



29 January 2019

BROOKE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 7 FEBRUARY 2019

A meeting of the Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held at 6pm on Thursday 7 February 2019 in Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Rugby.

Councillor Claire Edwards
Chair of Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee

A G E N D A

PART 1 – PUBLIC BUSINESS

1. Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2018.

2. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of:

(a) non-pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors;

(b) pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors;

(c) notice under Section 106 Local Government Finance Act 1992 – non-payment of Community Charge or Council Tax.

Note: Members are reminded that they should declare the existence and nature of their non-pecuniary interests at the commencement of the meeting (or as soon as the interest becomes apparent). If that interest is a pecuniary interest, the Member must withdraw from the room unless one of the exceptions applies.

Membership of Warwickshire County Council or any Parish Council is classed as a non-pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct. A Member does not need to declare this interest unless the Member chooses to speak on a matter relating to their membership. If the Member does not wish to speak on the matter, the Member may still vote on the matter without making a declaration.

4. Finance and Performance Monitoring 2018/19 Q3 – please refer to report from Cabinet 4 February and RPMS
5. Light-touch Review of Employee Wellbeing
6. Light-touch Review of Trees and Hedges
7. Motion from Council 27 February 2018 – Reduce Plastic Waste at the Council – the Head of Environment and Public Realm to present the audit findings
8. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2018/19

Any additional papers for this meeting can be accessed via the website.

Membership of the Committee:

Councillors Claire Edwards (Chair), Mrs A'Barrow, Keeling, McQueen, Mrs New, Pacey-Day, Picker, Srivastava and Mrs Timms

If you have any general queries with regard to this agenda please contact Veronika Beckova, Democratic Services Officer (01788 533591 or e-mail veronika.beckova@rugby.gov.uk). Any specific queries concerning reports should be directed to the listed contact officer.

If you wish to attend the meeting and have any special requirements for access please contact the Democratic Services Officer named above.

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Light-touch Review of Employee Wellbeing
Name of Committee:	Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	7 February 2019
Contact Officer:	Suzanne Turner, Human Resources Manager, Tel: 01788 533570
Summary:	The purpose of this item is to carry out a light-touch review of employee wellbeing.
Financial Implications:	Cost of sickness absence for 2017/18 was estimated at £550,440. Poorly managed long-term sickness cases could lead to compensation payments at an Employment Tribunal.
Risk Management Implications:	If employees are absent, this puts pressure on remaining colleagues. Continued absence can affect service delivery and achieving corporate priorities.
Environmental Implications:	There are no environmental implications arising from this report.
Legal Implications:	Poorly managed absence cases could be challenged at an Employment Tribunal
Equality and Diversity:	Employees are defined as disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. If a sickness lasts for more than 12 months then this will likely be regarded as a disability.

Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 7 February 2019

Light-touch Review of Employee Wellbeing

Public Report of the Head of Corporate Resources and CFO

Summary

The purpose of this item is to carry out a light-touch review of employee wellbeing.

1. Introduction

At the annual overview and scrutiny work programme workshop, a review of employee wellbeing was proposed. The scrutiny committee chairs subsequently agreed that the topic be included in the work programme for the current municipal year.

Due to an internal review being underway, the review was delayed.

This report introduces the council's Employee Wellbeing and Sickness Absence Management and provides an opportunity for the committee to review the mechanisms in place.

2. Aim of the Employee Wellbeing and Sickness Absence Management

Employee Wellbeing and Sickness Absence Management has a high profile within the Council. We aim to:

- provide employee wellbeing initiatives to improve the health of the workforce;
- manage absence in line with best practice; and
- monitor and report on absence levels.

3. Best Practice in Absence Management and Employee Wellbeing

Our Human Resources Business Partners are all members of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and have access to branch events including absence management and employee wellbeing. The CIPD and XperthHR also run annual surveys on absence levels, which are useful for benchmarking.

Our regional employers' organisation, West Midlands Employers, also runs projects and networking events to establish and share best practice around absence management and employee wellbeing.

In addition to this, we network with other district councils in Warwickshire and surrounding boroughs to share best practice. We also benchmark our sickness absence rates with this group at the end of each financial year.

4. Human Resources Strategy

Our Human Resources Strategy recognises the importance of employee wellbeing. Principle 4 is to Nurture Employee Engagement, Wellbeing and Diversity. Some of the actions highlighted in the Human Resources Strategy to support this work include:

- Facilitating health and wellbeing events
- Medical Intervention to get employees back to work sooner
- Reviewing reasons for sickness absence and identifying how we can improve employee wellbeing eg offering flu vaccinations

5. Absence Management Policy

We have an Absence Management Policy that is reviewed every three years or more frequently if changes are required. Our policy draws on best practice, employment case law and service delivery needs. The policy covers management of both short term and long term sickness absence.

