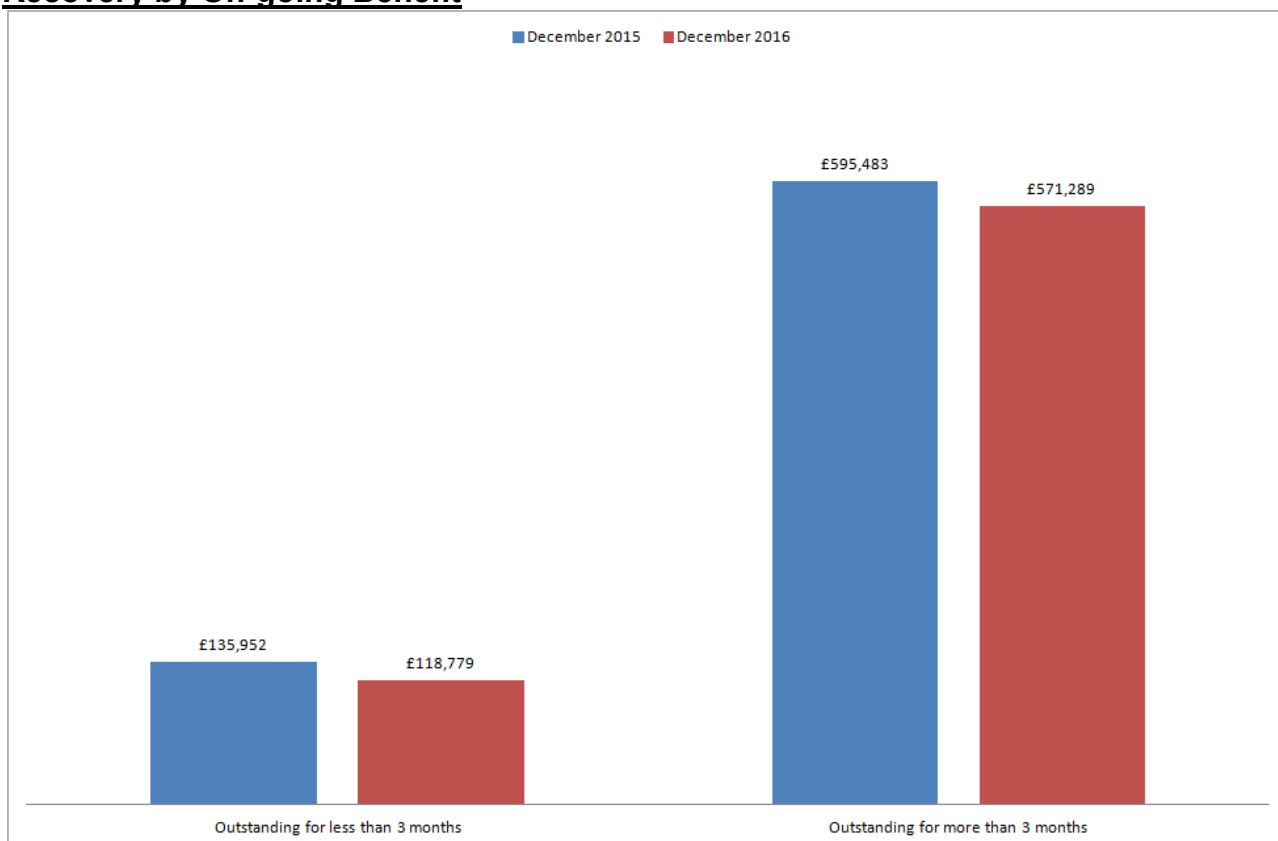
The Budget Risk Matrix has been reviewed to reflect the current assessment of risk. A copy is enclosed for information as **Appendix 5**.

3.7 Income and Outstanding Debt

The position relating to Housing Benefit Overpayment is shown in the next two graphs, split to show those debts being recovered from on-going benefit and those debts being recovered via an invoice:

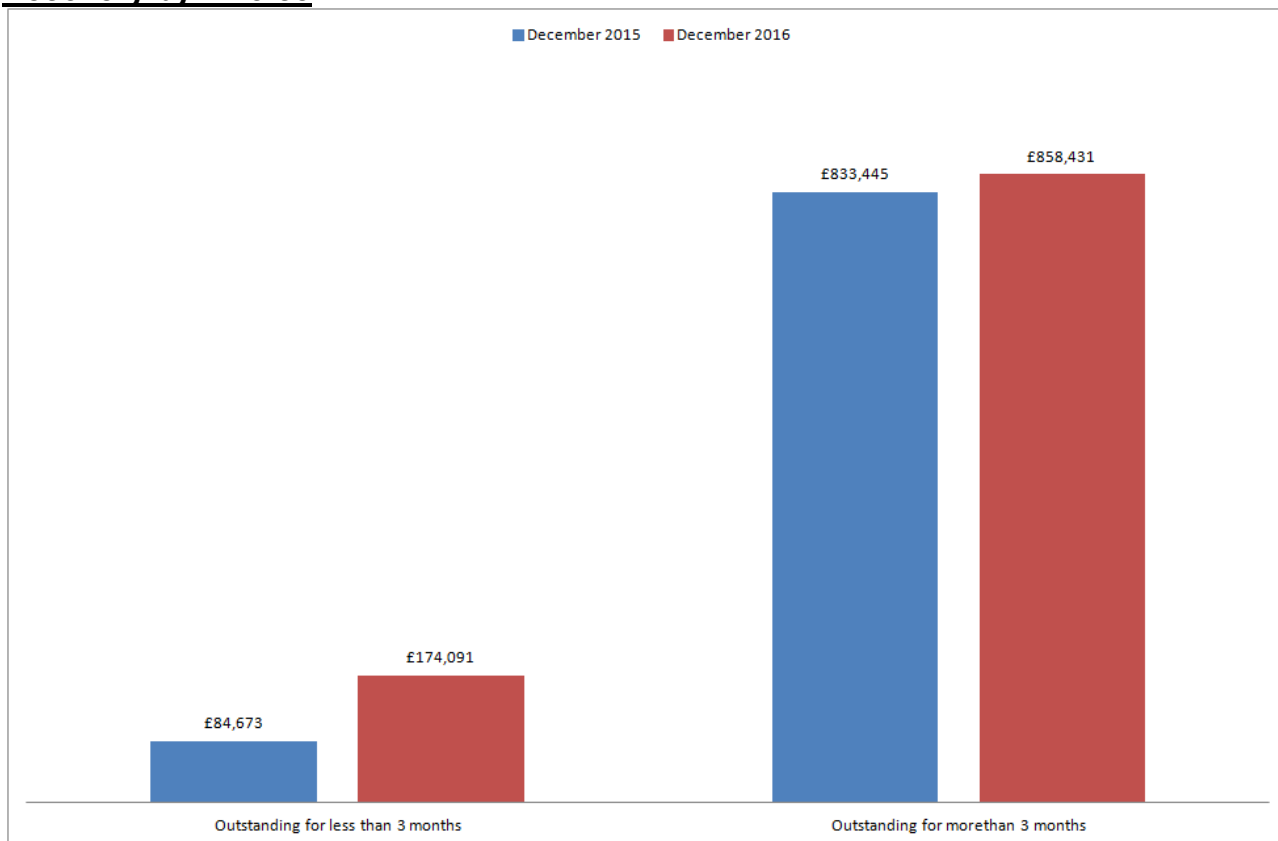
Comparison of the value of Housing Benefit Overpayment outstanding as at December 2015 and December 2016

Recovery by On-going Benefit



(E.G. In December 2015 the total value of debts outstanding for less than three months, being collected from on-going benefit was £135,952, compared to December 2016 where £118,779 was outstanding for less than three months)

