



## **Meeting of the Council**

**Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2014 at 6.00pm**

**in the Council Chamber at the Council House, Priory Road, Dudley**

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council for the purpose of transacting the business set out in the numbered agenda items listed below.

### **Agenda - Public Session (Meeting open to the public and press)**

Prayers.

1. Apologies for absence.
2. To receive any declarations of interest under the Members' Code of Conduct.
3. To confirm and sign the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 24<sup>th</sup> February and 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2014 as a correct record (Pages CL/39 – CL/51).
4. Mayor's Announcements.
5. To receive reports from meetings as follows:

Meeting of the Cabinet held on 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2014:

Councillor Sparks to move:

- (a) Capital Programme Monitoring (Pages 1 to 8).

Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board dated 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2014

Councillor Ridney to move:

- (b) Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board 2013/14 (Pages 9 to 15).

6. Notice of Motion

To consider the following notice of motion received from Councillor K Turner on 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2014:

“This Council agrees to formation of adoption of Scrutiny and Statutory Committees to be chaired by opposition members, providing effective debate and response to Cabinet for their recommendations to Council.


We further agree that no Special Responsibility Allowance be paid to Chairman or Vice-Chairman of any Scrutiny or Statutory Committees.

We all agree that our principal aims in accepting election is to serve our constituents and these actions will demonstrate our true commitment.”

7. To answer questions under Council Procedure Rule 11.

*Questions on the Minutes of the Cabinet and Committees, Community Forums and the Delegated Decision Summaries – these are contained in the separate book circulated to Members of the Council.*

8. To consider any business not on the agenda which by reason of special circumstances the Mayor is of the opinion should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972.



**Director of Corporate Resources**

**Dated: 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2014**

Distribution: All Members of the Council

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- Information about the Council and our meetings can be viewed on the website [www.dudley.gov.uk](http://www.dudley.gov.uk)
- The Democratic Services contact officer for this meeting is Steve Griffiths, Telephone 01384 815235 or E-mail [steve.griffiths@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:steve.griffiths@dudley.gov.uk)

**DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH**

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL  
AT THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2014  
AT 6.00 PM AT THE COUNCIL HOUSE, DUDLEY**

**PRESENT:** -

Councillor A Finch (Mayor)  
Councillor M Aston (Deputy Mayor)  
Councillors A Ahmed, K Ahmed, Ali, Mrs Ameson, Arshad, A Aston, Attwood, Baugh, Mrs Billingham, Bills, Blood, Body, Boleyn, Branwood, Burston, Casey, Caunt, Cotterill, Cowell, Crumpton, Duckworth, Elcock, Evans, K Finch, Foster, Hale, Hanif, Harley, Harris, Hemingsley, Hill, Islam, James, J Jones, L Jones, Jordan, Kettle, Lowe, Marrey, J Martin, Miller, Mottram, Ms Nicholls, Perks, Ridney, Roberts, Mrs Rogers, Russell, Mrs Shakespeare, Sparks, Sykes, Taylor, Mrs H Turner, K Turner, S Turner, Tyler, Vickers, Mrs Walker, Waltho, Mrs Westwood, C Wilson, Wright and Zada, together with the Chief Executive and other Officers.

**PRAYERS**

The Mayor's Chaplain led the Council in prayer.

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47      **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Herbert, Mrs P Martin, Partridge, Mrs Simms, Mrs M Wilson, Wood and Woodall.

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48      **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declarations of interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, were made by the following Members:

Councillor Vickers – Minutes Nos. 12 and 13 of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee (Revenue Budget Strategy 2014/15 and Scrutiny of Children's Centres – Feedback) – Non-pecuniary interest as the Chair of the Management Committee for Tenterfields Children's Centre.

Councillor Marrey - Minutes Nos. 12 and 13 of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee (Revenue Budget Strategy 2014/15 and Scrutiny of Children's Centres – Feedback) – Non-pecuniary interest in view of his son being in respite care.

Councillor Mrs Walker - Minutes Nos. 12 and 13 of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee (Revenue Budget Strategy 2014/15 and Scrutiny of Children's Centres – Feedback) – Non-pecuniary interest in view of her daughter's employment in Special Educational Needs.

Councillor Cowell – Minute No. 35 of the Audit and Standards Committee (Review of Current Corporate Risks and Corporate Risk Scrutiny) - Non-pecuniary interest as a Dudley Council Tenant.

Councillor Casey – Minute No. 48 of the Development Control Committee (Planning Application P13/0677 – 7 Straits Road, Lower Gornal) - Non-pecuniary interest as he knew the applicant.

Councillor Mrs Westwood – Minute No. 48 of the Development Control Committee (Planning Application P13/0677 – 7 Straits Road, Lower Gornal) - Non-pecuniary interest as she knew the owners and was also employed by them.

Councillor Wright – Minute No. 48 of the Development Control Committee (Planning Application P13/0677 – 7 Straits Road, Lower Gornal) - Non-pecuniary interest as he knew the applicant.

Councillor C Wilson – Minute No. 55 of the Development Control Committee (Planning Application P13/1317 – 38 Ferndale Park, Pedmore, Stourbridge) - Non-pecuniary interest as he knew the objector.

Councillor C Wilson – Minute No. 55 of the Development Control Committee (Planning Application P13/1448 – 8 Redlake Drive, Pedmore, Stourbridge) - Non-pecuniary interest as he knew the objector.

Councillor C Wilson – Minute No. 55 of the Development Control Committee (Planning Application P13/1453 – 36 Swindell Road, Pedmore, Stourbridge) - Non-pecuniary interest as he knew the objectors.

Councillor C Wilson – Minute No. 60 of the Development Control Committee (Planning Application P13/1340 – 98 Vicarage Road, Wollaston, Stourbridge) - Non-pecuniary interest as he was a friend of the applicant.

