



Council

Mon 30 Jun
2025
7.00 pm

Oakenshaw Community
Centre,
Castleditch Lane,
Redditch
B98 7YB



If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact
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GUIDANCE ON FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS

Please note that this is a public meeting and will be live streamed for general access via the Council's YouTube channel.

If you have any questions regarding the agenda or attached papers, please do not hesitate to contact the officer named above.

Notes:

Although this is a public meeting, there are circumstances when Council might have to move into closed session to consider exempt or confidential information. For agenda items that are exempt, the public are excluded and for any such items the live stream will be suspended and that part of the meeting will not be recorded.

Council

Monday, 30th June, 2025

7.00 pm

Oakenshaw Community Centre

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:

Joanna Kane
(Mayor)
David Munro
(Deputy Mayor)
Joe Baker
Juliet Barker Smith
Juma Begum
William Boyd
Brandon Clayton
Claire Davies
Matthew Dormer
James Fardoe
Andrew Fry
Bill Hartnett
Sharon Harvey
Chris Holz

Sid Khan
Wanda King
Alan Mason
Sachin Mathur
Gemma Monaco
Rita Rogers
Gary Slim
Jen Snape
Jane Spilsbury
Monica Stringfellow
Craig Warhurst
Ian Woodall
Paul Wren

1. Welcome

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest

To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests.

4. Minutes (Pages 5 - 24)

5. Announcements

To consider Announcements under Procedure Rule 10:

- a) Mayor's Announcements
- b) The Leader's Announcements
- c) Chief Executive's Announcements.

6. Questions on Notice (Procedure Rule 9)

7. Motions on Notice (Procedure Rule 11)

8. Executive Committee

Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 10th June 2025 (Pages 25 – 40)

NOTE: A restricted minute extract from the Executive Committee meeting held on 10th June 2025 has only been made available to Members and relevant Officers. Should Members wish to discuss this minute extract in any detail, a decision will be required to exclude the public and press from the meeting on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged, as defined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Schedule 12 (a) of Section 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

(Paragraph 3: Subject to the “public interest” test, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).)

(Paragraph 4: Subject to the “public interest” test, information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matters arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.)

8 .1 Warm Homes Local Grants Funding and Resources (Pages 41 - 48)

8 .2 Shareholders Committee Annual Report 2024/25 (Pages 49 - 62)

9. Urgent Business - Record of Decisions

To note any decisions taken in accordance with the Council’s Urgency Procedure Rules (Part 9, Paragraph 5 and/or Part 10, Paragraph 15 of the Constitution), as specified.

(None to date).

10. Urgent Business - general (if any)

To consider any additional items exceptionally agreed by the Mayor as Urgent Business in accordance with the powers vested in him by virtue of Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

(This power should be exercised only in cases where there are genuinely special circumstances which require consideration of an item which has not previously been published on the Order of Business for the meeting.)



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Monday, 19th May, 2025

MINUTES

Present:

Councillors Juma Begum (Mayor), Joanna Kane (Deputy Mayor), Juliet Barker Smith, William Boyd, Brandon Clayton, Claire Davies, Matthew Dormer, James Fardoe, Andrew Fry, Bill Hartnett, Sharon Harvey, Chris Holz, Sid Khan, Alan Mason, Sachin Mathur, David Munro, Rita Rogers, Gary Slim, Jen Snape, Jane Spilsbury, Monica Stringfellow, Craig Warhurst, Ian Woodall and Paul Wren

Officers:

Ruth Bamford, Claire Felton, John Leach and Bob Watson

Principal Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley-Hill

1. WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed all those present to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Joe Baker, Wanda King and Gemma Monaco.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MAYOR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Mayor of the Borough of Redditch in 2024/25, Councillor Juma Begum, commented that it had been an honour and a privilege to serve as the Mayor. The year had been very busy but it represented an opportunity to give back to the local community. There had been a number of highlights during the year, including meeting the High Sheriff for Worcestershire, the Astwood Bank Carnival and a visit to Buckingham Palace. The Mayor had attended the Remembrance Sunday commemorations in November 2024, and she commented that she had received invaluable support from the Royal British Legion and the Mercian Regiment. The Mayor also highlighted that she was proud to have held the first

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Bangra themed civic event attended by the Mayors and Chairmen from neighbouring authority areas as well as representatives of Redditch.

During her Mayoral year, Councillor Begum had raised £4,632 for her charities, Redditch Disability Support Project and the Primrose Hospice.

For her final civic duty, the Mayor had hosted a visit from the Mayor of Gruchet-le-Valasse, twin town of Redditch. During this visit, the Mayor of Gruchet-le-Valasse had presented a Mayoral ribbon to the Mayor of Redditch which had been a great honour.

5. ELECTION OF THE MAYOR FOR 2025/26

A nomination for the position of Mayor of the Borough of Redditch for the 2025/26 municipal year was received on behalf of Councillor Joanna Kane. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Juliet Barker Smith and seconded by Councillor Paul Wren.

There being no other nominations, on being put to the vote, Councillor Joanna Kane was elected Mayor of the Borough for the forthcoming year. She signed the statutory declaration of acceptance of office and then was invested with the Chain of Office. Councillor Kane thanked the outgoing Mayor and, on behalf of the Council, expressed gratitude for the work she had carried out as an ambassador for the town.

RESOLVED that

- 1) Councillor Joanna Kane be elected Mayor of the Borough of Redditch to serve until the next Annual Meeting of the Council; and**
- 2) the Council formally express, and record, its gratitude to Councillor Juma Begum for her excellent service to the town as Mayor in the 2024/25 municipal year.**

6. ELECTION OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR 2025/26

A nomination for the position of Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Redditch for the 2025/26 municipal year was received on behalf of Councillor David Munro. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Ian Woodall and seconded by Councillor Rita Rogers.