The policy covers the requirements for employees to notify their manager of their sickness absence and the need to maintain contact during their sickness absence.

Managers email a notification of the start and end of a sickness absence (called a Part 1 and Part 2 form, respectively) to the Payroll team. Sickness is logged onto our HR and Payroll system and can be viewed by both the employee and their manager.

Return to work interviews are carried out for all employees who are absent due to sickness. Wherever possible, these should be completed on the first day back at work. In the case of a longer term absence, it is best practice to carry out the return to work interview before the employee is back at work. This enables management to be confident that the employee is fit to return, can put in place under adjustments to aid their return and put into place any monitoring or review of the employee's health. These are monitored and managers are chased where return to work interview forms are not returned to Human Resources.

We have the following triggers to take short term sickness cases through the formal stages of our Absence Management Policy:

- 3 or more occasions in a 6-month period
- 4 or more occasions in a 12-month period
- 8 days or more in a 12-month period

The first formal stage of our procedure is a Sickness Consultation Interview. At this meeting, the employee will usually be given a written warning that they need to improve their attendance record. Targets for future sickness absence will be set and arrangements for monitoring and review will be outlined. The employee will be

encouraged to improve their health and wellbeing and managers check that they are receiving all appropriate medical advice and support.

Should the employee continue to have an unsatisfactory level of sickness absence, then the case will be escalated to a Stage 2 meeting under our policy. The format of this meeting is similar to the Sickness Consultation Interview but a final written warning will usually be given.

If the employee continues to have an unacceptable level of sickness absence then the final stage of our policy is invoked. These stage 3 meetings are usually held with the Head of Service, as the likely sanction will be dismissal.

Our Absence Management Policy mirrors our Disciplinary Policy and Capability Policy in terms of levels of warnings and management can deal with a combination of absence, conduct and performance, together under any one of these policies.

The management of long-term sickness cases is a different process. If an employee's sickness absence impacts significantly on service delivery, then, for reasons of business needs, dismissal is considered. Key factors that are considered in these decisions include:

- Length of absence – we need to make consistent decisions across the council
- Medical advice – is the employee unlikely to be fit to return to work in a reasonable timescale or are they not able to carry out the full remit of their role within a reasonable timescale?
- Consider redeployment – would they be fit to return to a different role?

We do, however, have a good track record in supporting employees back to work following a long-term sickness. We also have 28.9% of our workforce that have a disability.

For employees returning from a long-term sickness, we often agree a phased return, which could include reduced working hours/days and/or restricted job duties. The aim is to gradually increase the working hours and job duties, so the employee has a greater success in sustaining their return to work.

An internal audit is planned to review the effectiveness and efficiency of our absence management processes. This will be concluded later this year.

6. Occupational Health Advisors

The council have a contract with an occupational health provider. This provider currently holds a clinic at the Town Hall once or twice per month. They offer both telephone and face-to-face consultations. They have access to nurse practitioners and doctors.

They offer a variety of services to the council including:

- Pre-employment checks
- Referrals for advice on existing employees who have a medical condition

- Obtaining reports from GPs and Consultants
- Health surveillance eg audiometry tests
- Vaccinations eg Hepatitis
- Health at Work events
- Assessments for ill-health retirement within the Local Government Pension Scheme

Managers are able to ask specific questions in occupational health referrals to help make decisions about the employee's continued absence.

Regular account management meetings are held with our provider to ensure we get the service we need and find out about new services that are available.

7. Medical Interventions to Get Employees Back to Work Sooner

As part of a review of our employment terms and conditions in July 2017, we established a budget to be used for medical interventions to aid employees to be able to return to work sooner. This has included physiotherapy and medical tests, where there would have been a longer wait for NHS services.

8. Reducing our Sickness Absence Rates

Our sickness absence rates are currently high when benchmarked against similar organisations. Currently these are:

	Average Number of Sickness Days per Employee	% of Working Time Lost Due to Sickness
Short Term Sickness:	3.59	1.5%
Long Term Sickness:	8.56	2.0%
All Sickness:	12.15	3.5%

These rates are high compared to other benchmarking information:

XpertHR Survey 2017 for central and local government: 9.3 days
 Neighbouring councils 2017/18: 9.6 days

However, we have identified there is a significant difference in absence rates amongst our employees in manual roles compared to those in office roles, as follows:

	Average Number of Sickness Days per Employee	% of Working Time Lost Due to Sickness
Manual Roles	18.88	7.7%
Non-Manual Roles	5.22	2.1%

The sickness rate for our Manual Roles has however been reducing over recent years:

Period	Average Number of Sickness Days Per Employee in a Manual Role
May – November 2018	18.9
2017/18	20.8
2016/17	22.5

51% of our workforce are male (and they form a significant portion of our manual workforce) yet they account for 68% of our sickness absence.