Councillor Taylor – Minute No. 60 of the Development Control Committee (Planning Application P13/1781 – McDonalds, Bromsgrove Road, Halesowen) - Non-pecuniary interest as he had submitted a written objection prior to the meeting.

Councillor Casey – Minute No. 64 of the Development Control Committee (Planning Applications P13/1751 and P13/1758 – Dudley College) - Non-pecuniary interest as he had detailed discussions regarding the applications.

Councillor C Wilson – Minutes of the Ernest Stevens Trusts Management Committee (Mary Stevens Hospice) – Non-pecuniary interest as a Trustee of the Hospice.

Councillor Cowell – Minutes of the Ernest Stevens Trusts Management Committee (Mary Stevens Hospice) – Non-pecuniary interest as a Trustee of the Hospice.

Councillor Mrs Rogers – Minutes of the Ernest Stevens Trusts Management Committee (Project Implementation Team – Heritage Lottery Bid for Mary Stevens Park and attendance at stakeholder meetings) - Non-pecuniary interest as Chair of the Friends Group for Mary Stevens Park and Swinford Common.

Councillor Wright – Any references to Midland Heart – Non-pecuniary interest as a tenant of Midland Heart.

Councillor Crumpton – all matters affecting schools – Non-pecuniary interest as a relative worked as a supply teacher.

Councillor A Aston – Any references to West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) – Pecuniary interest as an employee of WMAS.

Councillors A Finch, Mrs M Aston and K Finch – Agenda Item No. 5(c) - Deployment of Resources – Housing Revenue Account and Public Sector Housing Capital – Non pecuniary interests as members of North Priory Project Board.

Councillor A Finch, M Aston and K Finch – Agenda Item No. 5(a) – Capital Programme Monitoring (Priory Park Improvements) – Non pecuniary interests as attendees at meetings of the Friends of Priory Park.

Councillor Mrs M Aston – Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (references to Children’s Centres) – Non pecuniary interest as a Member on the Committee for Priory Children’s Centre.

Councillor Taylor – Any references to Children’s Centres – Pecuniary interest as his daughter was employed in a Children’s Centre.

Councillors Evans and Caunt – Any references to Queen Victoria’s Children’s Centre – Non-pecuniary interest as members of the Advisory Board.

Councillor Caunt – Any reference to a grant application from Fellows, Morton and Clayton Ltd. – Non-pecuniary interest as Chairman of the Company.

Councillor Burston – Agenda Item No. 5(a) – Capital Programme Monitoring (Better Bus Area Fund) – Non-pecuniary interest due to employment with CENTRO.

Councillor Burston – Action Notes of Kingswinford North, Kingswinford South and Wordsley Community Forum (Reference to 205 bus route) - Non-pecuniary interest due to employment with CENTRO.

Councillor Burston – Action Notes of Halesowen North and Halesowen South Community Forum (References to Halesowen bus lanes and CENTRO budget Savings) – Non pecuniary interest due to employment with CENTRO.

Councillor Burston – Action Notes of Brierley Hill and Brockmoor and Pensnett Community Forum (Reference to Tennyson Street bus diversion) – Non pecuniary interest due to employment with CENTRO.

Councillor Boleyn – Any reference to the British Glass Foundation – Pecuniary interest in view of employment as Secretary to the Trustees.

Councillor Hanif – Agenda Item No. 5(a) – Capital Programme Monitoring (Better Bus Area Fund) – Non-pecuniary interest in view of involvement with CENTRO.

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49 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2013, be approved as a correct record and signed.

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50 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Death of Honorary Alderman Cyril Woodall MBE

The Mayor referred in sympathetic terms to the recent death of Honorary Alderman Cyril Woodall MBE. The Council observed a period of silence as a token of respect to his memory. Members of the Council then paid individual tributes.

(b) Mayor's Ball

The Council noted that the Mayor's Ball would be held on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2014 at the Copthorne Hotel, Brierley Hill.

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51 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor Sparks, seconded by Councillor Lowe and

RESOLVED

- (1) That current progress with the 2013/14 Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be noted and that budgets be amended to reflect the reported variance.
- (2) That the Disabled Facilities Grant allocation for 2014/15 be noted and the associated expenditure funded from this and other available Housing capital resources be included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 7 of the report.
- (3) That the revised funding for the Tiled House Lane Residential Home project be approved, and the Capital Programme amended accordingly, as set out in paragraph 8 of the report.

- (4) That it be noted that the programme to be funded from Adult Personal Social Services Capacity Grant this year includes £17,000 of expenditure on fire safety compliance work at Halesowen Library, and also that the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services be authorised to allocate such funding for similar purposes, as appropriate, within the overall objectives of the grant allocations, as set out in paragraph 9 of the report.
- (5) That the revised project for provision of an MOT Testing Facility be approved, as set out in paragraph 10 of the report.
- (6) That the project to renew all Pay and Display machines be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 11 of the report.
- (7) That the Better Bus Area project be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 12 of the report.
- (8) That the Schools Basic Need allocations for 2015/16 and 2016/17 be noted and the associated expenditure included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 13 of the report.
- (9) That the Schools Capital Maintenance allocation for 2015/16 be noted and the associated expenditure included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 14 of the report.
- (10) That the Schools Devolved Capital allocation for 2015/16 be noted and the associated expenditure included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 15 of the report.
- (11) That the Universal Infant Free School Meals allocation be noted and the associated expenditure included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 16 of the report.
- (12) That the Prudential Indicators as required to be determined by the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities and the Local Government Act 2003, as set out in Appendix C to the report, be approved.
- (13) That the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy for 2013/14 be approved as set out in paragraph 20 of the report.

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52 ADOPTION OF THE MEMBERS AND OFFICERS CODE OF CONDUCT –  
PLANNING MATTERS

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor Sparks, seconded by Councillor Lowe and

**RESOLVED**

That the amended Members and Officers Code of Conduct for Planning Matters be approved and adopted.