There being no other nominations, on being put to the vote, Councillor David Munro was elected Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Redditch for the forthcoming year. He signed the statutory

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declaration of acceptance of office and was then invested with the Deputy Mayor's Badge of Office.

RESOLVED that

Councillor David Munro be appointed Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Redditch to serve until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

7. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Council held on 17th March 2025 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Mayor.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements were made at the meeting:

a) The Mayor's Announcements

The new Mayor commented that it was a privilege to have been appointed the Mayor of the Borough of Redditch. Members were informed that the Mayor's husband, Mr John Kane, would be her consort during her Mayoral year. Council was informed that the Mayor's charity would be the Primrose Hospice. The work of the hospice was highly valued by the Mayor, following receipt of end-of-life care by her mother-in-law at a hospice. The Very Reverend Canon Brian McGinley would be appointed as the Mayor's Chaplain for the year ahead.

All Members were invited to attend a community mass at Mount Carmel Church on 17th June 2025.

b) The Chief Executive's Announcements

The Chief Executive highlighted that all Members had been invited to attend a briefing on the subject of Local Government Reorganisation, which was due to take place on 22nd May 2025.

9. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Following the resignation of the previous Leader of the Council since the previous Council meeting it was necessary for Council to appoint a new Leader. A nomination was proposed for Councillor

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Sharon Harvey to be appointed Leader of the Council for the ensuing three years. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Jane Spilsbury and seconded by Councillor Juma Begum.

RESOLVED that

Councillor Sharon Harvey be appointed the Leader of the Council for the ensuing three years.

10. LEADER'S APPOINTMENTS

The Leader thanked Members for appointing her to the position of Leader of the Council for the ensuing three years. A detailed list of the Leader's appointments were tabled at the meeting (Appendix 1) and the Leader confirmed the following portfolio appointments:

- Councillor Sharon Harvey – Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Environmental Services (in addition to her role as Leader)
- Councillor Jane Spilsbury – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Performance, Engagement and Governance
- Councillor Juliet Barker Smith – Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Recreation
- Councillor Juma Begum – Portfolio Holder for Community Spaces and the Voluntary Sector
- Councillor Bill Hartnett – Portfolio Holder for Housing
- Councillor Jen Snape – Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity
- Councillor Monica Stringfellow – Portfolio Holder for Community Services and Safeguarding Responsibilities
- Councillor Ian Woodall – Portfolio Holder for Finance

11. APPOINTMENTS OF COMMITTEE, PANELS ETC AND THEIR CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS (INCLUDING POLITICAL BALANCE) (REPORT TO FOLLOW)

The Leader presented a report which detailed the political balance and proposed nominations to Committees that had been made by group leaders in accordance with the political balance.

The recommendations detailed in the report were proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Jane Spilsbury.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the Political balance of the Committees of the Council be agreed as set out at Appendix 2 to the minutes;**

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- 2) appointments by political group leaders to the places on each Committee etc. be noted;
- 3) the Council appoints Chairs and Vice-Chairs to the Committees and other bodies as set out in Appendix 3 to the minutes;
- 4) appointments to Working Groups and other bodies listed in Appendix 3 be agreed; and
- 5) the terms of reference for the Committees be confirmed.

12. OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENTS

Members considered a report detailing proposed appointments to outside bodies for the 2025/26 municipal year.

The nominations were proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Jane Spilsbury.

RESOLVED that

the nominations to outside bodies for 2025/26 be approved.

13. CONSTITUTION REVIEW

Council considered a report concerning the Scheme of Delegations in the constitution. Members were advised that there was a constitutional requirement for Council to review the Scheme of Delegations each year and this took place at the Annual Council meeting. However, Members were advised that there were no changes proposed to the Scheme of Delegations on this occasion.

The report was briefly debated and Members commented that there was support for the proposal detailed in the report. However, it was also noted that some of the delegations to officers included in the Scheme of Delegations would be reviewed during the year to ensure that these supported the priorities that had been included in the new Council Plan.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Jane Spilsbury.

RESOLVED that

the current version of the Officer Scheme of Delegations be agreed.

14. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Executive Committee Minutes – 11th March 2025

The Mayor explained that there was a typographical error at Minute Item No. 97 – Members' Ward Budget Scheme - in the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 11th March 2025. The decision for this minute had been incorrectly recorded as a recommendation when in fact the decision had been resolved by the Executive Committee, in accordance with the proposals detailed in the report for the item that had been considered by the Committee. This decision could be taken by the Executive Committee because the funding for the Members' Ward Budget Scheme had been incorporated into the budget in February 2025 and therefore no change was required to be made to the Budget Framework by the Council. For this reason, the subject was not due to be debated at the Council meeting.

Future Cemetery Provision

The report in respect of future cemetery provision in the Borough was presented for Council's consideration. Members were asked to note that the report proposed that the incorporation of burial plots should be taken on board as part of work on the new Local Plan, which was in the process of being developed.

The report had been pre-scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to discussion at the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 11th March 2025. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was thanked for their hard work in reviewing the matter.

Consideration was given to the content of the report and reference was made to the proposed location of burial spaces and the exploratory work that would be undertaken in respect of this matter. Members were advised that the recommendation to Council was solely in respect of the incorporation of burial site provision into the Local Plan process as all other items had been previously resolved by the Executive. Questions were subsequently raised about how Members could influence discussions regarding the potential location of burial sites through the Local Plan process and the suggestion was made that this could be raised by Members at meetings of the Planning Advisory Panel (PAP). Council was also asked to note that the sites that had been addressed in the report to the Executive Committee were at an early exploratory stage and there would be a need for further reports to the Executive Committee, which could be pre-scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee where required by Members.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Jane Spilsbury.