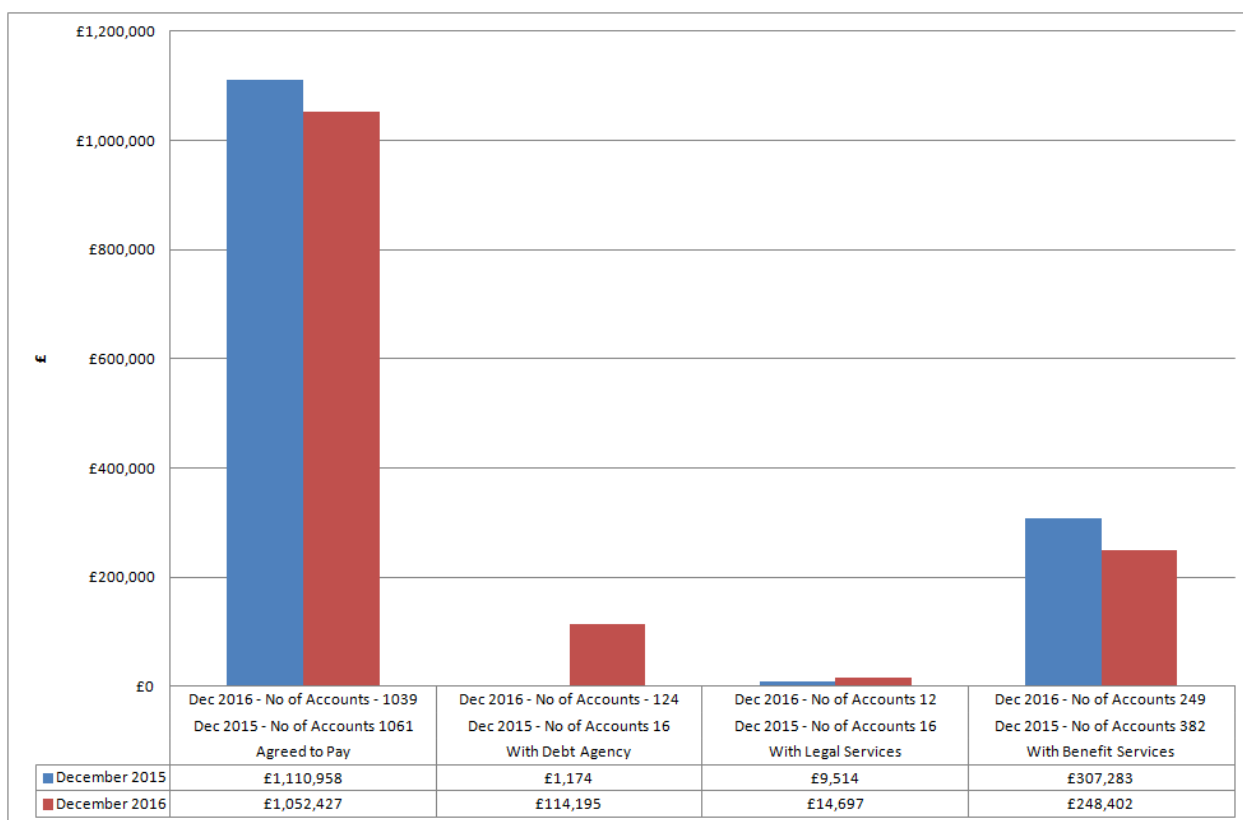
Recovery by Invoice



(E.G. In December 2015 the total value of debts outstanding for less than three months, being collected by invoice was £84,673, compared to December 2016 where £174,091 was outstanding for less than three months)

Debts over three months old have agreements in place to pay, have been referred to the Council's Legal Services, or remain with the Benefit Service to pursue. The Council employs the Debt Collection Agency Dukes, following the decision by Collectica Enforcement Services to withdraw from this service. Debts are referred as a last resort. As at December 2016 debts of £12,374 have been recovered at a cost of £1,856. The number of accounts, the value outstanding and how this will be collected is shown in the following graph:

Housing Benefit Overpayments outstanding and the number of accounts over 3 months old and their status as at December 2015 and December 2014

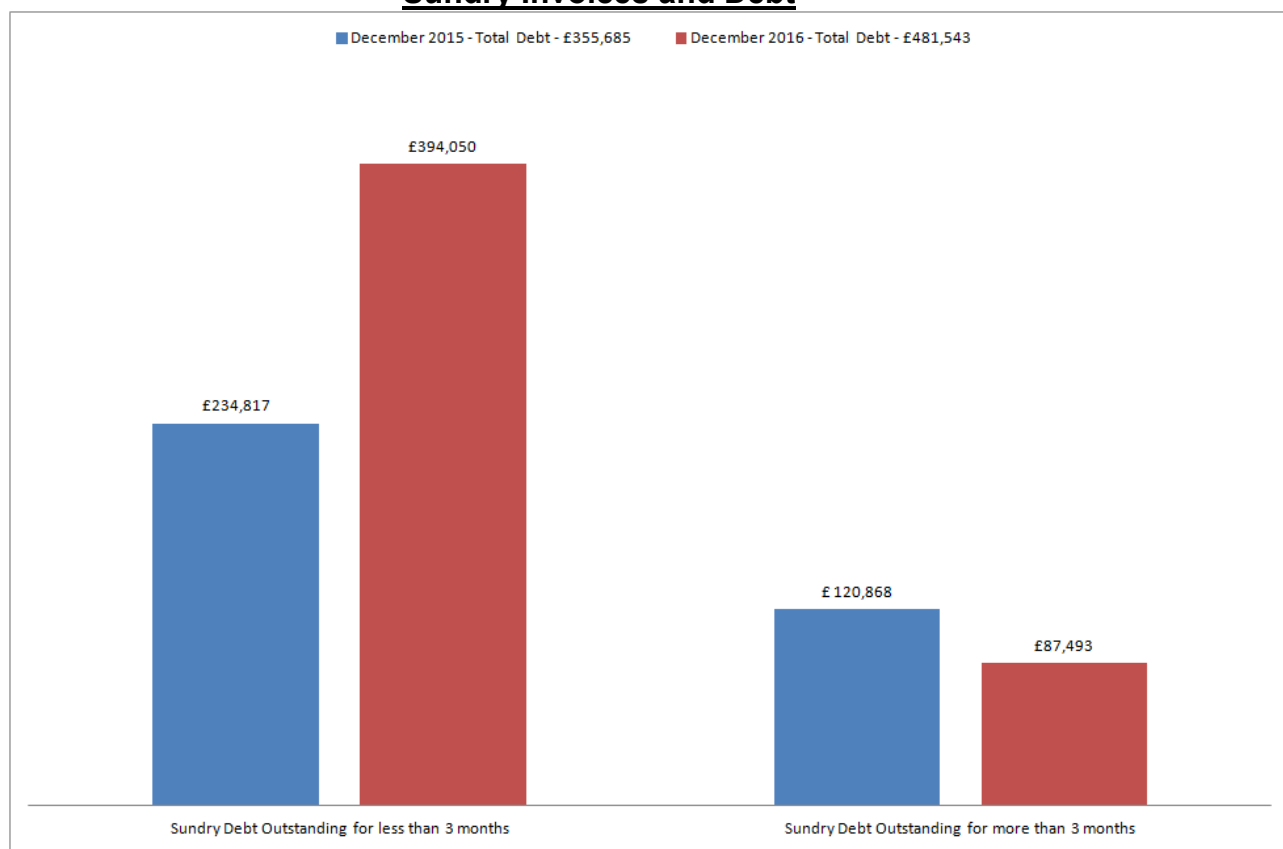


(E.G. In December 2015, 1061 claimants with a total debt of £1,110,958 had agreed to pay compared to December 2016, where 1039 claimants with a total debt of £1,052,427 had agreed to pay)

3.8 The position relating to Sundry/Property Customer Invoices are as follows:

Sundry Customer Invoices:

Sundry Invoices and Debt

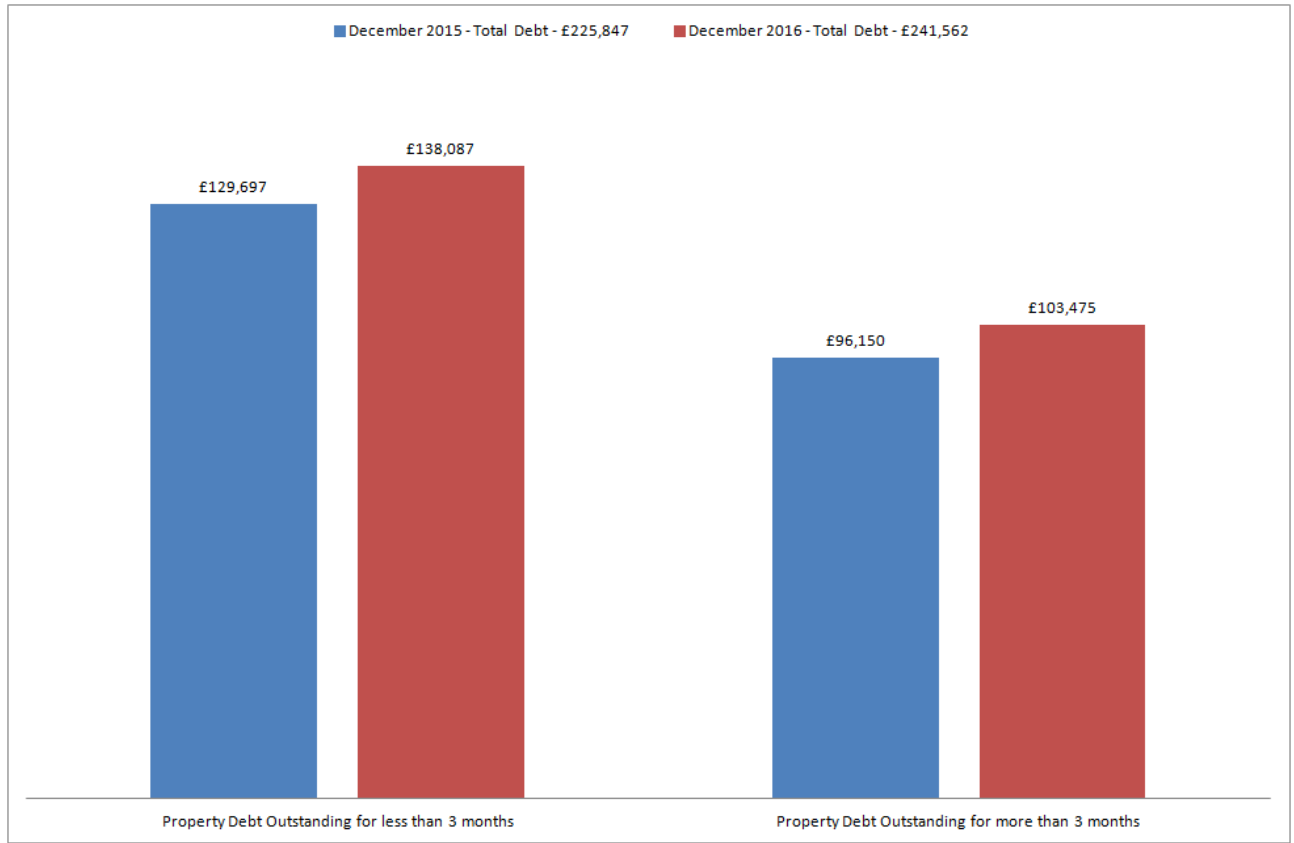


(E.G. In December 2015 the total value of debts outstanding for less than three months, was £234,817, compared to December 2016 where £394,050 was outstanding for less than three months).

The increase in short term debt (Sundry Debt for less than 3 months) includes the recharge for Shared Services and the new contract payment for Wyre Forest Leisure Centre from PfP Ltd, raised at the end of each Quarter.

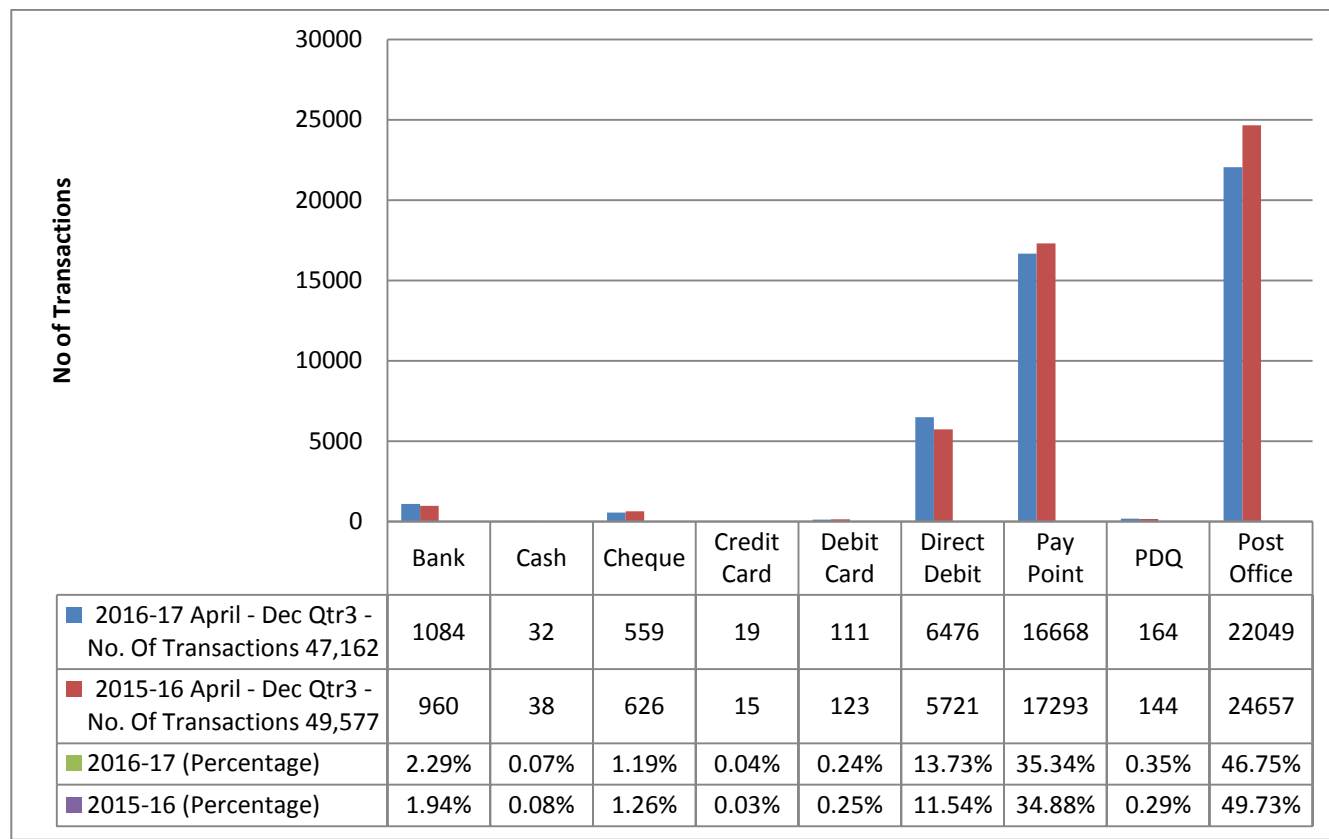
Property Customer Invoices

Property Invoices and Debt



(E.G. In December 2015 the total value of debts outstanding for less than three months, was £129,697, compared to December 2016 where £138,087 was outstanding for less than three months)

3.9 Comparison of payment methods for customer invoices raised as at December 2015 and December 2016



4. Multi Year Settlements

- 4.1 The Council took up the offer from the Government of a four year settlement and submitted an efficiency plan as part of this offer.
- 4.2 February 2017 Council to approve our Efficiency Plan – see at the following link:
http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/docs/doc51663_20170222_council_agenda.pdf
- 4.3 The Council has a long history of successfully making efficiency savings delivered through the Wyre Forest Forward Efficiency Programme. The total savings target from the Wyre Forest Forward programme including all Cabinet Proposals have been increased to £3.483m in 2018/19, of which projections show we should achieve £2.697m (just over 77%); forecast as at December 2016. The further target is particularly challenging but early work has already started to progress savings plans and we are optimistic this is achievable, especially when we consider the Council's strong track record in reducing expenditure since 2009. The current and planned proposals go a very considerable way towards closing the gap between what we are spending and our income.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS - BUDGET MONITORING 3rd QUARTER 2016/17

- 5.1 A copy of the Council's approved Revenue Budget is enclosed as **Appendix 1** for Members' information.
- 5.2 The Final Local Government Settlement announcement confirmed the provisional figures for Revenue Support Grant (RSG) released in December 2016. There is however, continued uncertainty about how the negative RSG arising in 2019-20 for this Council will work. While the report suggests an under spend, close monitoring by the Chief Financial Officer and all Directorates will continue.
- 5.3 Major changes to the New Homes Bonus grant are now confirmed for 2017-18 and will be paid on the basis of 5 years award and from 2018-19 on the basis of 4 years award. There will be assumed baseline growth of 0.4% for the annual grant award for 2017-18 and from 2018-19 additional conditions will be applied which will be subject to further consultation in due course.
- 5.4 The impact of the introduction of a national baseline of 0.4% below which funding allocations will not be made means that for this Council for 2017-18 the first new 163 homes will no longer qualify for New Homes Bonus Funding. We submitted a representation to the Government that was agreed in part, for the additional affordable Homes element, resulting in extra funding of £7,560 in 2016/17 and £10,640 in 2017/18 for the 3 years of the Budget Strategy so a total of £39,480 overall. Unfortunately because housing growth slowed down in 2016, we had growth of 176 properties so, after deducting the 163 baseline, this left 13 properties eligible for the bonus giving new funding of just £31k (including affordable housing supplement) for 2017-18 compared to the previous estimate of £225K (all figures are Band D equivalents).
- 5.5 It is certain that Public sector funding reductions look to continue until 2020, with increasing reliance on locally raised income including Council Tax. The funding outlook for local government, districts in particular, is set to become significantly more challenging.
- 5.6 The proposed changes to Local Government Funding present significant financial challenges for this Council and has resulted in a higher target for future savings from the Wyre Forest Forward Programme.
- 5.7 Housing Benefits overpayments – the council needs to monitor performance as it receives subsidy from the Department of Work and Pensions on those benefit payments which are identified as overpayments. The rate of subsidy varies, dependent on the classification of the overpayment. In addition the Council aims to recover the full or any part of an overpayment, then those recovered monies can be retained by the Council.
- 5.8 It is clear that the future financial position for the Council will continue to be challenging, particularly in the light of the fiscal uncertainty given the result of the European Referendum with austerity measures set to continue to balance the national budget. However it is too early to judge the impact of the decision to leave the European Union on Local Government Finances; at the moment the only tangible impact has been modest financial market volatility but this has not had a material