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53 DEPLOYMENT OF RESOURCES – HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT AND PUBLIC SECTOR HOUSING CAPITAL

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor Waltho, seconded by Councillor Lowe and

RESOLVED

- (1) That the revised Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2013/14 and the HRA budget for 2014/15, as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.
- (2) That the public sector housing revised capital budget for 2013/14 and the capital budget for 2014/15 to 2018/19, attached as Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.
- (3) That the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services and the Director of Corporate Resources be authorised to bid for and enter into funding arrangements for additional resources to supplement investment in the public sector housing stock as outlined in paragraphs 25 and 26 of the report.
- (4) That the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety, be authorised to manage and allocate resources to the capital programme as outlined in paragraph 27 of the report.
- (5) That the continued use of all capital receipts arising from the sale of HRA assets (other than those specifically committed to support private sector housing) for the improvement of council homes, as set out in paragraph 27 of the report, be confirmed.

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54 DUDLEY BUSINESS INVESTMENT ZONE

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Lowe and

RESOLVED

- (1) That approval be given to the creation of a Dudley Business Investment Zone at the Waterfront area of Brierley Hill from the start of the 2014/15 financial year.
- (2) That the Cabinet Member for Regeneration be authorised to determine the composition of the Management Board.



- (3) That the Directors of the Urban Environment and Corporate Resources, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Regeneration and Finance, be authorised to:
    - (a) Negotiate and enter into the required legal agreements for the Dudley Business Investment Zone.
    - (b) Create appropriate delegations for the financial administration of the Dudley Business Investment Zone.
    - (c) Update and amend the draft management framework.
    - (d) Amend the Council's discretionary rate relief policy to allow the reduction in business rates for businesses within the designated area for the Dudley Business Investment Zone, as detailed in the report.
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55 TREASURY MANAGEMENT

A report of the Audit and Standards Committee was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor Cowell, seconded by Councillor Lowe and

RESOLVED

- (1) That the treasury activities in 2013/14, as outlined in the report, be noted.
  - (2) That the Treasury Strategy 2014/15, attached as Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.
  - (3) That the Treasurer be authorised to effect such borrowings, repayments and investments as are appropriate and consistent with the approved Treasury Strategy and relevant guidance.
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56 QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11

During questions asked under Council Procedure Rule 11, there were no decisions that the Leader, Cabinet Members or Chairs agreed to have reconsidered.

The meeting ended at 8.00 p.m.

MAYOR

**DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH**

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL  
AT THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 3<sup>RD</sup> MARCH, 2014  
AT 6.00 PM AT THE COUNCIL HOUSE, DUDLEY**

**PRESENT:-**

Councillor A Finch (Mayor)  
Councillor M Aston (Deputy Mayor)  
Councillors A Ahmed, K Ahmed, Ali, Mrs Ameson, Arshad, A Aston, Attwood, Baugh, Mrs Billingham, Bills, Blood, Body, Boleyn, Branwood, Burston, Casey, Caunt, Cotterill, Cowell, Crumpton, Duckworth, Elcock, Evans, K Finch, Foster, Hale, Hanif, Harley, Harris, Hemingsley, Herbert, Hill, Islam, James, J Jones, Jordan, Kettle, Lowe, Marrey, J Martin, Miller, Ms Nicholls, Partridge, Perks, Ridney, Mrs Rogers, Russell, Mrs Shakespeare, Mrs Simms, Sparks, Sykes, Taylor, Mrs H Turner, K Turner, S Turner, Tyler, Vickers, Mrs Walker, Waltho, Mrs Westwood, C Wilson, M Wilson, Wood, Wright and Zada, together with the Chief Executive and other Officers.

**PRAYERS**

The Mayor's Chaplain led the Council in prayer.

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57      **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors L Jones, Mrs P Martin, Mottram, Roberts and Woodall.

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58      **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declarations of interests, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, were made by the following Members in relation to Minute No. 61 (Revenue Budget Strategy and Setting the Council Tax 2014/15):

Councillor Wright - Any references to Midland Heart - Non-pecuniary interest as a tenant of Midland Heart.

Councillor Crumpton - All matters affecting schools - Non-pecuniary interest as a relative worked as a supply teacher.

Councillor A Aston - Any references to matters affecting West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) - Pecuniary interest as an employee of WMAS.

Councillor S Turner - Any references to matters concerning Dudley College - Pecuniary interest in view of his employment as a Lecturer.

Councillor M Aston - Any references to Priory Children's Centre - Non-pecuniary interest as a Member on the Committee.

Councillor Taylor - Any references to Children's Centres - Pecuniary interest as his daughter was employed in a Children's Centre.

Councillors Evans and Caunt - Any references to Queen Victoria's Children's Centre - Non-pecuniary interests as members of the Advisory Board.

Councillor Boleyn - Any reference to the British Glass Foundation - Pecuniary interest in view of her employment as Secretary to the Trustees.

Councillor K Turner - Any reference to Day Care Places for Adults - Non-pecuniary interest as Chair of Age Concern Stourbridge.

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59 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor's Charity Appeal

The Mayor thanked UNISON for a donation of £500 and the Rotary Club of Halesowen and Rowley Regis for a donation of £2,000 towards the Mayor's Charity Appeal.

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60 SUSPENSION OF COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

It was moved by Councillor Sparks, seconded by Councillor Lowe and

RESOLVED

That, under Council Procedure Rule 22.1, the time restriction of five minutes referred to in Council Procedure Rule 14.4, be suspended to enable the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Lead Spokesperson for the main Opposition Group to speak for longer than five minutes on Minute No. 61 below and to enable the Cabinet Member for Finance to speak for longer than five minutes to exercise his right of reply to the debate.

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61 REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY AND SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX 2014/15

A joint report of the Chief Executive and the Treasurer was submitted, setting out recommendations concerning the deployment of General Fund revenue resources, a number of statutory calculations that had to be made by the Council and the Council Tax to be levied for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2015.