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Redditch Council Plan

The Leader presented the Redditch Council Plan for Members' consideration and in doing so highlighted that the content of the plan, including identification of Council priorities, had been considered over a number of months. Included within the Redditch Council Plan was an overview of the Council's priorities which included:

- Economy, Regeneration and Prosperity
- Green, Clean and Safe Redditch
- Community and Housing

In considering the report, Members were asked to note that the Council Plan was designed to outline ambitions for the future of the Borough. There were a number of key issues underpinning the success of the plan, which included public consultation, community engagement and good governance.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Jane Spilsbury.

Quarter 3 Revenue and Performance Monitoring 2024/25

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the Quarter 3 Revenue and Performance Monitoring Report 2024/25 and in doing so highlighted that there had been a decrease in the level of anticipated overspend when compared to the Quarter 2 Revenue and Performance Monitoring 2024/25 report. There remained budget pressures, including in respect of financial costs associated with the Council's vehicle fleet. There were also overspends recorded for Financial and Customer Services.

The Council was owed funding as a member of the former Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP). Members were informed that the Council would be submitting a business case, in line with the required process, in order to access these funds to support work on the Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre (DMIC).

Confirmation was provided that the Revenue and Performance Monitoring Reports were due to be updated and therefore this was the last occasion on which this report would be presented in this format for Members' consideration. In future, it was anticipated that the report would more clearly outline the basis for any variances as well as the action being taken to reduce any deficits.

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There was a legal requirement for the Treasury Monitoring Report to be reported to Council. The quarterly revenue and performance monitoring report provided an opportunity for this to occur in accordance with the proper process.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Ian Woodall and seconded by Councillor Juma Begum.

Redditch Local Plan

The Leader presented the Redditch Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation 2025 for Members' consideration. Council was informed that the purpose of the report was to commence the process of consultation on the content of the next Local Plan for the Borough of Redditch. The timeframes for the consultation process corresponded with the timetable that had been agreed by Members in the Local Development Scheme, which had been considered in February 2025.

In preparing the report, it was noted that the content had been considered at meetings of both PAP and of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Members in attendance at those meetings were thanked for their hard work. At these meetings, Members had highlighted an ambition to consult with as many groups as possible within the local community. Elected Members would also have an opportunity to raise any concerns that they might have in respect of the Local Plan during this consultation period. The Council had invested in new consultation software and it was hoped that this would have a positive impact on consultation outcomes.

During consideration of this item, Members noted that recent PAP meetings had been held in person, with no opportunities having been provided for Councillors to attend these meetings remotely. As PAP meetings were informal, private meetings at which no decisions were taken, the suggestion was made that there could be greater flexibility to enable Councillors to attend the meetings remotely.

Reference was made to the consultation period and questions were raised about whether this could be extended to continue until a certain proportion of the local population and other stakeholders had responded. The suggestion was made that this could be set at a minimum 5 per cent response rate. In response, Officers suggested that instead of amending the proposed consultation period at this stage, the idea could be discussed at a forthcoming PAP meeting when Members considered the responses to the consultation. The Council would then be able to proceed in accordance with the timetable for the Local Plan that had already been agreed with the Government.

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The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Bill Hartnett.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **subject to the amendment detailed in the preamble above, the minutes of the Executive Committee held on 11th March 2025 be approved and all recommendations adopted; and**
- 2) **the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 13th May 2025 be approved and all recommendations adopted.**

15. REGULATORY COMMITTEES

Primate Keeper Licences

Members considered a recommendation that had been made on the subject of Primate Keeper Licences at a meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 18th March 2025.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Sachin Mathur and seconded by Councillor Sharon Harvey.

RESOLVED that

the fees applicable to Primate Keeper Licence applications, as detailed below, be approved by Council.

Application for the grant of a licence	£366.00
Application for renewal of a licence	£300.00
Application for variation of a licence	£267.00
Inspections fees	£182.00

16. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

Members were informed that no urgent decisions had been taken since the previous meeting of Council.

17. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)

There was no urgent business for consideration on this occasion.

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The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.16 pm

Annual Meeting of the Council

19th May 2025

APPENDIX 1 - LEADER'S APPOINTMENTS **(and places from outside the controlling group)**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair: Leader of the Council by office – Councillor Sharon Harvey

Vice-Chair: Deputy Leader by office – Councillor Jane Spilsbury

Councillors: 8 = 8 – not required to be proportional

Councillors Juliet Barker Smith, Juma Begum, Bill Hartnett, Jen Snape,
Monica Stringfellow and Ian Woodall.

Cannot be members of O&S Committees

Named

Substitutes: Not permitted.

Annual Meeting of the Council

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Portfolio Holders (8)

Numbers of Portfolios and range of services covered are reviewable annually.

Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Environmental Services – Councillor Sharon Harvey – covering planning and land use, economic development and strategic partnerships, emergency planning, waste management services, bereavement services, cleansing and landscaping.

Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Performance, Engagement and Governance – Councillor Jane Spilsbury – covering strategic performance of Council services, including enabling services of ICT, human resources, communications and customer services including quarterly surveys. This includes oversight of Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

Portfolio Holder for Finance – Councillor Ian Woodall – covering Commercialism, Finance, Audit, Revenue and Benefits.