impact to date. The Bank of England reduced the Bank Base Rate to 0.25% in early August 2016, the first change since 2009. The fall in Base Rate has had a 'knock on' effect upon Public Works Loans Board (PWLb) borrowing rates, so there will be potential savings in respect of future borrowing. The newly elected president of the United States also introduces uncertainty into the global financial markets, which may lead to increased volatility over the next few years. The reduced level of funding currently programmed for the Council in the future is being mitigated by a raft of transformational reviews being developed and implemented as part of the Wyre Forest Forward programme.

- 5.9 The decision to remain a member of the reformed Worcestershire Business Rates Pool will help protect the Council from any business rate reductions and help maximise the benefit by retaining more business rates delivered from economic growth within Worcestershire. The position in relation to further appeals and resultant uncertainty due to the impact on performance remains a concern; this is being managed by the Chief Financial Officer in conjunction with the other Treasurers within the Pool. Business rate projections included in the December Cabinet Report have now been refreshed in the light of the latest Pool monitoring, including the revised position on appeals and it has been possible to increase growth by £100k for each year of the Financial Strategy from 2016-17. The final outturn for Business Rates growth is dependent on performance to year-end and in particular the activity in relation to appeals that often increases in March. It is the intention to reserve any additional growth over and above the £200k included in the approved budget in a Business Rates Equalisation Reserve to mitigate the significant risk around further appeals as part of the Final Accounts Process. This practice will be mirrored across the Worcestershire Business Rates Pool.
- 5.10 The early review of earmarked reserves has increased the forecast under spend now reported by circa £200k. This exercise will be repeated as part of the Final Accounts process to ensure we release any reserves no longer required to help towards the future financial sustainability of the Council.
- 5.11 Sundry/Property Debt – The income generated through the raising of invoices is a very important part of the Council's finances. We will continue to monitor Sundry and Property debt to ensure that invoices are paid in a timely manner and that processes are in place to recover outstanding income.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Local Government Act 2003 (sections 25–29) placed additional duties on Local Authorities on how they set and prioritise budgets.
- 6.2 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.
- 6.3 Our External Auditor Grant Thornton makes 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 resilience and that the organisation has

proper arrangements for challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 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.

9. CONCLUSIONS/ACTION

- 9.1 The information contained within Appendices 2, 3, 4, and 5 provides Members with an overview of financial trends within the period to 31st December 2016

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 Corporate Leadership Team
10.2 Cabinet
10.3 Service Managers and Budget Holders

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Council 24th February 2016, Draft paper for 22nd February 2017
Cabinet Report on Provisional Final Accounts 2015/16 14th June 2016
Cabinet Financial Strategy 2016/2019 9th February 2016
Cabinet Report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017-20 20th December 2016, 7th February 2017

Hyperlink to Committee Reports

<http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/meetings/main.htm>

Cabinet Financial Strategy Advisory Panel 11th October 2016, 14th November 2016, 10th January 2017, 26th January 2017

(Papers for Panels can be provided on request)

REVENUE BUDGET TOTAL REQUIREMENTS - DISTRICT
COUNCIL PURPOSES

SERVICE	2016/17	
	Original Estimate £	Revised Estimate £
CORPORATE COSTS	3,467,050	3,757,580
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	2,314,160	2,187,040
COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AND ENVIRONMENT	5,238,130	5,009,580
ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND PLACE	2,532,520	2,717,220
	13,551,860	13,671,420
LESS: CAPITAL ACCOUNT	1,030,690	821,270
REVERSAL OF CAPITAL CHARGES	(1,609,660)	(1,718,070)
INTEREST RECEIVED	(113,660)	(93,480)
INCREASES IN FEES AND CHARGES	0	0
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES	12,859,230	12,681,140
LESS: REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT	(1,179,060)	(1,179,060)
BUSINESS RATES	(2,602,060)	(2,602,060)
BUSINESS RATES GROWTH	(85,000)	(200,000)
COLLECTION FUND SURPLUS	(90,000)	(90,000)
NEW HOMES BONUS	(2,350,460)	(2,358,020)
TRANSITION GRANT	(43,230)	(43,230)
GENERAL EXPENSES -		
COUNCIL TAX INCOME	(6,720,820)	(6,720,820)
(SURPLUS) / DEFICIT FOR YEAR	(211,400)	(512,050)
COUNCIL TAX LEVY		205.36
COUNCIL TAX BASE		32,727

BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT
MAJOR REVENUE VARIATIONS QUARTER THREE (to 31st December 2016)

Total Revised Budget 2016/17 - Net Expenditure on Services	12,681,140
Reduced Expenditure on Services	(253,440)
TOTAL QUARTER THREE PROJECTION TO YEAR END 2016/17	12,427,700

<u>Description of Estimated Major Variances</u>	Extra Costs/ Reduced Income £	Savings/ Additional Income £
<u>Community Well Being and Environment</u>		
1. Kidderminster Town Hall - reduction in income due to refurbishment work	20,000	
2. Leisure Services - target for increased income not achieved	10,000	
<u>Economic Prosperity and Place</u>		
1. Planning Income - reduction in forecast	40,000	
<u>Corporate Variations</u>		
1. Capital - Increase in interest receivable - deferment of capital projects		(10,000)
2. Pay and General Admin savings		(120,000)
3. Release of EMR - Pension, VAT repayment for Trade Waste, Housing Benefit		(193,440)
	70,000	(323,440)
Reduction on Revised Budget (based on Quarter Three 2016/17 Projection)		(253,440)