It was moved by Councillor Lowe and seconded by Councillor Sparks, that the recommendations in paragraphs 84 to 92 (inclusive) in the report on the Revenue Budget Strategy and Setting the Council Tax for 2014/15, be approved and adopted.

Following the debate, Councillor Lowe was afforded and exercised his right of reply pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.11(b). The motion was then put to the vote and it was

RESOLVED

- (1) That the budget for 2014/15 and service allocations, as set out in the report, be approved as follows:

<b>Service</b>	<b>£m</b>
Children's Services	70.585
Adult, Community and Housing Services	102.780
Urban Environment	56.163
Corporate Resources	10.652
Chief Executive's	3.858
<b>Total Service Budget</b>	<b>244.038</b>

- (2) That the statutory amounts required to be calculated for the Council's spending, contingencies and contributions to reserves; income and use of reserves; transfers to and from its collection fund; and council tax requirement, as referred to in Section 67(2)(b) be now calculated by the Council for the year 2014/15 in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as shown below:-

- (a) £692.322000m being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act (*The Council's spending, contingencies, contribution to reserves and specified transfers from the general fund to the collection fund*).
- (b) £597.693000m being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Sections 31A (3) of the Act (*The Council's income, use of reserves, and specified transfers from the collection fund to the general fund*).
- (c) £94.629000m being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year.

(d) £1125.3609 being the amount at (c) above divided by the Council Tax base of 84087.69 calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.

(e) Dudley Council Tax for each Valuation Band

<b>A</b> <b>£</b>	<b>B</b> <b>£</b>	<b>C</b> <b>£</b>	<b>D</b> <b>£</b>	<b>E</b> <b>£</b>	<b>F</b> <b>£</b>	<b>G</b> <b>£</b>	<b>H</b> <b>£</b>
750.24	875.28	1000.32	1125.36	1375.44	1625.52	1875.60	2250.72

being the rounded amounts given by multiplying the amount at (d) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different bands.

(f) Precepts for each Valuation Band

That it be noted for the year 2014/15, that the major precepting authorities have issued the following amounts in precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

	<b>A</b> <b>£</b>	<b>B</b> <b>£</b>	<b>C</b> <b>£</b>	<b>D</b> <b>£</b>	<b>E</b> <b>£</b>	<b>F</b> <b>£</b>	<b>G</b> <b>£</b>	<b>H</b> <b>£</b>
West Midlands Police	69.65	81.25	92.86	104.47	127.69	150.90	174.12	208.94
West Midlands Fire and Rescue	35.91	41.90	47.88	53.87	65.84	77.81	89.78	107.73

- (4) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts in Appendix 9 to the report, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, agrees the following levels of Council Tax for 2014/15:

Valuation Bands

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
855.80	998.43	1141.06	1283.70	1568.97	1854.23	2139.50	2567.39

- (5) That the 2013/14 budgets be revised to reflect the variances set out in paragraph 15 of the report.
- (6) That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Director of Public Health and the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, be authorised to determine the allocation of the available public health grant funding for 2014/15.
- (7) That the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), as set out in the report, be approved.
- (8) That the Council determines that a referendum relating to Council Tax increases is not required in accordance with Chapter 4ZA of Part 1 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (9) That Cabinet Members, the Chief Executive and Directors be authorised to take all necessary steps to implement the proposals contained in the report, in accordance with the Council's Financial Management Regime.
- (10) That the Chief Executive and Directors be reminded to exercise strict budgetary control in accordance with the Financial Management Regime and care and caution in managing the 2014/15 budget, particularly in the context of commitments into later years and the impact that any overspending in 2014/15 will have on the availability of resources to meet future budgetary demands.
- (11) That the Chief Executive and Directors, in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and relevant Cabinet Members be authorised to explore the areas set out in paragraph 55 of the report and report back with specific proposals to the Cabinet in July, 2014.

- (12) That the Council notes the arrangements for Local Government Pension Scheme employer contributions, as set out in paragraph 31 of the report, including the implications for the Council's budgets for 2017/18 – 2019/20; in particular, both Future Service employer contributions and Past Service Deficit contributions being stepped up over the period 2014/15 – 2016/17; the difference between stepped contributions and un-stepped contributions which would then be added to the contributions certified by the Fund actuary for the period 2017/18 to 2019/20 (ie: an additional £2.5m per annum).
- (13) That the Pay Policy Statement 2014, as set out in Appendix 11 to the report, be approved.
- (14) That the Director of Corporate Resources be authorised to make any necessary revisions to the Constitution to include the provisions of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

Under the provisions of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, the voting on the above motion was recorded as follows:

For (42): Councillors A Ahmed, K Ahmed, Ali, Arshad, A Aston, M Aston, Baugh, Bills, Body, Boleyn, Branwood, Casey, Cotterill, Cowell, Crumpton, A Finch, K Finch, Foster, Hale, Hanif, Harris, Hemingsley, Herbert, Islam, Jordan, Lowe, Marrey, J Martin, Partridge, Perks, Ridley, Russell, Sparks, Sykes, Mrs H Turner, K Turner, S Turner, Tyler, Waltho, M Wilson, Wood and Zada

Against (25): Councillors Mrs Ameson, Attwood, Mrs Billingham, Blood, Burston, Caunt, Duckworth, Elcock, Evans, Harley, Hill, James, J Jones, Kettle, Miller, Ms Nicholls, Mrs Rogers, Mrs Shakespeare, Mrs Simms, Taylor, Vickers, Mrs Walker, Mrs Westwood, C Wilson and Wright

The meeting ended at 9.00 p.m.

MAYOR

## Meeting of the Council – 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2014

### Report of the Cabinet

#### Capital Programme Monitoring

##### Purpose of Report

1. To report progress with the implementation of the Capital Programme.
2. To propose amendments to the Capital Programme.

##### Background

3. The table below summarises the *current* 3 year Capital Programme updated where appropriate to reflect latest scheme spending profiles.