Portfolio Holder for Community Services and Safeguarding Responsibilities – Councillor Monica Stringfellow – covering safer communities, crime and disorder, with a focus on diversity and inclusion, health and wellbeing.

Portfolio Holder for Community Spaces and Voluntary Sector – Councillor Juma Begum – covering strategic oversight of non-residential property, voluntary group support and community grants.

Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Recreation – Councillor Juliet Barker Smith – covering leisure and culture strategy for parks and open spaces, allotments, play areas, sports and heritage facilities. This includes oversight arrangements with Rubicon.

Portfolio Holder for Housing – Councillor Bill Hartnett - covering Housing Services, Strategic Housing, private sector housing, HRA tenancy and property and housing growth. This includes an oversight of parking facilities and related enforcement.

Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity – Councillor Jen Snape covering strategic direction for climate change action across a range of service areas, alongside maintenance and planning of woodland areas.

Appendix 2 - Political Balance Calculation May 2025

Committee	Lab 18 66.67% of total	Con 5 18.52% of total	Independent (Non-aligned) Cllr Baker 1 3.70% of total	Independent (Non-aligned) Cllr Khan 1 3.70% of total	Independent (Non-aligned) Cllr King 1 3.70% of total	Green (non- aligned) Cllr Davies 1 3.70% of total	Total
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6 6.00	2 1.67	0 0.33	0 0.33	0 0.33	0 0.33 *Take 1	8 9 members on Committee 9
Licensing Committee	7 7.33 *Take 8	2 2.04	0 0.41	0 0.41 *Take 1	0 0.41	0 0.41	9 11 members on Cttee 11
Planning Committee	6 6.00	2 1.67	0 0.33	0 0.33	0 0.33	0 0.33 *Take 1	8 9 members on Cttee 9
Audit, Gov'ce & Standards Committee	6 6.00	2 1.67	0 0.33	0 0.33	0 0.33 * Take 1	0 0.33	8 9 members on Cttee 9
Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel	3 3.33	1 0.93	0 0.19 * Take 1	0 0.19	0 0.19	0 0.19	4 5 Members on the Committee 5
(Joint) Appointments Committee	3 3.33	1 0.93 *Take 0	0 0.19 *Take 1	0 0.19	0 0.19 *Take 1	0 0.19	4 5 Members on Committee 5
Electoral Matters Committee	3 3.33	1 0.93	0 0.19	0 0.19 *Take 1	0 0.19	0 0.19	4 5 Members on Committee 5
Allocated Total Prior to Balancing	34	11	0	0	0	0	45
Entitlement	35	10	2	2	2	2	53
Mathematical calculation	35.34	9.82	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	53
Final Balanced Total	35	10	2	2	2	2	53

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Appendix 3 - Nominations and Appointments to Committees that Form Part of the Political Balance

Committee / Sub-Committee etc.	Size (Members)	Labour	Conservative	Non-Aligned Cllr Baker	Non-aligned Cllr Davies	Non-aligned Cllr Khan	Non-aligned Cllr King
Audit, Governance and Standards Committee	9	6 Cllrs Boyd, Fardoe, Fry, Rogers, Slim and Wren	2 (Ch) Cllr Monaco (v Ch) Cllr Holz	-	-	-	1 Cllr King
Licensing Committee (Note the sub-committees are now selected from the committee membership)	11	8 (Ch) Cllr Munro (V Ch) Cllr Mathur Cllrs Barker Smith, Begum, Fry, Slim, Snape and Wren	2 Cllrs Clayton and Dormer	-	-	1 Cllr Khan	-

Committee / Sub-Committee etc.	Size (Members)	Labour	Conservative	Non-Aligned Cllr Baker	Non-aligned Cllr Davies	Non-aligned Cllr Khan	Non-aligned Cllr King
Planning Committee (A pool of named substitutes would be welcomed for this Committee from both groups)	9	6 (Ch) Cllr Fry (V Ch) Cllr Boyd Cllrs Begum, Hartnett, Munro and Woodall <u>Named substitutes:</u> Cllrs Barker Smith, Fardoe, Rogers, Snape and Wren	2 Cllrs Clayton and Dormer <u>Named Substitutes:</u> Cllrs Holz, Monaco and Warhurst	-	1 Cllr Davies	-	-
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	9	6 Cllrs Boyd, Fardoe, Fry, Mathur, Rogers and Wren	2 (Ch) Cllr Dormer (VC) Cllr Warhurst	-	1 Cllr Davies	-	-

Committee / Sub-Committee etc.	Size (Members)	Labour	Conservative	Non-Aligned Cllr Baker	Non-aligned Cllr Davies	Non-aligned Cllr Khan	Non-aligned Cllr King
Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel	5	3 Cllrs Fry, Kane and Rogers	1 (Ch) Cllr Warhurst	1 Cllr Baker	-	-	-
Joint Appointments Committee	5	3 (Ch) Cllr Harvey (V Ch) Cllr Spilsbury Cllr Hartnett	-	1 Cllr Baker	-	-	1 Cllr King
Electoral Matters Committee	5	3 Members (Ch) Cllr Boyd (V Ch) Cllr Fardoe Cllr Mathur	1 Cllr Dormer	-	-	1 Cllr Khan	-