Q3 Budget Monitoring 2016/17 (to December 2016)
Capital Programme 2016/17

APPENDIX 3

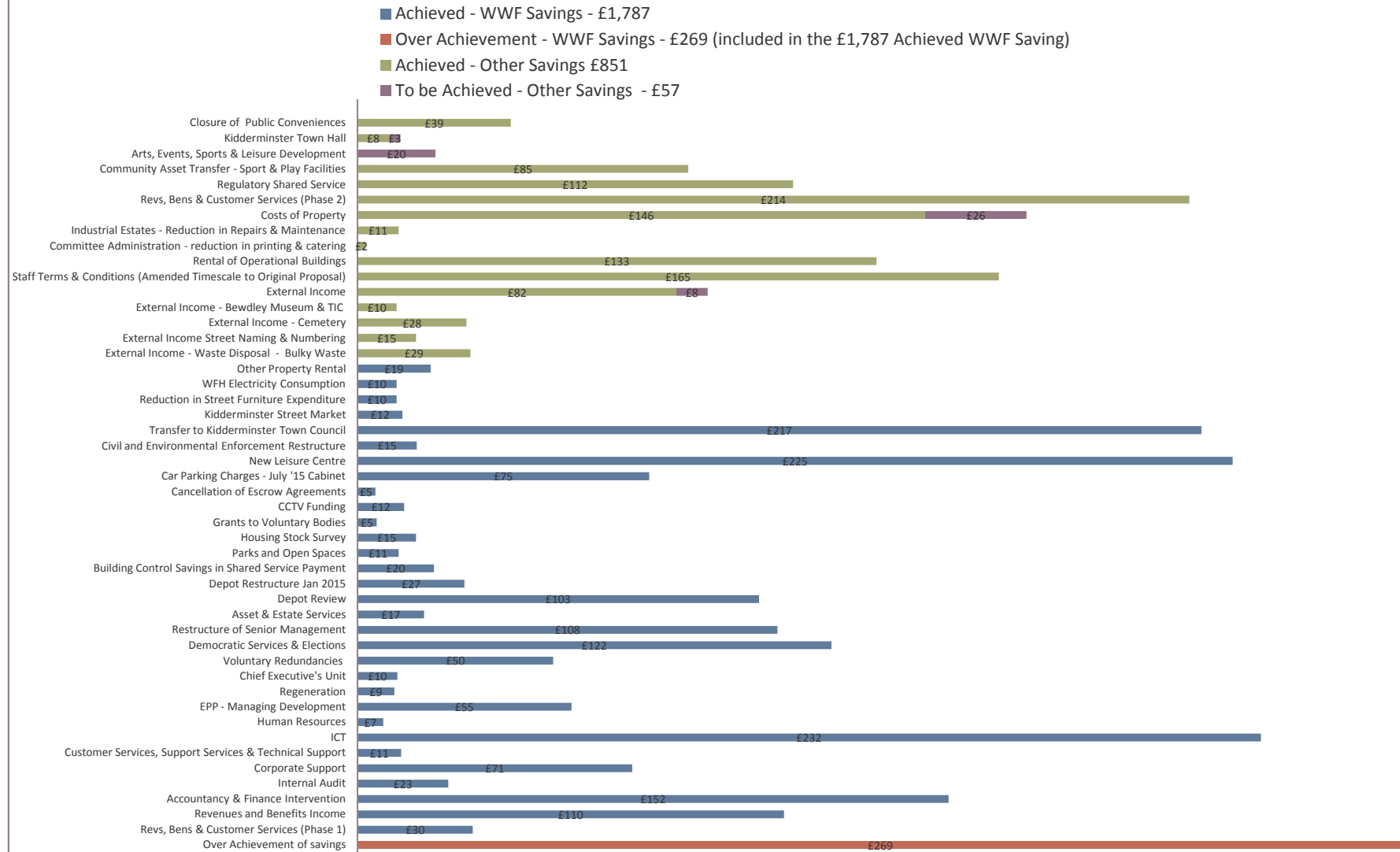
Capital project description	2016/17 Budget (Full Year)	YTD Actual Expenditure (Net Income)	Commitment	Year To Date Expenditure Including Commitments	Projected Total 2016/17 Expenditure	Slippage to 2017/18	Explanation
<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE</u>							
New Headquarters - Office Accommodation	11,640	Cr 1,972	133,911	131,939	11,640	0	Contractor account still to be finalised due to outstanding issues.
ICT Strategy	250,000	86,729	6,231	92,960	210,000	60,000	Wireless project likely to slip into next financial year.
Boundary Wall at 49 Worcester Street	10,000	0	0	0	0	10,000	Ongoing dispute regarding liability for damage to wall.
Total S6 CHIEF EXECUTIVE	271,640	84,757	140,142	224,899	221,640	70,000	
<u>COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AND ENVIRONMENT</u>							
Parking Facilities: Improvements to Car Parks	80,010	0	0	0	0	80,010	Car park improvements currently under review. Likely to be spent Q1 and Q2 2017/18.
Vehicle Renewals (Capital Programme)	599,420	191,018	0	191,018	455,560	103,420	See separate Vehicle, Equipment and System Renewals schedule.
Franchise St S106 - Brintons Pk/Habberley Valley	46,760	0	0	0	0	46,760	To be used for Brintons Park HLF project. Likely to slip to 2017/18.
Public Conveniences Refurbishment	30,990	29,658	0	29,658	29,658	0	Scheme complete
Future Leisure Provision	4,395,290	3,750,078	207,560	3,957,638	3,750,078	645,212	Retention monies and contingency remain. Balance to slip into 2017/18.
Northwood Lane Improvements	11,250	3,429	0	3,429	3,429	7,821	For landscape development improvements. Balance to slip into 2017/18.
Total S11 COMMUNITY WELL BEING & ENVIRONMENT	5,163,720	3,974,183	207,560	4,181,743	4,238,725	883,223	
<u>ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND PLACE</u>							
Disabled Facilities Grants	940,000	467,503	0	467,503	740,000	200,000	The Occupational Therapist post is still out for recruitment so spend for this and the Dementia Dwelling Grant isn't likely to commence until the start of the new financial year. The Council is still working with Community Housing Group to identify ways of fast tracking low level DFGs for tenants. Work on developing an Independent Living Centre is on hold whilst other projects have taken priority.
Private Sector Measures	80,000	67,908	3,881	71,789	80,000	0	This will be fully spent by year end.
Planning Delivery Grant Capital Projects	26,240	8,250	19,250	27,500	26,240	0	Scheme complete.
Flood Relief	10,000	0	0	0	0	10,000	Schemes still being negotiated with land owners.
Regeneration of Economic Development	961,360	578,511	90,793	669,304	961,360	0	Anticipated to complete by year end.
Bewdley Medical Centre	291,360	20,405	234,360	254,765	291,360	0	Anticipated to complete by year end.
North Worcs Water Management Capital Projects-Redditch	96,000	20,723	2,063	22,786	50,000	46,000	Works underway. Balance likely to slip into 2017/18.
North Worcs Water Management Capital Projects-Bromsgrove	3,930	3,650	0	3,650	3,650	0	Scheme complete.
Repair & Renew Flood Grants	3,200	0	0	0	0	0	Scheme ended - funding no longer required.
New Street Conversion	0	385	0	385	1,185	0	Some preliminary work carried out in 2016/17 (including the requirement for approx £800 asbestos survey). Budget for the conversion works will be available from 2017/18.
Total S5 ECONOMIC PROSPERITY & PLACE	2,412,090	1,167,335	350,347	1,517,682	2,153,795	256,000	
TOTAL	7,847,450	5,226,275	698,049	5,924,324	6,614,160	1,209,223	

Q3 Budget Monitoring 2016/17 (to December 2016)
Vehicle, Equipment and System Renewals 2016/17