There is also a correlation between sickness absence rates and age:

Age	Average Number of Sickness Days per Employee	% of Working Time Lost Due to Sickness
Under 30	7.25	3.0%
30-55	10.32	4.2%
Over 55	14.60	5.9%

There is a strong desire within RBC management to reduce our sickness absence rates.

Our new Human Resources Business Partnering model has established monthly meetings with all managers and Heads of Service to discuss their employee issues. This includes a review of the sickness cases within their teams.

Through monitoring, and chasing, of return to work interviews and sickness consultation interviews, we are more rigorously progressing employees through the formal stages of our Absence Management policy.

We have a good record of getting employees, with a long-term health condition, back to work. In the year to October 2018, we facilitated 52 employees on long-term absence back to work, out of 60 cases, ie 87%. We have progressed long-term absence cases through our Absence Management Policy to the dismissal stage.

Whilst we have already linked written warnings to withholding annual salary increments (ie progression through a salary grade), we are currently considering withholding council sick pay (not Statutory Sick Pay) where absence triggers are hit or job performance is unsatisfactory.

We will be launching an Employee Recognition Scheme later this year. In the meantime, we are working on a communication to employees to celebrate their success stories. A couple of the success stories received relate to employees and teams with zero or low sickness absence rates.

9. Wellbeing Appointments

We give employees time off to attend wellbeing appointments. These include mammograms and prostate checks.

10. Wellbeing Events

We have run a number of different wellbeing events and initiatives. Some examples include:

- Health at Work Days – staff can drop in during the working day to get advice on a range of wellbeing initiatives and get health checks eg blood pressure tests.
- Access to a dietary advice website with daily tips emailed to employees
- Health Checks offered at low cost and on site eg bone density, cholesterol checks
- Weight Loss groups
- Lunchtime walking group

11. Mental Health Support

We recognise that mental health conditions are increasing nationally. Stress, depression and anxiety is our second highest reason for short-term absence and the first highest reason for long-term sickness absence (for 2017/18). It is the top reason for all our sickness absences.

Every year we run training courses for employees to help build emotional resilience and offer strategies to help their mental health. We have also run training courses for managers to help them support their employees that have mental health conditions. All employees experiencing stress are offered a Stress Risk Assessment and are offered support through a trained counsellor.

This year, we supported Mental Health Awareness Week, with a ‘Tea and Talk’ event. This attracted many employees who learnt a lot about techniques to improve their mental health. Also a chance to share with other employees experiencing mental health difficulties.

We are establishing a group of Mental Health First Aiders. Training for the 10 employees taking on these roles took place in November 2018. Employees will be able to meet with a Mental Health First Aider to get support and advice on their mental health.

We have run awareness events and training in Dementia and a number of our employees are now Dementia friends.

12. Including Councillors in Wellbeing Events

We extended the invitation to attend the ‘Tea and Talk’ event to our councillors. We will be including councillors in future wellbeing events.

Name of Meeting: Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting: 7 February 2019
Subject Matter: Light-touch Review of Employee Wellbeing
Originating Department: Corporate Resources

DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY YES NO

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Light-touch Review of Trees and Hedges
Name of Committee:	Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	7 February 2019
Contact Officer:	Dave Gower, Arboricultural Officer, Tel: 01788 533634
Summary:	The purpose of this item is to carry out a light-touch review of the processes in place with regards to trees and hedges in the Borough of Rugby.
Financial Implications:	There are no financial implications arising from this report.
Risk Management Implications:	There are no risk management implications arising from this report.
Environmental Implications:	There are no environmental implications arising from this report.
Legal Implications:	There are no legal implications arising from this report.
Equality and Diversity:	No new or existing policy or procedure has been recommended.

Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 7 February 2019

Light-touch Review of Trees and Hedges

Public Report of the Head of Environment and Public Realm

Summary

The purpose of this item is to carry out a light-touch review of the processes in place with regards to trees and hedges in the Borough of Rugby.

1. Background

At the annual overview and scrutiny work programme workshop, a review of trees and hedges was proposed. The scrutiny committee chairs subsequently agreed that the topic be included in the work programme for the current municipal year.