Committees that do not form part of the political balance

Committee / Sub-Committee etc.	Size (Members)	Labour	Conservative	Non-Aligned Cllr Baker	Non-aligned Cllr Davies	Non-aligned Cllr Khan	Non-aligned Cllr King
Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Committee (Usually relevant Portfolio Holder)	1	1 Cllr Stringfellow	-	-	-	-	-
Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee	2 (+ 2 subs)	Cllr Spilsbury Sub: Cllr Harvey	Cllr Dormer Sub: Cllr Clayton	-	-	-	-
Planning Advisory Panel	5	3 (Ch) Cllr Hartnett (V Ch) Cllr Fry Cllr Snape	2 Cllrs Dormer and Warhurst	-	-	-	-
Member Support Steering Group	5	3 (Ch) Cllr Barker Smith (V Ch) Cllr Spilsbury Cllr Rogers	2 Cllr Dormer and Warhurst	-	-	-	-

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Committee / Sub-Committee etc.	Size (Members)	Labour	Conservative	Non-Aligned Cllr Baker	Non-aligned Cllr Davies	Non-aligned Cllr Khan	Non-aligned Cllr King
Climate Change Advisory Panel	5	3 (Ch) Cllr Snape (V Ch) Cllr Boyd Cllr Mathur	1 Cllr Monaco	-	1 Cllr Davies	-	-
Constitutional Review Working Party	5	3 (Ch) Cllr Spilsbury (V Ch) Cllr Hartnett Cllr Harvey	2 Cllrs Dormer and Warhurst	-	-	-	-
Holocaust Memorial Committee	5	3 (Ch) Cllr Hartnett (Vc) Cllr Barker Smith Cllr Begum	2 Cllrs Clayton and Monaco	-	-	-	-
Redditch Matters Editorial Panel	3	Cllrs Barker Smith, Munro and Spilsbury	-	-	-	-	-

Scrutiny Groups

(Political proportionality not required)

Working Group / Task Group / Short Sharp Review	Size (Members)	Labour	Conservative	Non-aligned Cllr Baker	Non-aligned Cllr Davies	Non-aligned Cllr Khan	Non-aligned Cllr King
*Budget Scrutiny Working Group	5 (maximum)	2 Cllrs Fry and Mathur	3 (Ch) Cllr Warhurst, Cllrs Dormer and Holz	-	-	-	-
*Performance Scrutiny Working Group	5 (maximum)	2 Cllrs Boyd and Rogers	3 (Ch) Cllr Warhurst Cllrs Dormer and Holz	-	-	-	-
*Fly Tipping Task Group**	4	2 Cllrs Boyd and Slim	2 (Ch) Cllr Dormer Cllr Clayton	-	-	-	-
*Post-16 Education Task Group**	5 (maximum)	3 Cllrs Boyd, Mathur and Wren	2 (Ch) Cllr Warhurst Cllr Dormer	-	-	-	-

*The Chairs of each of these scrutiny groups must be a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

** Members are strongly encouraged not to change the membership of these Task Groups as they are due to be completed imminently, and continuing membership will ensure consistency



Executive Committee

Tuesday, 10th June, 2025

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Sharon Harvey (Chair), Councillor Jane Spilsbury (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juliet Barker Smith, Juma Begum, Bill Hartnett, Jen Snape, Monica Stringfellow and Ian Woodall

Officers:

Matthew Bough, Matthew Eccles, Debra Goodall, John Leach, Simon Parry and Judith Willis

Principal Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley-Hill

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader advised that at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 9th June 2025 Members pre-scrutinised the following items on the agenda for consideration at the Executive Committee meeting:

- Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment Complaint Handling Code
- Housing Regulator Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- Shareholders Committee Annual Report

At the end of their discussions, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorsed the recommendations contained within the reports but made no additional recommendations.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, the Leader thanked the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their hard work in pre-scrutinising these reports prior to the Executive Committee's consideration.

Chair

Executive Committee

Tuesday, 10th June, 2025

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 13th May 2025 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. WARM HOMES LOCAL GRANTS FUNDING AND RESOURCES

The Climate Change Manager presented a report on the subject of Warm Homes Local Grants (WHLG) funding and resources.

The Executive Committee was informed that the WHLG funding was being provided by the Government to assist householders in improving the energy efficiency of their properties. Owner occupiers on lower incomes would be eligible to apply for this funding, as it was designed to help alleviate fuel poverty. Properties would need to have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D – G in order to be eligible for funding. The Council had chosen to focus allocation of this funding to owner occupiers living in the Woodrow area, where there were higher levels of deprivation than in some other parts of the Borough. Whilst Council House properties would not be eligible to receive funding through this scheme, there was a separate Warm Homes Social Housing (WHSH) fund that Council tenants could benefit from.

The Council had been allocated grant funding to spent on WHLG for a three-year period, starting in 2025/26. The funding could be spent on a range of measures including the installation of insulation and of solar panels. Officers were estimating that there would be an average spend of £15,000 per property using this funding. Act on Energy would work with the Council on the project and would provide support to owner occupiers during the process.

Following the presentation of the report, Members discussed a number of points in detail:

- The monitoring update reports that the Council would be required to provide on a monthly basis to the Midlands Net Zero Hub (MNZH) regarding local progress with the project and the potential for this data to be shared with Members.
- The funding that had been allocated to the WHLG for the three financial years starting in 2025/26 and the reasons why the allocation for the first year was lower than subsequent years. Officers suggested that this could be due to previous experiences with similar grant funding initiatives, which had

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tended to report increases in demand for funding in later years of a project.