	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Public Sector Housing	38,753	43,095	41,155
Other Adult, Community & Housing	8,395	5,258	550
Urban Environment	26,893	26,524	10,302
Children's Services	10,022	25,950	170
Corporate Resources	2,611	1,963	1,428
<b>Total spend</b>	<b>86,674</b>	<b>102,790</b>	<b>53,605</b>
Revenue	17,043	16,134	12,929
Major Repairs Reserve (Housing)	22,199	22,279	22,558
Capital receipts	5,185	20,439	13,150
Grants and contributions (inc. Lottery)	19,165	27,195	2,053
Capital Financing Requirement*	23,082	16,743	2,915
<b>Total funding</b>	<b>86,674</b>	<b>102,790</b>	<b>53,605</b>

\*This will be funded internally from the Council's cashflow resources as far as possible, rather than from external debt.

Note that the capital programme for future years is in particular subject to government grant allocations, some of which have not yet been announced.

4. In accordance with the requirements of the Council's Financial Regulations, details of progress with the 2013/14 Programme are given in Appendix A. It is proposed that the current position be noted, and that budgets be amended to reflect the reported variances. An update on progress with the Council's most significant capital schemes is shown in Appendix B.



## **Adult, Community and Housing**

### Mortgage Rescue Scheme

5. The Council joined the Government funded Mortgage Rescue scheme as one of its original pathfinder authorities in 2009 and has completed 54 rescues to date of homeowners referred by its Homelessness Team. The scheme is a “product of last resort” for homeowners at risk of homelessness through mortgage repossession, and who cannot be helped to avoid homelessness through any other measures such as mortgage rescheduling, benefit support, lender forbearance, voluntary sales, equity release, etc. At present the Government provides a grant so that the properties can be purchased by a housing association and rented back to the previous owner. The Council now has the opportunity to become a syndicate member of the scheme which allows us to take ownership of properties that are rescued. In doing so the Council would benefit from a Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) grant of 47% toward the purchase price and a further 47% of the costs of any improvements needed to be made to the property to bring it up to the Decent Homes Standard (up to a maximum cost of £20,000). The Council would not be obliged to purchase any property offered to it and an evaluation would be carried out on each property before it is purchased to ensure that the purchase cost plus any costs incurred in bringing the property up to a Decent Homes Standard (and any future projected maintenance costs) represent a sound investment and good value for money. The properties would be managed as part of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) stock, and the Council’s share of the acquisition, improvement and ongoing costs would be funded from existing HRA resources.

It is proposed that expenditure of £500,000 plus the value of any associated HCA Grant be added to the public sector housing capital programme over 5 years, and that the Director of Corporate Resources be authorised to acquire properties suitable for Mortgage Rescue on behalf of the Council.

## **Children’s Services**

### Schools Energy Efficiency

6. It is proposed to replace existing lighting with high efficiency lighting (either fluorescent or LED) and install insulation to heating, pipework and valves at 10 pilot schools, with the intention of reducing energy costs and carbon dioxide emissions. It is anticipated that this work could be funded by an interest free loan from Salix (an independent, publicly funded company, dedicated to providing the public sector with loans for energy efficiency projects) to be repaid over a period up to 8 years from the savings generated. Any savings thereafter will be retained by the schools. The initial estimated cost of the works is £430,000, although the costs (and savings) will be clarified further before submitting any application.

The Interim Director of Children’s Services has been authorised to submit an application for funding to Salix. Subject to the application for funding being successful, it is proposed that the project be approved and included in the Capital Programme.

## **Urban Environment**

### 7. Dudley Town Centre Regeneration

On 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2014, the Cabinet considered a report on regeneration activity in and around Dudley Town Centre. The full report is available on the [Committee Management Information System](#) via the Council's internet site ([www.dudley.gov.uk](http://www.dudley.gov.uk)).

On consideration of the report, the Cabinet resolved:

- To recommend the Council to approve and include the proposed Tower Street car park in the Capital Programme.
  - That the regeneration activity underway in and around Dudley Town Centre be noted.
  - That authority be given to incur capital expenditure of up to £9 million on regeneration activity in Dudley Town Centre and Castle Hill in advance of capital receipts from the project.
  - That reports be submitted to the Cabinet at least annually to review the implications on the Dudley Town Centre Area Development Framework programme of any variances in the value and timing of project costs and capital receipts.
8. The Cabinet, at its meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2014, resolved to recommend the Council to approve the proposals set out in paragraph 13 below.

## **Finance**

9. This report is financial in nature and information about the individual proposals is contained within the report.

## **Law**

10. The Council's budgeting process is governed by the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980, the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and the Local Government Act 2003.

## **Equality Impact**

11. These proposals comply with the Council's policy on Equality and Diversity.

12. With regard to Children and Young People:

- The Capital Programme for Children's Services will be spent wholly on improving services for children and young people. Other elements of the Capital Programme will also have a significant impact on this group.
- Consultation is undertaken with children and young people, if appropriate, when developing individual capital projects within the Programme.
- There has been no direct involvement of children and young people in developing the proposals in this report.

### **Recommendations**

13. The Council is recommended:

- That current progress with the 2013/14 Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix A be noted, and that budgets be amended to reflect the reported variance.
- That in respect of the Mortgage Rescue Scheme, expenditure of £500,000 plus the value of any associated HCA Grant be added to the public sector housing capital programme over 5 years, and that the Director of Corporate Resources be authorised to acquire properties suitable for Mortgage Rescue on behalf of the Council, as set out in paragraph 5.
- That subject to the application for funding being successful the Schools Energy Efficiency project be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 6.
- That the recommendations of the Cabinet concerning Dudley Town Centre Regeneration be approved, as set out in paragraph 7.