2. Introduction

The appended report introduces the arboriculture in the Borough of Rugby and provides an overview of the:

- management of trees on land owned by Rugby Borough Council
- trees in the planning system
- strategy and plan
- processes in place
- partnerships
- resources and concerns

The Arboricultural Officer has been asked to attend the meeting to present the report and answer questions.

Name of Meeting: Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 7 February 2019

Subject Matter: Light-touch Review of Trees and Hedges

Originating Department: Corporate Resources

DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY YES NO

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink

Rugby Trees

An Arboricultural Perspective



**David Gower Arboricultural Officer BSc, HND, Arb MArbora
(Rugby Borough Council)**

1.0 Overview

Trees on public and private land are a considerable cultural, biological asset within the borough with innumerable public benefits in relation to visual amenity, biodiversity, health and historical associations. In Rugby we are lucky to have a diverse arboricultural resource both urban and rural for the enjoyment of all.

Arboriculture (Tree Care) can be divided into 2 broad categories. The management of trees owned by Rugby Borough Council and trees in relation to planning whether it be Tree Preservation orders, Trees in conservation areas or trees/landscaping issues in relation to planning applications.

As of April 2017 Rugby Borough Council no longer manages highways trees.

1.1 Management of trees on land owned by Rugby Borough Council

We are responsible for the management of trees on upwards of 162 sites containing tens of thousands of trees whether they are on public open spaces, cemeteries, or housing land.

Our trees are on an inspection regime where we aim to inspect our trees every 3 to 5 year years.

Tree inspections are carried about by the Arboricultural Officer and we also employ a Tree inspector whom comes in one day a week to assist.

Tree inspections are carried out using a web-based computer management program called Arbortrack where data is recorded and any subsequent tree works recommendations which are highlighted are programmed to be carried out and sent to the tree works contractor to be undertaken according to the level of priority and urgency.

Examples of tree works may include the following;

- Annual removal of basal growth from 700 limes located around the town.
- Pruning of lower branches (crown lifting) to facilitate access of pedestrians and vehicles.
- Crown reduction to lessen the sail area of a defective tree to lessen the chance of stem/branch failure.
- Removal of dead or dangerous trees.
- Removal of major dead wood.



Example of defective Chestnut tree at Whinfield cemetery removed and replaced. Tree in a “high target” area next to seating. Tree irreversibly weakened as a consequence of “bleeding canker”

Where practicable those trees which are removed will always be replaced with good quality standard trees to maintain and enhance continuity of tree cover within the borough. Usually between 70 and 100 trees a year will be planted some to replace those that have been removed due to poor health and others to enhance existing tree stock.



Removal of a diseased mature Lime Tree at John Thwaites Close and replaced with 2 smaller Trees more suited to a small space in close proximity to sheltered accommodation.

For proposed removal of defective trees which are likely to cause public interest these will always be publicised with the general public and members given a chance to comment. A recent example of this was when the Council removed and replaced a number of defective Horse Chestnut trees at Whitehall recreation ground following public safety concerns.

1.1.1 Public enquiries

Trees can be very emotive and can cause conflict with the general public whom may raise issues in relation to perceived light loss, the nuisance of overhanging branches or issues with nesting birds and associated excrement for example.

We do receive a considerable volume of public enquires which can result in a strain in resource considering the volume of sites under our management. In 2018 we received 625 public enquires in relation to trees. Enquiries can rise sharply in response to adverse weather events which periodically occur for example wind and snow.

A robust tree inspection regime and tree works maintenance program goes some way to lowering the amount of tree enquiries. Also, consideration to planting the right tree in the right place is vitally important so trees can co-exist successfully with properties in close proximity.

1.1.2 Ecology

A defective tree can also provide good habitat for birds and bats as well as many other microorganisms. Therefore, it is important trees are checked prior to removal especially if there is potential for bat activity etc. Bats and their 'roost' sites are fully protected under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, the latter of which deems them a European Protected Species. It is a criminal offence to recklessly disturb or destroy a known or suspected bat 'roost', even if the roost is only occasionally used. Rugby Council recently removed two defective Willows (with bat potential) to the rear of Mckinnell Crescent under strict ecological supervision. A bat box was erected on a nearby tree to maintain habitat as well leaving fallen timber en-situ in the interests of biodiversity.

1.2 Trees in the planning system

1.2.1 Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)

A tree preservation order is used to protect those trees where it is deemed expedient in the interests of visual amenity to do so especially where it is considered that a tree maybe at risk from removal. For example, a mature tree in good condition which is highly visible from a public place and makes a considerable contribution to the character of local area may be considered for a TPO especially if it is at risk from removal as a result of a planning application.