- The number of properties that the Council was expecting to assist using the WHLG grant funding in each year and the extent to which there would be the flexibility to provide support to more properties than anticipated. Officers clarified that this was based on assumptions that maximum levels of expenditure would be required for each property, however, should this not be the case then more eligible properties could potentially receive support.
- The benefits arising from the potential to co-commission suppliers of the works funded by the WHLG and the WSH. The Committee was informed that a joint procurement exercise could be undertaken and it was anticipated that this would result in efficiency savings.
- The need for thorough planning and community engagement to be undertaken in order to enable eligible households to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the WHLG funding. It was noted that the Council would approach eligible owner occupiers directly.
- The fact that through this scheme, improvements would be made to the energy efficiency of eligible properties at no financial cost to the owner occupiers.
- The benefits to addressing health inequalities in the Borough arising from improving the energy efficiency of properties.
- The lack of certainty about whether further WHLG funding would be made available to local authorities at the end of the three-year period. Members expressed their hopes that this or similar funding would be made available by the Government again in the future.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer to reflect in the Capital Programme the grant funding in 2025/26 and to include the 2026/27 and 2027/28 funding in the Medium-Term Financial Plan for the Warm Homes Local Grant (WHLG) (as shown below).**

Year 1 2025/26	Year 2 2026/27	Year 3 2027/28
£63,576.92	£261,000	£252,300

RESOLVED that

- 2) **authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity to administer the funding received in the**

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WHLG in line with the grant conditions and any alterations to the delivery programme.

6. HOUSING REGULATOR TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES

The Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services presented a report on the subject of the Housing Regulator Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

Members were informed that the Housing Regulator had introduced 22 tenant satisfaction measures in 2023. These measures were designed to help regulate the performance of housing providers, including Redditch Borough Council. The Council had monitored the authority's performance in accordance with these measures in 2023/24 and 2024/25 and the data for both years had been included in the report for Members' consideration.

There were two key elements in the report that were highlighted for the Executive Committee's attention:

- The Tenant Perception Survey results for the two years, which highlighted that there had been improvements to performance in most areas. A change had been made to the survey in 2024/25, compared to the previous year, through the inclusion of free text comment sections to enable the Council to assess the reasons for particular responses to certain questions. In considering the results for this section, Members were asked to note that the Repairs and Maintenance team had recruited a number of new team members and invested in modernising technical equipment during this period.
- The Council's responsibilities as a landlord and how the authority was performing compared to other providers. The Council was performing well in many areas although improvements still needed to be made in Repairs and Maintenance.

Officers were in the process of developing an improvement plan and this was at an interim stage by the date of the meeting. A response from the Housing Regulator to the latest inspection of the Council was due to be announced publicly in July 2025 and a report would subsequently be presented on the outcomes of this process for the Executive Committee's consideration in September 2025.

Members subsequently discussed the report in detail and in doing so commented on the following areas:

- The hard work of officers to try to improve performance and the need for further work to be undertaken.

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- The 100 per cent compliance with key requirements that had been reported for important areas such as gas safety checks.
- The positive intentions amongst officers and Members to make further improvements, as demonstrated by the interim improvement plan.
- The value of introducing a panel of local housing tenants to scrutinise housing performance. Members commented that this development would be welcome and the panel could act as the tenants' voice.
- The action that was being taken to modernise housing services, including through investment in digital services.
- The introduction of new teams to help address issues that impacted on tenants, including a new Damp and Mould team.
- The sites visited by Members during recent ward walks with officers and the opportunities that this provided to Members to engage with residents directly, including with regard to any housing issues that tenants might be experiencing.
- The need for the Council to communicate effectively the work of officers in relation to improving the performance of Housing Services.
- The information included in the report that revealed how the Council's performance compared to median performance levels and the need for the authority to be as ambitious as possible, in terms of aiming to perform at a level exceeding this. Officers clarified that the data for the median performance levels had been included to enable Members to compare the Council's performance to average performance levels in the sector. However, Members were assured that the Council was striving for excellence.
- The levels of requests for support received by Members from tenants relating to housing matters. Members commented that this tended to occur where officers did not communicate effectively with tenants and this needed to continue to be addressed moving forward.
- The data that had been reported in respect of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and the extent to which this data was accurate. The Committee was informed that Officers had identified this as a matter that required further investigation as it was recognised that this might not be accurate.
- The frequency with which Officers had previously reported on the Council's performance in respect of the Housing Regulator's tenant satisfaction measures. Members were informed that this had been identified as a gap in reporting procedures and for this reason officers were proposing to report to the Executive Committee on a quarterly basis in future.

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- The opportunities that would be provided for tenants to submit expressions of interest to participate in future panels that would represent the voice of housing tenants.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the Council's 2024/25 Tenant Satisfaction Measures and the Housing Interim Improvement Plan be approved; and**
- 2) **a quarterly update on the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (Landlord) and progress against the Housing Improvement Plan be reported in future to the Executive Committee.**

7. SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

The Chair of the Shareholders Committee in 2024/25, Councillor Sharon Harvey, presented the Committee's Annual Report for the 2024/25 municipal year.

Members were advised that the Shareholders Committee had held formal meetings during the year focusing on the work of the Council's company, Rubicon Leisure Limited. The Committee did not have decision making powers in respect of operational matters, which were the domain of the Rubicon Board. However, there were various matters reserved for the Committee to determine in the articles of the company. This included agreement of the annual business plan which had occurred during the year. In addition, quarterly performance and budget monitoring reports relating to Rubicon Leisure Limited had been presented.

The Committee had welcomed a number of developments, including the introduction of enhanced food and beverage offers across a number of sites managed by the company. There remained room for improvement and the Committee would continue to work hard to monitor the performance of the company. During the year, members of the Shareholders Committee had also had an opportunity to meet informally with members of Rubicon Board. The Committee had welcomed this opportunity.