APPENDIX 3

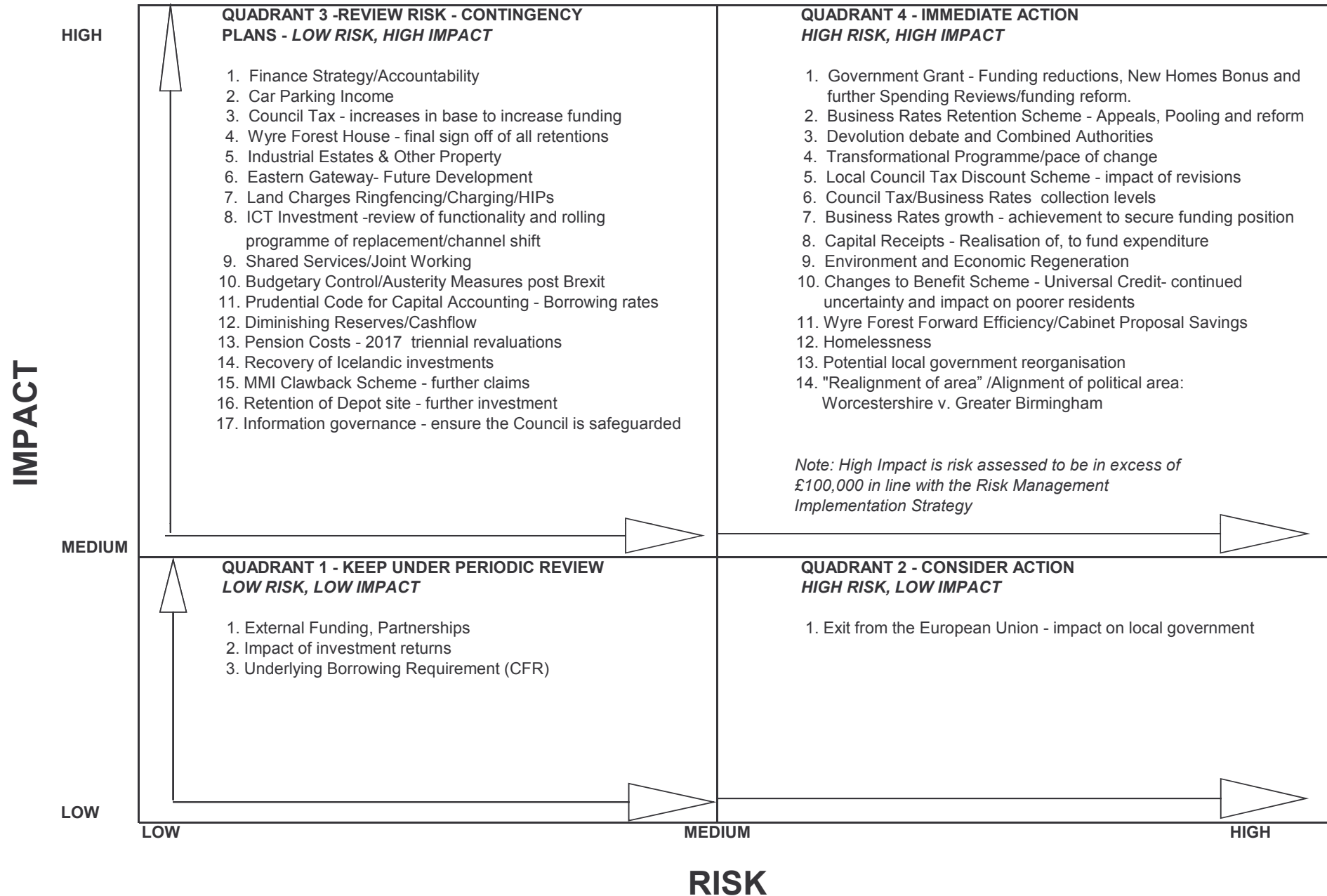
Detail	Revised Capital Programme 2016/17 £	Q3 Expenditure 2016/17 £	Projected Total 2016/17 Expenditure £	Slippage to 2017/18 £	Old Vehicle Fleet Number to be replaced	COST CENTRE	Comments
1. VEHICLES							
REFURBISHMENT FUND	25,000	0	0	25,000	N/A		To slip into 2017/18.
TIPPER 3,500kg	30,000	0	30,000	0	AV179	R200	Currently with Legal. About to start procurement process. Possibility could slip into 2017/18.
TIPPER 7,500kg	45,000	0	45,000	0	AV033	R002	Currently with Legal. About to start procurement process. Possibility could slip into 2017/18.
VAN	20,000	0	20,000	0	AV174	R200	Currently with Legal. About to start procurement process. Possibility could slip into 2017/18.
LIGHT VAN	20,000	0	20,000	0	AV203	R200	Contract has been awarded. Awaiting delivery.
LIGHT VAN	20,000	0	20,000	0	AV043	R035	Contract has been awarded. Awaiting delivery.
LIGHT VAN	18,000	0	18,000	0	AV204	R185	Contract has been awarded. Awaiting delivery.
CAR	18,000	9,250	9,250	0	AV178		Complete.
4x4	23,000	0	0	23,000	AV191	R163	To slip into 2017/18.
ROAD SWEEPER	120,000	111,542	111,542	0	AV166	R200	Complete.
PAVEMENT SWEEPER	ome - reductio	59,180	59,180	0	AV207	R200	Complete.
PAVEMENT SWEEPER	70,000	59,180	59,180	0	AV208	R200	Complete.
GARAGE EQUIPMENT	23,420	0	0	23,420	N/A	R229	To slip into 2017/18.
TRACTOR	32,000	0	0	32,000	AV070	R236	To slip into 2017/18.
RIDE ON MOWER	35,000	35,000	35,000	0			Complete.
CHIPPER WITH TRAILER	30,000	28,408	28,408	0	AV182	R236	Complete.
	529,420	302,560	455,560	103,420			

WWF/Cabinet Savings for 2016/17 £'000



BUDGET RISK MATRIX 2017/2020

APPENDIX 5 (Part 1)



BUDGETARY RESPONSE TO EACH RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUE IN ORDER OF QUADRANT

ISSUE	BUDGETARY RESPONSE
Quadrant 1 - Low Risk, Low Impact 1. External Funding, Partnerships 2. Impact of Investment Returns 3. Underlying Borrowing Requirement (CFR)	Keep under periodic review Continue to evaluate sustainability of each scheme as part of project appraisal. Continue to monitor and report as appropriate. The Governor of the bank of England has indicated that the rate may reduce further from the current 0.25%. 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. We continue to work with Capita in this area. The rising CFR over the term of the Budget Strategy will be carefully monitored in close liaison with Capita to gauge both the timing and type of external borrowing.
Quadrant 2 - High Risk, Low Impact 1. Exit from the European Union	Consider Action To-date the impact has not been significant but this will be closely monitored.
Quadrant 3 - Low Risk, High Impact 1. Finance Strategy/Accountability 2. Car Parking Income 3. Council Tax - increase in base 4. Wyre Forest House final sign off of all retentions 5. Industrial Estates and Other Property 6. Eastern Gateway - Future Development 7. Land Charges Ring fencing /Charging/HIPs 8. ICT Investment/channel shift 9. Shared Services Joint working 10. Budgetary Control/Austerity Measures 11. Prudential Code for Capital Accounting – Borrowing rates 12. Diminishing Reserves/Cash flow 13. Pension Costs 14. Recovery of Icelandic Investments	Review Risk - Contingency Plans Council are required to adopt a three year Balanced Budget Strategy. Usages/Income level closely monitored, proposal for new simplified policy is factored into the MTFP Assumption of increase of 300 pa should hopefully be realised. Managed closely by Chief Executive and CLT/Cabinet Managed through Property Disposal Strategy Development opportunities continue to be explored Reduced income allowed for within Base Budget reduces the scale of any challenge. Settlement of claim with lawyers New Burdens Grant will mitigate the impact ICT Strategy Group formed to oversee/enhance the governance, planning and delivery arrangements of the strategy between ICT and council service areas. Shared Services partnerships continue to contribute to collaborative efficiencies but will be monitored to ensure risk is managed and mitigated. Planning Income - reduction in forecast External borrowing is £15m, rates remain low but the economy is still volatile and future rates difficult to predict; Capita continue to provide technical advice Cash flow management will be tighter given reduction in capital and revenue reserves and use of the Capita Cash flow model is being used to improve management information to help mitigate any risk in this area Higher payments made as a result of the 2013 year's triennial revaluation have improved our position and it is hoped that the impact of the current revaluation can be contained within existing budgets. Under £1m is outstanding and work will continue to achieve maximum recovery.
Quadrant 3 Continued 15. MMI Claw Scheme 16. Retention of Depot Site 17. Information Governance	One further claim received and settled so far, ear marked reserve held. Currently on schedule and on budget; this will be carefully managed. Investment is required to provide a sustainable depot site now the decision has been taken to retain this key asset. Internal working group chaired by the Chief Executive is reviewing this area to ensure the Council continues to be safeguarded
Quadrant 4 - High Risk, High Impact 1. Government Grant – Funding Changes, further Spending Reviews and New Homes Bonus 2. Business Rates - Retention Scheme, Appeals, Pooling and revision of funding arrangements 3. Devolution debate and Combined Authorities 4. Impact of Transformational Programme 5. Local Council Tax Discount Scheme 6. Council Tax collection levels 7. Business Rate Growth 8. Capital Receipts - Realisation of to fund expenditure 9. Environment and Economic Regeneration 10. Changes to Housing Benefit Scheme – universal credit/localisation of support for Council Tax 11. Wyre Forest Forward Efficiency savings 12. Homelessness 13. Potential Local Government Reorganisation 14. Realignment of area/alignment of political area: Worcestershire V Greater Birmingham	Immediate Action Significant issue given the scale of the Spending deficit. The Cabinet Financial Strategy Advisory Panel process will assist Wyre Forest Forward coordinating Councils future Plans. Proposed changes to funding arrangements introduce uncertainty and risk, the new Worcestershire Pool may mitigate this. Annual review of pooling arrangements but future of pooling uncertain. Our robust regeneration programme is a mitigation factor. Monitored closely by CLT/Cabinet Managed by CLT/Cabinet with reports to Group Leaders. The impact of the revised Local Scheme will be kept under review by the Chief Executive/Chief Financial Officer 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 Scheme and these will be carefully managed and reported on. Given proposed funding reform independent business rates growth is of key importance to funding streams. Our regeneration policy, innovative service delivery options and proposed loans to third parties policy all help mitigate risk. Capital Programme funding reflects realistic timescale for the realisation of 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 Cabinet/CLT The continued overhaul of the benefits systems will be carefully managed and monitored. Progress continues to be monitored and reported regularly to members. The 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. Macroeconomic area strategically assessed and managed by the Leadership team. Kept under strategic review by the Leadership team in liaison with two LEPS. The three LEP footprint proposals are also within our radar.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14th March 2017

Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Ian Hardiman
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Planning Policy Manager
CONTACT OFFICER:	Rebecca Brown x 2195
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 – Draft WFDC Response to LTP4 Consultation

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek the Cabinet's approval of Wyre Forest District Council's response to the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4 Consultation (March 2016).