Rugby Borough Council currently administers 408 Tree Preservation orders across the borough. The earliest was made in 1951. Over half of these TPO's have been made in the last 14 years. A TPO may contain one tree or thousands within a woodland.



Rugby Councils most recent TPO. A mature Oak on Hinckley Road Wolvey in response to proposed development in close proximity. Tree of high visual amenity value.

TPO's are usually made on trees on private land. If a land owner wishes to prune or remove a protected tree they must make an application to the council to do so and await formal written permission.

On average Rugby Borough Council receive 127 tree works applications per annum, including notifications of tree works in conservation area's (see below).

It is offense to remove or prune a protected tree without written permission. There have been recent cases where Rugby Borough Council have prosecuted because of unlawful removal of trees, the most recent of which was in relation to the removal of eight mature

Ash trees contained within a woodland TPO at a development site at Lower Street in Hillmorton. Orbit homes were fined £10,000 amount and ordered to plant replacements.



Large gap created through unlawful tree removal and subsequent negative impact on visual amenity



New trees planted by Orbit homes to mitigate for tree loss

1.2.2 Trees in Conservation areas

Conservation areas protect areas of special architectural or historical interest and the Council has extra powers to control development. Rugby currently has 19 conservation

areas across the borough which also enjoy diverse tree cover and contribute to the overall character and quality of those areas.

It is an offence to cut down, uproot, top, lop deliberately destroy or damage a tree in a conservation area. Tree owners must give the council 6 weeks written notice of their intentions. This is called a “section 211” notice. The Council then have 6 weeks to decide whether to allow works to proceed or stop the works by placing a TPO on the subject tree(s). A TPO would be made if the impact of proposed tree works/removal are likely to have an adverse impact on visual amenity in the local area.

1.2.3 Hedgerow regulations (1997)

These regulations intend to protect important countryside hedges from destruction or damage. Land owners whom wish to remove countryside hedge must give the Council 6 weeks written notice by submitting a Hedgerow removal notice. The Council must then decide if that hedgerow is “important” by virtue of its ecological and historical significance. Rugby Borough Council receives on average 2 to 3 hedgerow removal notices per annum.

1.2.4 High Hedges legislation (2005)

The high hedges legislation gives the Council powers under the Anti-Social behaviour Act to serve notice on the owners of nuisance hedges where the hedge has been adjudged to be affecting the reasonable enjoyment of a complainant’s property by assessing the effect of light loss to gardens and windows. The Council recently made judgement on a tall hedge located at a property at Foxglove Close in Brownsover which was having an adverse impact upon the reasonable enjoyment of a property at Poppy Drive.



High Hedge at Foxglove Close. Notice served to reduce the height.

1.2.5 Planning Applications

Rugby has seen significant urban growth in recent years. This can put pressure on existing tree stock. Trees and landscaping are material considerations in the planning process. Indeed, many potential development sites contain trees, many of which have the potential to enhance a proposed development. Some may be at risk of removal to facilitate a planning proposal.

We are consulted on many planning applications across the borough and must assess the potential impact upon existing trees and the surrounding landscape. It may be deemed appropriate to protect trees by a virtue of a TPO and a considerable volume of TPO's have been served over recent years.

If important trees are being retained within a development scheme it is important to ensure they are successfully incorporated to ensure tree(s) and the new built form can co-exist with minimal or no direct impact upon each other.

This is achieved by the provision of a BS5837:2012 tree report (Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – recommendations). We would ask for this to support a planning application and it acts a design tool to aid successful design, assessing a number of variables, e.g. health, and dimensions (e.g. height, canopy spread, root protection areas). For example, a large mature Oak tree incorporated into small garden is likely to cause issues by virtue of being overbearing, loss of light to garden and potential for root damage. The same tree maybe better suited in an open space especially it has potential for major public benefits from a visual amenity point of view.



Oak tree at Bronze Road Cawston saved from felling and incorporated into the design scheme to create a focal point of a quality open space. Tree is a highly prominent visual amenity and is now protected.

1.2.5.1 Tree planting in new developments and Landscaping

Applications are based on a case by case basis, looking at site context and potential landscaping issues in terms of proposed tree losses, screening, visual amenity and biodiversity. Carefully selected provision of new tree planting can greatly enhance a new development.



Two upright growing Oak trees (Quercus robur fastigiata ‘Koster’) at Horton Crescent Rugby School growing in a limited space compliment the new build, enhance the development and planted at the request of the Arboricultural Officer

Some planning applications may be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Assessment which identify the effects of new developments (i.e. where there will be a change resulting from development) on views and on the landscape itself, looking at the existing landscape character, its sensitivity, condition and its ability to except change. We will assess these as per the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) and respond as

appropriate, possibly suggesting mitigation planting to lessen the visual impact of a design proposal.