Following the presentation of the report, Members commented on the important role of Rubicon Leisure Limited in managing the Council's leisure facilities and delivering leisure and cultural activities on behalf of the Council. There was the potential for Rubicon Leisure Limited to help address health inequalities within the Borough and the suggestion was made that the Managing Director of Rubicon Leisure Limited should be asked to approach the Public Health team at Worcestershire County Council to discuss this matter further. The Chief Executive undertook to raise this with

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the Managing Director of Rubicon Leisure Limited at a forthcoming meeting.

Reference was made to the Council's plans to recruit a bid writer to work for the authority who could apply for grant funding. The suggestion was made that this officer, once in post, could also assist Rubicon Leisure Limited in terms of submitting bids for funding. Members commented that there might be opportunities for the company to access additional funding that the Council was not eligible to receive.

Consideration was given to the work of Rubicon Leisure Limited and Members commented that this needed to correspond with the vision and priorities of the Council. It was suggested that this was something that the Shareholders Committee could monitor, including during consideration of the annual business plan for 2026/27 when this was submitted later in the municipal year.

Finally, in considering the report, Members noted that there was a typographical error in the report, which referred to the membership of the Shareholders Committee in 2024/25 having been appointed in June 2025. Members commented that this should have referred to "June 2024".

RECOMMENDED that

subject to the amendment detailed in the preamble above, the Shareholders Committee Annual Report 2024/25 be noted.

8. APPOINTMENTS TO THE SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE

The Principal Democratic Services Officer presented a report relating to arrangements for the appointment of Members to serve on the Shareholders Committee in the 2025/26 municipal year.

Members were advised that as the Shareholders Committee was a sub-committee of the Executive Committee only Executive Committee members could be appointed to the Shareholders Committee. In line with the terms of reference for the Committee, the leader of the opposition political group at the Council would continue to be invited to attend meetings of the Shareholders Committee to participate in the debate, although as he was not a Member of the Committee he would not have the power to vote at these meetings. Other elected Members were welcome to attend meetings of the Shareholders Committee to observe proceedings but could only participate in the debate at the discretion of the Chair.

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The following Members were nominated to serve on the Shareholders Committee in 2025/26:

- Councillor Juliet Barker Smith
- Councillor Bill Hartnett
- Councillor Sharon Harvey
- Councillor Jane Spilsbury
- Councillor Ian Woodall

RESOLVED that

- 3) The following Councillors be appointed to serve on the Shareholders Committee during the 2025/26 municipal year:**

- **Councillor Juliet Barker Smith**
- **Councillor Bill Hartnett**
- **Councillor Sharon Harvey**
- **Councillor Jane Spilsbury**
- **Councillor Ian Woodall**

- 4) Councillor Sharon Harvey be appointed as the Chair of the Shareholders Committee in the 2025/26 municipal year; and**

- 5) Councillor Ian Woodall be appointed as the Vice Chair of the Shareholders Committee in the 2025/26 municipal year.**

9. HOUSING OMBUDSMAN SELF-ASSESSMENT COMPLAINT HANDLING CODE

The Strategic Housing and Business Support Manager presented the Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment Complaint Handling Code for Members' consideration.

The Executive Committee was informed that there was a requirement for the Council, as a social housing provider, to adopt the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code. There was a further requirement for the Council to undertake a self-assessment in line with the code. Following the latest self-assessment, Officers had identified that there was a need to provide greater clarity with regard to Stage 2 complaints, particularly with regard to which would not be accepted as complaints at this stage. The report provided an opportunity to update the code and Members were being invited to consider this change.

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There was a need for tenants to be informed about and to understand the Council's approach to handling complaints. Officers were anticipating that the introduction of a panel of tenants, acting as a voice for tenants, would help the Council to promote the process more effectively.

The Council had responded to 62 per cent of complaints in line with target timescales in the first part of the year. This compared to a median response rate nationally of 80 per cent. Officers recognised that there was a need for improvement in this context.

The Housing Ombudsman regarded complaints as providing an opportunity for social housing providers to learn and were keen for organisations to have a culture that was positive about learning from complaints. To address this, work would be undertaken with relevant service managers in cases where complaints occurred.

Any tenant could make a report to the Housing Ombudsman. In addition, the Housing Ombudsman could choose to investigate complaints. In the period covered by the report, the Housing Ombudsman had investigated three cases relating to tenants of houses managed by Redditch Borough Council.

Members welcomed the report and in doing so commented that complaints had been one of the lowest scoring areas for the Council in terms of tenant satisfaction measures. It was noted that the Council did make mistakes and there was a need for honesty and transparency in terms of recognising these mistakes and responding appropriately.

The Committee noted that the action required in learning lessons from complaints would vary. The suggestion was made that it would be helpful if in future the report could distinguish between complaints that were made that involved external contractors and complaints that related to Council staff, although it was recognised that it would not be appropriate to include specific details about particular cases. This information would help Members to assess whether there were greater needs for staff training or contract management issues that needed to be addressed.

The length of the complaint handling code was discussed by the Committee. Members noted that this was relatively lengthy and the suggestion was made that this could be confusing or frustrating for some tenants. Whilst recognising the need for detail, questions were raised about the potential for a shorter flow chart guide to be produced for ease of reference. The Committee was advised that Officers would aim to work with the new tenants' panel to review the code and to ensure that the content and layout met the needs of tenants.

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Questions were also raised about the potential to provide copies of the code in alternative languages to tenants for whom English was not their first language. Officers confirmed that options were available to provide copies to tenants on request in alternative languages.

Reference was made to the 55 per cent of learning outcomes that were recorded between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025 where the complaints were partially or fully upheld. Members suggested that this indicated that there was a cultural issue and it was anticipated that scrutiny by a panel of tenants would help to address this in future.