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:

2. 1 **That the comments and representations as set out at Appendix 1 of this report, be agreed as the District Council's formal response to the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4 Consultation.**
2. 2 **That the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place be authorised to submit the District Council's representations in accordance with the consultation deadline of 17th March 2016.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Worcestershire County Council (WCC) is required to maintain a valid Local Transport Plan (LTP) under the Transport Act 2000. The role of the LTP is to set out local transport policies and a strategy for investment in transport infrastructure, technology and services to deliver against a wide range of objectives.
- 3.2 Worcestershire's fourth LTP will cover the time period from 2017 to 2030. The consultation documents are split into 3 sections:
- The LTP itself which includes the proposed transport investment schemes grouped into three strategic areas: North East Worcestershire; South Worcestershire and the Wyre Forest.
 - The transport policies which set out the various policies which underpin the delivery of the LTP.
 - The Network Management Plan which sets out WCC's approach to managing its transport networks.

- 3.3 Cabinet will be aware that WCC Officers attended the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 2nd February to provide a presentation on the LTP4 Consultation. The District Council's draft response was reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting on 2nd March for consideration. Cabinet will receive recommendations from the Committee at the meeting on 14th March.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 LTP4 sets out the issues and priorities for investment in transport infrastructure, technology and services to support travel by all relevant modes of transport. As increasing transport network capacity is extremely expensive, Worcestershire County Council will aim to target investment in three broad areas as follows:

- Transport technology: opportunities to help manage demand on our networks to tackle congestion and support growth.
- Travel choice: enhance access to travel information and prioritise investment in alternative modes of travel. LTP4 emphasises the potential for the rail network to accommodate and support economic diversification and planned growth. In addition, investment in high quality, continuous corridors for active travel modes and improvements to public realm in urban areas to help provide realistic alternative travel choices for shorter trips.
- Capacity enhancement: where suitable business cases can be identified to support investment, WCC will aim to fund and deliver capacity enhancements at key pinch points to support development growth, address poor air quality issues and tackle congestion.

4.2 The Wyre Forest Package

LTP4 contains a Wyre Forest package at pages 50-58. Transport challenges for the District during the LTP4 period will be to relieve congestion; to improve journey time reliability; to deliver transport schemes to accommodate development growth associated with the Local Plan Review.

- 4.3 The following strategic schemes are identified for delivery during the LTP4 timeframe:

- Kidderminster Transport Strategy Major Scheme – phased investment programme to support regeneration, economic diversification and growth associated with the Local Plan Review
- Transport Telematics Investment Package: To include variable messaging signs, real time information systems and signalling improvements.
- Bewdley to Wyre Forest Active Travel Corridor – systematic investment in walking and cycling along the Dowles corridor.
- Mustow Green Junction Enhancement Scheme – improve efficiency of this busy junction.
- Blakedown Rail Station Enhancement Scheme – station enhancements to include passenger information and station facilities; set down and pick up facilities and improvements to car parking.

- 4.4 Specific packages are included for the District's three main towns as follows:

Kidderminster

- Bewdley Hill (A456) improvements including major junctions review
- Kidderminster Rail Station Enhancement Scheme – upgrading the railway station
- Ring Road junction and public realm improvement schemes with the particular aim to mitigate poor air quality.
- Active travel network investment programme to include surfacing, signage and lighting improvements.
- Chester Road Improvements including major junctions review.
- A456 Birmingham Road/Hurcott Lane junction/Sion Hill/A449/Stourbridge Road junction; A451 Stourbridge Road/B4189 Park Gate Road junction; A449 Stourbridge Road/B4189 Wolverley and Park Gate Road junction – comprehensive review of junctions to identify whether capacity and/or safety improvements are required.
- Stourport Road Improvements – include new technology surfacing; lighting; enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure.
- B4190 Habberley to Wolverley improvements (as above)

Stourport-on-Severn

- Stourport-on-Severn Transport Strategy – a comprehensive multimodal review of network efficiency and infrastructure, public realm and wider access.

Bewdley

- Bewdley Transport Strategy – review access arrangements to the town with a particular focus on improving air quality.

- 4.5 It is recognised that the LTP4 consultation document clearly raises issues with funding availability and that increasing the local transport network's capacity is a very expensive option. Generally the overall content of LTP4 is to be supported and in particular the Wyre Forest Package and it's identified schemes. Taken all together, these Wyre Forest Strategic Delivery Packages address a number of the key issues in the District, especially in and around Kidderminster.
- 4.6 Clearly there will be a strong relationship between LTP4 and the Wyre Forest Local Plan Review and an iterative dialogue between WCC and WFDC will need to continue to ensure the infrastructure needs associated with future planned development will be met. The District Council is producing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to inform the Local Plan Review Preferred Options consultation. LTP4 and the identified transport schemes will form an important element of the IDP. There are positive references to the further transport investment which might be needed in connection with the emerging Wyre Forest Local Plan Review. Collectively, these packages should all be fully supported by WFDC with inputs into the bidding for funds, wherever necessary.
- 4.7 Appendix 1 sets out the draft response from Wyre Forest District Council for Cabinet's approval. This has been formulated by Officers following discussion of the LTP4 at Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 2nd February and at Local Plans Review Panel at its meeting on 13th February.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications to the Council arising from this report.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. The recommended responses are in accordance with the Council's Corporate priorities.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 N/A

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 It is important that the District Council responds to the LTP4 consultation, which could have a significant impact on the future regeneration of the District.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Overall the Worcestershire LTP4 document is to be welcomed and supported. The specific packages identified for Wyre Forest District are strongly supported. However, it is considered that the final version of the LTP4 should provide more detail on certainty and prioritisation of the schemes identified for Wyre Forest. It is proposed that the response as set out at Appendix 1 be submitted to WCC for their consideration as they develop the final LTP4 for adoption in summer 2017.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 Members' Forum (14/07/16)
10.2 Local Plans Review Panel (13/02/17)
10.3 Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Meetings dated 02/02/2017 & 02/03/2017)

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Local Transport Plan 4 Consultation documents (www.worcestershire.gov.uk)

DRAFT Wyre Forest District Council Response to the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP4) Consultation: 2017-2030**MAIN LTP4 DOCUMENT****INTRODUCTION**

This recognises the role of Infrastructure Delivery Plans in setting out a strategic approach to investment in transport infrastructure, technology and services to support growth

Comment: Support. The summer 2017 Wyre Forest Infrastructure Delivery Plan (WFIDP) will have an important role in supporting the proposals contained in the emerging Wyre Forest Local Plan Review. The WFIDP will also consider the potential role of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as one potential funding source. It is recognised that funding from developers will have an important role to play in funding transport schemes but it is important that the LTP4 explains that this is not always on a site specific basis. The Potential Funding Sources column in all of the Transport Packages is open to mis-interpretation.

OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE

Countywide approach which recognises the role of both the Worcestershire and Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

Comment: The District Council supports emphasising the role of both the LEPS and the context set by Midlands Connect – a strategy covering all of the Midlands.

SETTING THE SCENE

Comment: The District Council supports the recognition of the growth envisaged in Wyre Forest to 2026; and the role of the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park.

FUNDING OUR AMBITION

WCC will bid for major transport funding for major transport schemes including:

- Kidderminster Transport Strategy
- Blakedown Railway Station Parkway enhancement.

In Worcestershire prominent Local Growth Funded projects include:

- Hoobrook Link Road, Kidderminster
- Kidderminster Railway Station

In July 2016, North Worcestershire Economic Development & Regeneration (NWEDR) in association with WCC submitted applications for Growth Deal funding for schemes such as:

- Churchfields , Kidderminster

Comment: Wyre Forest District Council fully supports these funding bids as they benefit the District.

STRATEGIC DELIVERY PROGRAMME: THE WYRE FOREST AREA (pp. 50-58)

The Area Profile The Council considers this to be a succinct summary which gives a fair description of the District and highlights the following issues:

- The area is well connected to Birmingham, the Black Country & Worcester but lacks local access to the motorway network.
- Two Air Quality Management Areas at Welch Gate, Bewdley & Horsefair, Kidderminster.
- Two railway stations at Kidderminster & Blakedown.
- The poor quality of Kidderminster Town Centre Bus Station.
- Top tourist attractions at the Severn Valley Railway & the West Midlands Safari Park.

Comment. The District Council supports the majority of this area profile but wishes to raise the following points:

- i) The references to buses need to be amended. The key problem is the poor quality of bus services in the District. Work does need to be done in respect of the bus station. It is important that the County Council undertakes a Study to determine the need for a bus station and then to advise on an appropriate location.
- ii) The District Council considers that alternative delivery models for bus passenger transport in the District, such as community led schemes should be progressed through LTP4.
- iii) It is good to give prominence to the role of the Severn Valley Railway (SVR) but it has potential not only to serve a tourism purpose but also a transport/commuter service purpose too. It is important that some reference is made to the potential for connections to Silverwoods (and The South Kidderminster Enterprise Park) and the West Midlands Safari Park. This would then provide a basis for SVR to be approached to reconfigure its service to be a more commercial one at peak periods.