2.0 Strategy and Plan

There is not a formal approved tree policy in place at present but it is something we should be aiming to achieve when resources are available.

For example, a formal tree policy is a useful tool in outlining to the general public when (and not) the Council will react to specific enquires and complaints regarding the management of council owned trees.

This also outlines the broad principles in relation to the importance of trees in the urban and rural landscape, inspection regimes, arboricultural principles, replacement tree planting, health and safety, environmental legislation, damage caused by trees and roots, publicising of tree works and issues relating to trees and the planning system.

3.0 Processes in Place

Processes regarding Tree inspection and issuing of works are discussed above.

In the event of out of hours emergency call-outs we can call upon a local contractor to deal with these situations.

We aim to respond to public enquiries within 3-5 working days.

We aim to respond to planning applications within 15 working days.

We aim to respond to trees in conservation area and hedgerow notifications within 6 weeks and TPO applications within 8 weeks.

4.0 Partnerships

We work in partnership with a number of bodies including Warwickshire Wildlife Trust on a number of sites including the Great Central Way, Swift Valley Country Park and Windmill Spinney in Bilton. Also, the woodland trust and forestry commission for the recent planting of new woodland planting across the borough.

5.0 Resources & Concerns

Recent years have seen a severe reduction in officer resource. To perform functions set out above historically there used to be 4 officers employed by the Council; 2 Arboricultural Officers (1 for planning and 1 for parks), 1 Assistant Arboricultural & high hedges officer and a Landscape Officer. Rugby Council now employs 1 Arboricultural Officer and 1 tree inspector (for 1 day a week) to undertake these roles.

In an ever expanding town where pressures on green infrastructure are higher than ever and also issues relating to climate change, this is a concern and it is suggested that this be reviewed going forward to ensure our valuable tree stock within the borough continues to be maintained protected and enhanced.



Mature Lime tree provides the focal point to the centre of Stretton on Dunsmore Conservation area

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Motion from Council – Reduce Plastic Waste at the Council
Name of Committee:	Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	7 February 2019
Contact Officer:	Dan Green, Head of Environment and Public Realm, Tel: 01788 533 850
Summary:	<p>On 27 February 2018, Council referred a motion to a scrutiny committee in accordance with Council Standing Order 11.</p> <p>The motion was considered by Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 June 2018 where the Head of Environment and Public Realm was asked to undertake an audit of single use plastics used by Rugby Borough Council services.</p> <p>This report provides the results of that audit.</p>
Financial Implications:	There are no immediate financial implications for Rugby Borough Council.
Risk Management Implications:	There no immediate equality and diversity implications for Rugby Borough Council.
Environmental Implications:	There are no immediate risk management implications arising from this report.
Legal Implications:	There are no immediate environmental implications arising from this report.
Equality and Diversity:	There are no legal immediate arising from this report.

Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 7 February 2019

Motion from Council - Reduce Plastic Waste at the Council

Public Report of the Head of Environment and Public Realm

Summary

On 27 February 2018, Council referred a motion to a scrutiny committee in accordance with Council Standing Order 11.

The motion was considered by Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 June 2018 where the Head of Environment and Public Realm was asked to undertake an audit of single use plastics used by Rugby Borough Council services.

This report provides the results of that audit.

1. MOTION FROM COUNCIL

On 27 February 2018, Council considered a motion submitted on notice by Cllr Douglas and seconded by Cllr Mrs New as set out below.

“Rugby Borough Council’s new Corporate Priorities include “continue to improve the efficiency of our waste and recycling services”. In light of the recent trends to tackle the reduction in plastics and a drive that includes improving the quality of the dry recycling bins along with maximizing the amount of household waste that is reprocessed.

The Council should seek to:

- 1. Lead the way by undertaking an audit, within existing resources, of single use plastics used by the Authority and seek to replace with sustainable or reusable alternatives where practicable.*
- 2. Work in greater partnership with local environmental groups and engage with local businesses and residents to help educate about plastic waste.*
- 3. Adopt the ambition as outlined by the Waste and Resources Action Programme known as WRAP to reduce plastic waste.”*

In accordance with Council Standing Order 11, the motion stood referred to a scrutiny committee.

On 28 June 2018, Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the motion and requested that an audit of individual service areas was undertaken and reported back to the committee.

2. SINGLE USE PLASTICS AUDIT

All Council services were asked to complete a short assessment of single use plastics. For the purpose of this assessment, the definition of single use plastics was as follows: ***“plastics which are only used once before they are thrown away or recycled”***.