.....  
**Leader of the Council**

## 2013/14 Capital Programme Progress to Date

<b>Service</b>	<b>Budget £'000</b>	<b>Spend to 31st January £'000</b>	<b>Forecast £'000</b>	<b>Variance £'000</b>	<b>Reasons for Variance</b>
Public Sector Housing	38,753	27,947	38,753		
Other Adult, Community & Housing	8,395	5,670	8,395		
Urban Environment	26,893	18,445	26,869	-24	See note 1
Children's Services	10,022	5,156	10,022		
Corporate Resources	2,611	1,878	2,611		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86,674</b>	<b>59,096</b>	<b>86,650</b>	<b>-24</b>	

1. Minor underspend in respect of Healthy Towns project; grant funding freed up will be used for associated revenue expenditure.

**Progress with Major Capital Schemes****Adult, Community and Housing**New Council Housing

The Council has been successful in securing match funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) from the Care and Specialised Support Housing Fund and work has commenced on design and planning for the 14 two bedroom apartments for people with learning disabilities and who are on the autistic spectrum at the former depots at Norfolk Road, Wollaston and The Walk, Sedgley, and 3 two bedroom three person houses also at The Walk. Work is continuing on feasibility studies for other potential new build across the borough although no firm proposals have been developed yet. Spend this year is planned to be only design and planning fees, with construction on site planned to commence later in 2014. Schemes are expected to be delivered within budget.

Dementia Gateways

Work has been successfully completed on the dementia gateway at Brettell Lane, Brierley Hill and works have now also commenced on the second dementia gateway at Brett Young in Halesowen with completion in August 2014. Schemes are expected to be delivered within budget.

Tiled House Lane Residential Home Modernisation

Refurbishment works to carry out improvements to Tiled House Lane Residential Home have commenced and are expected to be completed, within budget, in May 2014.

**Urban Environment**Street Lighting

Street lighting improvement works are in progress and the Street Lighting Central Management System (CMS) is now fully commissioned and operational. 8,700 of the Council's 32,000 street lights can now be controlled via the CMS system remotely to help save energy; 4,200 of these can be dimmed. Spend is forecast to be within budget.

Better Bus Area

A planning application has been prepared and submitted for the proposals which involve the construction of a new signal controlled pedestrian crossing on the A4036 Pedmore Road, and the creation of additional road space and signal controls to facilitate bus priority measures at the junction of the Boulevard with Mill St, Brierley Hill. The planning application will be considered by the Council's Development Control Committee in March and subject to gaining planning permission works will be programmed to start on site in Summer 2014.

Recycling

The grant funded recycling vehicles are now operational and approximately two thirds of the boxes and bags have been deployed to households in line with Phases 1 and 2 of the rollout. Phase 3 rollout is expected to complete the recycling capital expenditure Spend is forecast to be within budget.

Wheeled Bins

Phases 1 and 2 wheeled bin deliveries have now been rolled out with Phase 3 bins expected to be delivered by February 2014. Spend is forecast to be within budget.

### Priory Park Improvements

Awaiting some final snagging issues to be resolved by the main contractor, but capital project is virtually complete. Claims for capital funding from Heritage Lottery are almost complete. Revenue spend is progressing well with a large number of new volunteers involved in the improvements. Spend is forecast to be within budget.

### Mary Stevens Park

Heritage Lottery Fund has given permission to start project. All conditions have been met. The Project Manager started work in December, and is due to start the process of regular project meetings to monitor progress. The design team will be recruited by March, and the procurement process has begun. Spend is forecast to be within budget.

### Castle Hill

New Access Road: Phase 1a was completed during October 2012. Phase 1b (link road and roundabout) was completed April 2013.

Phase 2 onwards: This comprises the secondary route, recreational route, car parking and Visitor Hub. Planning permission was granted on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2013. The design team are currently working on detailed designs on a phased basis. Works commenced onsite for the initial phase of the secondary route on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013. Works commenced on the lower level car parks on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2013, with anticipated completion due early March 2014. Further works to commence early 2014, with final completion currently projected for December 2014.

Spend is forecast to be within budget.

### Dudley Marketplace and Town Centre

The Dudley Marketplace project is currently underway and the first construction phase in Castle Street commenced on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2014. The Market Place phase will follow in the next financial year. Spend is forecast to be within budget.

## **Children's Services**

### DGfL3

Dudley Grid for Learning 3 includes a programme of ICT equipment upgrade and renewal across financial years 2013/14 & 2014/15. Consultation with schools to ascertain their priorities for the 'refresh' programme is underway and options have been presented to schools. Initial equipment procurement has commenced in response to schools and service needs. The programme and associated expenditure is therefore on schedule to bring improvement to schools ICT as planned.

### Corbyn Road - base for joint Children's Safeguarding Unit and frontline social work teams

Tenders have now been returned, and work started on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2014 with a planned completion date of 27<sup>th</sup> June 2014. Expected outturn cost is within budget.

### Pens Meadow Special School – Additional Places

A costed feasibility study has been produced and the next stage is for more detailed surveys to be undertaken to ascertain more up to date costs for refurbishment. Corporate Estates have been commissioned by the Directorate of Children's Services to negotiate a lease of the building on behalf of the Council. Construction & Design have been commissioned to provide full design services for the project.

## **Corporate Resources**

### Transforming our Workplace (ToW)

The project is now less than 6 months to completion. There has been some overspend on the refurbishment of core offices but this has been offset by underspend on other ToW budget lines such as fewer staff moves. Additionally, Non-Domestic Rate credits have been received for vacant offices during refurbishment periods. Work to offices at 3/5 St James's Road was originally due to complete before Christmas but has been delayed; predominantly due to slow work on site over November and December. However, furniture and ICT has been installed and the programme remains on target to relocate staff in early February. Alterations to offices at Mary Stevens Park Stourbridge are in progress ahead of the relocation of around 250 Children's Services staff commencing at the end of March. Work to the Council House complex and 8 Parsons Street is scheduled to commence in February 2014. The release of 12 surplus office sites has commenced with Castle Court, 5-7 The Broadway now on the market. The other 11 sites will be vacated in 2014. The whole programme of work is currently running to budget and is scheduled to complete accordingly to plan in July 2014.