Transport achievements highlighted are:

- Hoobrook Link Road.
- Major investment in local streets via the “Driving Home” project.
- Strong business case for investment in Kidderminster Railway Station
-

Comment. The District Council notes and supports these achievements.

Challenges

Availability of public funding is limited and therefore need to make a business case for improvements.

These are structured into the following packages:

- Wyre Forest Strategic Transport (WFST) schemes.
- Kidderminster (K) Package.
- Stourport-on-Severn (S) and Bewdley (BE) schemes.

These are considered in turn:

Strategic (WFST) Schemes

- WFST 1: Kidderminster Transport Major Scheme. Phased programme, especially in Kidderminster Town Centre, and linked to WFDC Development Plan (emerging Wyre Forest Local Plan Review).
- WFST 2. All towns. Telematics. Smarter information and signalling.
- WFST 3. Active Travel Corridor: Bewdley to Wyre Forest: Dowles Link: walking, cycling etc.
- WFST 4. Mustow Green Enhancement Scheme (A448 /A450).
- WFST 5. Blakedown Railway Station Enhancement Scheme.

Kidderminster Package

- K1. Bewdley Hill (A456): Key corridor of improvement.
- K2: Kidderminster Station Enhancement Scheme.
- K3: Ring Road: Junction and Public Realm Improvement Scheme.
- K4: Active Travel Network Investment Programme.
- K5: Chester Road (A449): Key corridor of improvement.
- K6: A456 Birmingham Road/Hurcott Lane junction.
- K7: Sion Hill/ A449 Stourbridge Road junction.
- K8: A451 Stourbridge Road/ B4189 Park Gate Road junction.
- K9: A449 Wolverhampton Road / B4189 Wolverley Road / B4189 Park Gate Road junction.
- K10: Stourport Road: Key corridor of improvement.
- K11: B4190: Key corridor of improvement: Habberley to Wolverley.

Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley Package

- S1: Stourport-on-Severn Transport Strategy. Comprehensive review of the network.
- BE1: Bewdley Transport Strategy. Review access arrangements into the town.

It is noted that the South Worcestershire Travel Corridor Package includes the following scheme:

- SWAT 10: Stourport to Hartlebury Station (Leapgate Line) Active Travel Corridor.

Comments:

- i) Taken all together, these Wyre Forest Strategic Delivery Packages address a number of the key issues in the District, especially in and around Kidderminster. There are also the positive references to the further transport investment which might be needed in connection with the emerging Wyre Forest Local Plan Review. Collectively, these packages are supported by

Wyre Forest District Council with inputs into the bidding for funds, wherever necessary.

- ii) Whilst it is accepted that this is a strategic document, greater clarity could be provided in some cases where there is particular public interest:
 - a) Greater clarity could be provided on the roles of 20mph zones, especially in Town Centres.
 - b) Kidderminster Rail Station is the second busiest in Worcestershire and should rightly be the main focus of an enhancement scheme to include improved parking provision. A full assessment should be undertaken of the impact of the growth potential for Kidderminster Station on car parking requirements at the site and network and highway capacity to access the station in the future.
 - c) The origin and nature of the Blakedown Railway Station Enhancement Scheme (WFST5) could be helpfully provided. The justification for expanding the facilities at Blakedown Rail Station needs to be explained more fully. More analysis is required of the impact of enhancing the provision at the station and the advantages and disadvantages that this will have for the settlement and surrounding highway network.
 - d) Mustow Green Enhancement Scheme - The District Council respectfully requests that an early timetable is brought forward for improving the efficiency of this busy junction.
 - e) In respect of S1, the District Council wishes to express its continued support for at least the partial completion of the Stourport Relief Road if the river crossing element is no longer feasible. It would be helpful to explain if the routes of key sections of this proposal are going to be retained, in terms of the delivery of key sites and the formation of a partial relief road linking the A451 with Worcester Road, Stourport.
 - f) There should be some specific references in the main LTP4 document to the issue of dealing with Air Quality Management Areas in Wyre Forest. It should not just be left to the general statements in the Transport Policies document.

LTP4: TRANSPORT POLICIES

This consists of a series of standardised County-wide policies under the following main headings:

- Transport Engagement.
- Public Realm
- Cycle Infrastructure
- Integrated Passenger Transport
- Transport and Air Quality
- Motorcycling.
- Climate Change.

Comment: All of these policy areas are supported by Wyre Forest District Council.

THE WORCESTERSHIRE NETWORK MANAGEMENT PLAN

This consists of a number of topics, all dealt with on a County-wide basis, including:

- Tackling congestion
- Management of Road Works
- Freight
- Transport Telematics
- Travel choices.

Comment: Although Wyre Forest District Council supports the Management Plan it is strongly considered that the poor quality of the surface of the District's roads needs addressing.

6th March 2017

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Cabinet
14th March 2017**

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 2nd March 2017**

Worcestershire Partnership Plan

The Committee received a report from the Strategic Housing Services Manager which set out the consultation responses and amendments to the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan that had been developed by the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership.

Recommend to Cabinet:

- 1. The Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan be approved.**
- 2. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's concerns about the following areas of The Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan be noted, for the reasons stated:**
 - a) The Sustainability and Transformation Plan**
Members have not received a local briefing yet on this Plan and therefore do not understand how it will support the housing agenda.
 - b) Care Leavers and the Corporate Parenting Role in Worcestershire**
Work regarding Care Leavers is not made reference to in the "What Are We Doing Section" of the Plan. This is very concerning given Worcestershire County Council's recent inadequate rating for its Ofsted inspection of services for children in Worcestershire.
 - c) Supported Housing**
Due to the reduced levels of supported accommodation which will be available for people with disabilities, following cuts to the Supporting People budget, there needs to be robust monitoring procedures in place as part of the plan to understand the impact of funding cuts.
- 3. That the Wyre Forest Clinical Commissioning Group be invited to a future meeting of the Members' Forum to brief Members on the Sustainability and Transformation Plan for this area.**

Background papers:

Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Thursday 2nd March 2017

<http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/meetings/com193.htm#mt7616>

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Cabinet
14th March 2017**

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 2nd March 2017**

Changes to Community Housing Group Community Member Nominations

The Committee received a report from the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place which advised the Committee of changes that were expected which impact on the Council's approach to nominating Council Members to the Community Member positions on Community Housing Group (CHG).

Recommend to Cabinet:

That no further nominations to the roles of Community Member are made to any of the vacancies on CHG.

Background papers:

Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Thursday 2nd March 2017

<http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/meetings/com193.htm#mt7616>

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Cabinet
14th March 2017**

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 2nd March 2017**

Initiating a Collective Energy Switching Scheme

The Committee considered a report from the Principal Health and Sustainability Officer which sought permission for Wyre Forest District Council to initiate a Collective Energy Switching Scheme (CESS) on behalf of residents.

Recommend to Cabinet:

To initiate a Collective Energy Switching Scheme on behalf of residents.

Background papers:

Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Thursday 2nd March 2017

<http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/meetings/com193.htm#mt7616>

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Cabinet
14th March 2017**

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 2nd March 2017**

Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4

The Committee considered a report which gave an overview of the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4 consultation documents.

Recommend to Cabinet:

1. The consultation response, as set out at Appendix 1 of the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, be agreed with the following additions:
 - a) Mustow Green Junction Enhancement Scheme – to request an early timetable for improving the efficiency of this busy junction.
 - b) Kidderminster Rail Station– that a full assessment is undertaken of the impact of the growth potential for Kidderminster Station on car parking requirements at the site and network and highway capacity to access the station in the future.
 - c) Blakedown Rail Station Enhancement –More analysis is required of the impact of enhancing the provision at the station and the advantages and disadvantages that this will have for the settlement and surrounding highway network. In particular there's concern about the potential impact on the Green Belt Land which surrounds the station.
 - d) Quality of the surface of the District's roads – the poor quality of surface needs addressing.
 - e) Stourport Relief Road –continued support for at least the partial completion of the Relief Road if the River Severn crossing element is no longer feasible.
 - f) Passenger Transport – that alternative delivery models are explored for the provision of bus passenger transport in the district such as community – led schemes.
2. The consultation response, as amended, be approved for submission to Worcestershire County Council by the deadline of 17th March 2017.

Background papers:

Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Thursday 2nd March 2017

<http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/meetings/com193.htm#mt7616>