The audit showed that the following single use plastics are currently used by Council services.

Housing/CAST	weed killer, washing-up liquid containers, sponges in cellophane wrap
Human Resources	plastic wallets, plastic cups
Bereavement Services	plastic cups
Business Support	plastic cups, plastic stirrers
Waste and Recycling	plastic bags for litter picking, plastic cups
Sport and Recreation	plastic pint and half pint cups, plastic cutlery, plastic drinks bottles, plastic cup lids, UHT milk containers (single serve), straws
Elections	cable ties
Parks and Grounds	plastic cups, chemical containers, plant pot trays
Regulatory Services (commercial regulations)	disposable gloves, environmental swabs, evidence bags, sample pots, bottles
Regulatory Services (neighbourhood services)	evidence bags, evidence stickers, rubbish sacks, cable ties, disposable gloves, disposable over-shoes, CDs, DVDs, pesticide packaging
Regulatory Services (community wardens)	evidence bags, evidence stickers, rubbish sacks, cable ties, disposable gloves, laminated temporary signs
Regulatory Services (licensing)	ID cards, hackney plates, plate holders, plate holder tags, DVD evidence, temporary rank signs, hearing notices laminated, dual drivers licence wallet, windscreen badge
Planning	laminator sheets, stationary, bin bags
RAGM/Visitor Centre	plastic cups, PVC banners, bubble wrap, exhibiting packing, biro's, poly-pockets, Sellotape, cash bags, bin bags, shop items, brochure bags, plastic water bottles, cleaning product containers
Property Repairs	plastic cups, wrapping, bin liners, disposable gloves, shoe covers, asbestos bags, carpet protector, ear plugs

3. MINIMISING PLASTIC WASTE

As referenced in the previous report to Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee, there is a growing appetite to reduce or eliminate single use plastics. To this end, numerous Local Authorities across the country have considered the issue of single use plastics, with varying commitments to reduce or remove single use plastics resulting. Examples of commitments made and action taken can be found by the following links:

<http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/documents/s17223/Environmental%20Policy%20-%20New%20Strategy%20and%20Action%20Plan%20for%20Plastics.pdf>

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/recycling-and-waste/wasteaware-campaigns/plasticfree.aspx>

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news-room/media-releases/news-from-2018/news-from-february-2018/cornwall-council-commits-to-become-single-use-plastic-free-by-2020/>

Measures to reduce single use plastics are being considered by partners across the Warwickshire Waste Partnership (WWP) and ongoing dialogue with the WWP is essential to maximise efforts across the County.

In late 2018, Warwick District Council (WDC) Executive, considered and approved a Plastics Policy, which aims to minimise if not eliminate the use of single use plastics by the Council. The WDC Policy considers the following key elements in reducing plastic impact:

- Procurement
- Tender Contracts
- Staff Awareness
- Performance Monitoring
- Raising Awareness
- Litter and Recycling
- Events

The WDC Draft Policy is included as Appendix to this report.

4. CONCLUSION

The committee is asked to consider:

- How they wish to proceed in relation to the Notice of Motion
- Further recommendations (such as a Plastics Policy) to reduce the Council's use of single use plastics

Name of Meeting: Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 7 February 2019

Subject Matter: Motion from Council – Reduce Plastic Waste at the Council

Originating Department: Environment and Public Realm

DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY YES NO

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink

Warwick District Council - Our Plastics Policy

Plastics can be very useful in every day life, but there is increasing evidence that plastics are seriously harming our environment both on land and in particular the marine life in our seas. Plastics can take up to 500 years or more to degrade which means that every item of plastic ever made still exists today.

Warwick District Council is concerned about plastics and we have developed this policy to set out how we will reduce our own impact on the environment and encourage others to do the same. Our commitments are set out below and will be incorporated into our 'Sustainability Approach' which is our strategic direction on the sustainability agenda.

Reducing Our Impact

<p>Procurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will wherever possible avoid the procurement of single-use plastics in relation to eating and drinking, such as straws, water bottles, disposable cutlery and plastic cups and source practical alternatives. Where we cannot avoid single-use plastics, we will aim to ensure these contain recycled plastic and can be easily recycled. - We will minimise plastic from the goods that are procured where available and challenge suppliers in this area. - We will avoid plastic bottle use in relation to the election count. - We will include plastic avoidance requirements in procurement guidance. - We will procure items made from recycled plastic where plastic cannot be avoided.
<p>Tender Contracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will include plastic avoidance requirements in tender contracts if applicable.
<p>Staff Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will explore further opportunities to recycle more types of plastic from our own buildings and provide clear guidance to staff on the types of plastic that can be recycled. - We will ensure Staff are aware of the environmental impacts of plastic use and provide guidance on how to reduce their impact at home and at work.
<p>Monitoring our Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will monitor the number of single-use plastic items avoided. - We will monitor the number of new plastic recycling streams introduced.