## **Meeting of the Council – 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2014**

### **Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**

### **Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board 2013/14**

#### **Purpose of Report**

1. To consider the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for 2013/14.

#### **Background**

2. The terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, as set out in the Constitution, require an annual report to be submitted to the Council. It is a key function of the Board to make reports and recommendations to the Council and/or the Cabinet in connection with the discharge of overview and scrutiny functions.
3. On 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2013, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board considered an interim report on the operation of the revised scrutiny arrangements since their start in June 2013. This report builds on the issues identified in the interim review and identifies further ongoing work to improve the arrangements based on comments and views expressed by Members of the Council.
4. The changes to the Council's scrutiny arrangements have been broadly welcomed. In particular, positive comments have been made on the directorate aligned Committee arrangements and the adoption of an Annual Scrutiny Programme to give a clear focus on specific topics for in-depth scrutiny by Members.
5. Scrutiny Committees retain the flexibility to scrutinise any additional topics that might arise during the year. In carrying out their individual work programmes, Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs have the freedom to adapt their approaches to carry out the scrutiny reviews allocated to them. Examples have been informal meetings, visits, working groups and 'virtual' meetings.
6. The Council has recognised the importance of retaining an annual review process. This should ensure that the arrangements continue to align themselves to the needs of the Council and that the scrutiny arrangements remain adaptable and flexible to changes in circumstances.
7. As part of the annual review process, the views of all elected Members were invited and a summary of the comments received were reported at the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2014.



## Key Scrutiny Activities in 2013/14

8. This report gives a brief overview of the key areas of business considered by Scrutiny Committees during the 2013/14 municipal year. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board received a more detailed interim report on the working arrangements at its meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2013. In addition, all Scrutiny Committees were involved in budget scrutiny during the November, 2013 cycle of meetings.
9. The minutes of all formal Scrutiny Committee meetings are reported to full Council in the 'White Book' submitted to each Council meeting. In addition, the minutes and reports of Scrutiny Committees can be accessed online via the [Committee Management Information System](#) on the Council's website. The main items of business considered by Scrutiny Committees in 2013/14 are as follows:

### Urban Environment Scrutiny Committee

10. Chair – Councillor Tyler; Vice Chair – Councillor Hale; Lead Officer – Assistant Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services (Housing Strategy and Private Sector).
  - Parks, Nature Reserves and Open Spaces Strategy.
  - Support for Local Business.
  - Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) Process.

### Adult, Community and Housing Services Scrutiny Committee

11. Chair – Councillor Islam; Vice Chair – Councillor James; Lead Officer – Assistant Director Customer Services.
  - Impacts and Outcomes of the Making it Real Agenda – What Does Personalisation Mean for the People in Dudley?
  - Welfare Reforms and Housing – The Dudley Response
12. The Committee has considered specific items on discretionary housing payments; the local welfare assistance scheme; the impact of the benefit cap and removal of the spare room subsidy on income collection and an options paper on the remodelling and reclassification of Council housing stock. In March, 2014, the Committee considered an update on New Bradley Hall.

### Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

13. Chair – Councillor Marrey; Vice Chair – Councillor Boleyn; Lead Officer – Assistant Director Housing Services.
  - Early Intervention Strategy for the Borough – Children's Centres
  - Safeguarding Standards within the Borough and Children's Services Contribution
  - Looked After Children – Provision and Outcomes

The annual report of Dudley Safeguarding Children Board has been received. The Committee has discussed child sexual exploitation issues and the involvement of members in scrutinising the work of the Dudley Safeguarding Children's Board.

## Corporate Performance Management, Efficiency and Effectiveness Scrutiny Committee

14. Chair – Councillor Blood; Vice Chair – Councillor A Ahmed; Lead Officer – Assistant Director, Policy and Improvement.
- Quarterly Performance Management Report (ongoing scrutiny item)
  - Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Year 2)
  - Apprenticeships and Work Experience
  - Corporate Complaints System

## Health Scrutiny Committee

15. Chair – Councillor Ridney; Vice Chair – Councillor Kettle; Lead Officer – Assistant Director, Law and Governance.

In connection with its statutory role, the Committee has considered specific reports on the maternity update; Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group primary care development strategy; mortality rates; the urgent care public consultation; the Keogh review update; development of the vascular services hub; stroke transformation programme; the Dudley Health and Wellbeing Board progress report 2013/14; the 111 service; NHS quality accounts; NHS England primary care strategic framework; Patient Participation Groups in Dudley and the realignment of community physiotherapy clinics. At the time of writing, a special meeting of the Scrutiny Committee has been convened for 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2014 concerning the Urgent Care Centre Procurement and draft service specification.

The Committee also has the following items in the Annual Scrutiny Programme:

- Tobacco Control Strategy -Update/Development
- Elements of Patient Experience in Acute Care

## **Work of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**

16. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board met on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2013 to approve the terms of reference and Annual Scrutiny Programme for 2013/14. A further meeting was held in July, 2013 to ensure that any outstanding issues from previous Scrutiny Committees were properly dealt with.
17. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has reviewed the scrutiny arrangements during the year. The following key issues have been identified:

### Developing the Annual Scrutiny Programme

18. Early consideration is being given to potential topics for inclusion in the 2014/15 Annual Scrutiny Programme. This will contain topics for consideration by individual Scrutiny Committees and the Board itself. A further report will be submitted to the Board on 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2014. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will then meet early in the new municipal year to approve the Annual Scrutiny Programme.

19. It is important that Scrutiny Committees retain the freedom to influence the topics they wish to scrutinise in the Annual Scrutiny Programme and during the municipal year. Scrutiny Committees will retain some discretion over the number of topics they wish to scrutinise, however, the workloads of Committees need to remain manageable.
20. The development of the Annual Scrutiny Programme should continue as a Member-led process taking account of the views of Directorates, Scrutiny Chairs and other Members. Members are asked to reflect on the number of topics selected for the Annual Scrutiny Programme in the context of the Council's budgetary situation, corporate priorities and organisational capacity.