Warwick District Council - Our Plastics Policy

Community Leadership

Raising Awareness

- We will work with Birmingham Commonwealth Games Organising Committee in relation to the Commonwealth Games in Leamington Spa to avoid the use of single-use plastics.

Litter & Recycling

- We will continue to support Clean Up Britain on the 'Now or Never' scheme to reduce litter.
- We will support the implementation of the National 'Re-fill' scheme across the District.
- We will continue to collect recycling from bring sites located in various public places across the District.

Events

- We will develop plastic reduction event guidance in relation events that we organise and share this where events are taking place on our land.

16 October 2018

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2018/19
Name of Committee:	Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	7 February 2019
Contact Officer:	Veronika Beckova, Democratic Services Officer, Tel: 01788 533591
Summary:	The report updates the Committee on the progress of scrutiny reviews and details the forward work programme for 2018/19.
Financial Implications:	There is a budget of £500 available in 2018/19 to spend on the delivery of the overview and scrutiny work programme.
Risk Management Implications:	There are no risk management implications arising from this report.
Environmental Implications:	There are no environmental implications arising from this report.
Legal Implications:	There are no legal implications arising from this report.
Equality and Diversity:	No new or existing policy or procedure has been recommended.

Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 7 February 2019

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2018/19

Public Report of the Executive Director

Summary

The report updates the Committee on the progress of scrutiny reviews and details the forward work programme for 2018/19.

1. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The scrutiny committee chairs meet on a regular basis to discuss and agree the allocation of work and topics for each scrutiny committee. The current scrutiny reviews are as follows:

Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Topic	Comments
<i>Special Expenses Scheme – Council Tax</i>	The draft one-page strategy is scheduled for review on 11 April. The review is anticipated to commence in June 2019.

Whittle Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Topic	Comments
<i>Access for Disabled People</i>	The next meeting of the task group is scheduled for ...
<i>Parking at the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre</i>	Light-touch scheduled over two meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the first meeting was a site visit on 31 January to gather evidence; and • the second meeting will be held in February to consider the evidence and any possible review recommendations A report to be presented on 11 March.

Topic	Comments
<i>Informing and Engaging Our Communities</i>	The next meeting of the task group is scheduled on 28 February 2019 where the lead officer will present the draft animation for the recycling campaign and the task group will consider a way forward.

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Topic	Comments
<i>Commercialisation, Collaboration and Partnerships</i>	Item carried forward to 2019/20. A joint meeting to be scheduled in June/July 2019.

A copy of the work programme is appended to this report.

2. CONCLUSION

The committee is asked to:

- note the progress in the scrutiny reviews; and
- agree the future work programme for the committee.

Name of Meeting: Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting: 7 February 2019
Subject Matter: Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2018/19
Originating Department: Executive Director

DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY YES NO

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2018/19

Whittle 11 March 2019

Topic	Description
Growth and Investment	Discussion on the progress in the portfolio focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town centre economy • Inward investment • Affordable housing
World Rugby Hall of Fame	Progress against the recommendations in the review report
Town Centre Heritage	Progress against the recommendations in the review report
Review of Parking at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre	Draft report on the conclusions and recommendations
Bridges – Great Central Way	Review of factors behind the revenue and capital budget agreed by Cabinet on 7 January 2019

Brooke 11 April 2019

Topic	Description
Crime and Disorder	Annual review
Special Expenses Scheme	Draft one-page strategy
Review of Informing and Engaging Our Communities	Draft review report on the conclusions and recommendations
Review of Access for People with a Disability	Draft review report on the conclusions and recommendations

Items to be carried forward to 2019/20

Topic	Description
Affordable Housing Provision in the Borough	Overview. Factors affecting affordable housing on new developments.
Commercialisation, Collaboration and Partnerships	The approach and areas of focus to be agreed
Encouraging the Community to Adopt Healthy Lifestyles	Monitor the delivery of priorities and associated costs of one or two initiatives the Council could support
Houses in Multiple Occupation	Focus on existing issues with HMOs, licensing and enforcement following new legislation coming into effect on 1 October 2018
Materials Recovery Facility	Pre-decision scrutiny
Review of Housing Maintenance/Repairs	Review
Rugby Lotto	Progress
Special Expenses Scheme	Review
Universal Credit	Current position