#### Scrutiny of Budget Proposals

21. Members have acknowledged the need to clarify and refine the budget scrutiny process for the future. Particular reference was made to the scrutiny of budget proposals by individual Scrutiny Committees and in particular, the Corporate Performance Management, Efficiency and Effectiveness Scrutiny Committee.
22. For 2014/15, Scrutiny Committees will focus on the detailed scrutiny of individual Directorate budget proposals whilst retaining some flexibility for cross-cutting issues. Following the programmed cycle of Scrutiny Committees in November, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will then meet to scrutinise the overall budget proposals on a strategic basis.
23. In connection with the scrutiny of budget proposals and other financial issues, comments were made on the skills and knowledge required to undertake in-depth scrutiny. The Board supported further Member development and training in this complex area of work. This will complement Member development sessions on specific issues identified in the 2014/15 Annual Scrutiny Programme.
24. The involvement of a wider group of Members in scrutinising budget proposals is a positive development to assist Members in understanding the complexities involved with the Council's finances and budget process.

#### Programming of Scrutiny Committee Meetings

25. The calendar of meetings for 2014/15 will include programmed meetings of all Scrutiny Committees throughout the whole year in line with the established cycle of committees. This will give clear timelines for the production of reports and reduces the possibility of meetings clashing with other key meetings in the municipal calendar. Additional formal and/or informal meetings or working groups can be arranged as and when necessary. The programme of meetings will be formally approved at the Annual Meeting of the Council in June, 2014.

#### Scrutiny of Decisions Taken by External Bodies

26. Reference has been made to the lack of a facility under the Constitution for reporting back on decisions taken by external bodies on which the Leader represents the Council (eg: West Midlands Joint Committee and the Local Enterprise Partnership).

27. The Board supports the development of a more robust feedback mechanism either through the Cabinet or Scrutiny Committees. This will be considered as part of the ongoing review process and discussed further with the Leader of the Council.

#### Format of Scrutiny Committee Minutes

28. Scrutiny Committee minutes should be more extensive than certain other meetings and record additional detail. Whilst it is accepted that verbatim minutes are unnecessary and excessive, the consensus view is that Scrutiny Committee minutes should be sufficiently detailed to record the thread of the discussion and capture the essence of the debate. Officers have acknowledged these views and have obtained examples of 'best practice' from other local authorities.

#### Scrutiny Call-in

29. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has received the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for information at its programmed meetings during the year. It should be noted that, at the time of writing, there have been no formal scrutiny 'call-ins' referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board during the 2013/14 municipal year.
30. At the meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2013, it was reported that the Leader of the Council had requested the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to scrutinise the consultation on the future of Sure Start Children's Centres in Dudley. A special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board took place on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2014 with appropriate recommendations being submitted to the Cabinet and Council via the budget report.

#### Other Issues

31. Issues have been identified relating to the development of a more robust and consistent mechanism for Lead Officers briefing Chairs and Vice-Chairs on key issues being considered by Scrutiny Committees.
32. Concerns have been raised regarding the ability of Directorate officers to give full and meaningful responses at meetings, particularly arising from questions on the Quarterly Corporate Performance Management report. It has been suggested that a relevant senior officer from each Directorate should attend the Committee meeting. The arrangements for circulating papers make it impractical for Members to submit advance questions in all cases. This is linked to issues raised by Members about the formatting of the quarterly performance report and the timing of its distribution.
33. An issue raised during the consultation had been the possible opportunities for formalised joint scrutiny arrangements with other local authorities. Although some joint working has taken place, this had been problematic in the past.
34. Members have emphasised the need to maintain the quality standards of reports to scrutiny meetings. Reports should be circulated with sufficient notice; late reports should not be tabled at meetings and reports should be presented without 'small print', making them difficult to read.

35. It has been suggested that a review of the composition of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee is necessary, in particular the appointment of co-opted members. There is a need to ensure that the composition of the Committee remains fit for purpose moving forward with a wider focus than just educational issues. A report will be considered at the next meeting of the Board on 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2014.
36. The Board has discussed the process and protocols for referring individual items to Scrutiny Committees outside the agreed Annual Scrutiny Programme. It is suggested that in future, requests for the referral of specific items for scrutiny should be channelled through the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. The Board will then decide whether to undertake the scrutiny review itself or refer the matter to a specific Scrutiny Committee.
37. The Council will continue to draw and build upon learning points during the year as to how individual reviews are undertaken, particularly the use of different working methods such as informal working groups and 'virtual' scrutiny meetings. We are also considering good practice examples of work undertaken in other local authorities and advice offered by the Centre for Public Scrutiny.

### **Finance**

38. The costs of operating the Council's scrutiny arrangements are being contained within existing budgetary allocations.
39. The ongoing budget reductions will undoubtedly have an impact on the levels of Directorate and Democratic Services support that is available for the scrutiny process. Moving forward into 2014/15, consideration has to be given to the availability of corporate and directorate resources to service and support working groups, meetings and various levels of scrutiny activity.

### **Law**

40. Scrutiny Committees are established in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and the requirements of the Council's Constitution, which was adopted under the Local Government Act 2000, subsequent legislation and associated Regulations and Guidance.
41. Scrutiny powers relating to health are included in the Health and Social Care Acts 2001 and 2012, and associated Regulations and statutory guidance. The Police and Justice Act 2006 gives the Council powers to scrutinise the work of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 enables local authorities to scrutinise other partners. Much of this legislation has now been consolidated in the Localism Act 2011.
42. The Council's scrutiny arrangements are set out in Article 6 of the Constitution (Scrutiny Committees) and the associated Scrutiny Procedure Rules and Protocols.

**Equality Impact**

43. Provision exists within the scrutiny arrangements for overview and scrutiny to be undertaken of the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

**Recommendation**

44. That the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for 2013/14 be received and noted.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Susan M. Ridgway". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a dotted line.

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**Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**