RESOLVED that

- 6) the Housing Complaint Self-Assessment be approved;**
- 7) the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2024-25 be approved;**
- 8) the Housing Complaints Standard be approved and;**

RESOLVED to NOTE that

- 9) the reports referred to at resolutions 1 to 3 above, would be published to the Council's website.**

10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members were advised that there were no outstanding recommendations arising from the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 12th May 2025.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 12th May 2025 be noted.

11. MINUTES / REFERRALS - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, EXECUTIVE PANELS ETC.

There were no referrals from either the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the Executive Advisory Panels on this occasion.

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12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that:

Under S100 A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matters on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 of the said act, as amended.

Minute Item No. 13 – Promoting Independent Living Service

13. PROMOTING INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICE

The Strategic Housing and Business Support Manager presented a report on the subject of the Promoting Independent Living (PIL) Service.

A report had been presented on the subject of this service for the consideration of the Executive Committee in July 2024. Following consideration of that report, a decision had been taken to extend the contract with the existing service provider for a further 12 months.

Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) funding was distributed through the work of the PIL service. This funding could be allocated to providing adaptations to properties designed to enable people with physical disabilities and mobility difficulties to live in their homes independently.

Members commented on the importance of DFG funding to enabling some of the most vulnerable residents to continue to live independently.

RESOLVED that

10) The report be noted;

11) Officers to work towards ensuring the continuation of the Promoting Independent Living Service.

(During consideration of this item, Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to move to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed which related to

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the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matters arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.)

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 7.52 pm

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Executive Committee

10/06/2025

Warm Homes Grant Funding and resources

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jen Snape
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Judith Wills
Report Author	Job Title: Climate Change Manager Contact email: matthew.eccles@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 07816112073
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Green, Clean & Safe Redditch
Non - Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that: -

- 1) Authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer to reflect in the Capital Programme the grant funding in 2025/26 and to include the 2026/27 and 2027/28 funding into the Medium-Term Financial Plan for the Warm Homes Local Grant (WHLG) (as shown below).**

Year 1 2025/26	Year 2 2026/27	Year 3 2027/28
£63,576.92	£261,000	£252,300

The Executive Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

- 2) Authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity to administer the funding received in the WHLG in line with the grant conditions and any alterations to the delivery programme.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Warm Homes: Local Grant scheme, was launched in April 2025, aims to provide energy performance upgrades and low carbon heating to low-income households in England. The scheme targets homes with

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an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating between D and G that are privately owned. Social housing is not eligible, however, separate funding from the Government is being made available for this tenure. Local authorities will deliver measures such as insulation, solar panels, and air source heat pumps, tailored to individual homes. Occupants on a low income will not contribute to the cost of these upgrades.

- 2.2 The Warm Homes Local Grant (WHLG) provides an opportunity for Redditch Borough Council to directly address fuel poverty and improve the energy efficiency of homes within the Borough. By retrofitting homes with energy-saving measures, Redditch Borough Council can work towards achieving the authority's climate goals, enhance the well-being of residents, and create employment in the green sector.
- 2.3 This programme is a key component of the Government's broader strategy to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2050 and ensure that all homes meet minimum energy efficiency standards by 2030.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 Officers are proposing that the initial project delivery will focus on the Woodrow area, which features a mix of tenures and allows for a collaborative approach with Redditch Borough Council Housing Service using both WHLG and the separate Warm Homes Social Housing Fund (WHSHF).
- 3.2 The eligibility for the WHLG scheme is below
- IMD:ID Eligible Postcodes: Households located in postcodes that fall within the most deprived 25% according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) are eligible. These households are classified as auto eligible; or
 - Households with a gross income below £36,000 per year or a net income of £20,000 or less after housing costs or households must be classified as low-income, which can be demonstrated by receiving specific means-tested benefits and;
 - Properties must have an EPC rating between D and G.
- 3.3 Act on Energy have been selected by the Midlands Net Zero Hub (MNZH) to provide the customer engagement in our area and Officers will work in partnership with them to leverage their expertise in engaging residents and encourage applications for the programme through the owner-occupier part of the programme to ensure residents are engaged.

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- 3.4 Officers will undertake a joint exercise with Housing Services to employ a qualified and experienced Retrofit Assessor and Coordinator. The Council will also go out to procure a qualified and experienced PAS 2035 retrofit installer/contractor to undertake the retrofit works. This will include a clear specification for the retrofit measures to be delivered, emphasising quality and value for money, as well as experience of working across multiple grant schemes.
- 3.5 Officers will be required to supply monthly progress and financial reports to MNZH the consortium lead, on the progress, to ensure transparency and alignment with the overall programme goals.
- 3.6 Based on an average cost per home of £15,000, the WHLG funding can be utilised to retrofit approximately 38 homes (£576,876.92 / £15,000 per home)

The potential number of homes that can be retrofitted in each year based on the funding allocation for each year is:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
4	17	16

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 MNZH have advised the funding allocation is £576,876.92 (including £57,687.69 for administrative and ancillary costs) over 3 years
- 4.2 The funding is split into the following amounts per year

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
£63,576.92	£261,000	£252,300

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council will need to agree and sign the grant agreement form to receive the funding. It is proposed that this should be delegated to Officers to complete on behalf of the Council.
- 5.2 The Council will need to enter into contracts with qualified retrofit installers and service providers to ensure compliance with PAS 2035 standards. This will need to be delivered in line with the Council's procurement process.

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6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 There are no expected implications for local government reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The Warm Homes Local Grant (WHLG) project directly aligns with the Council priority of Green, Clean and Safe Redditch and Housing and Community. By improving the energy efficiency of homes and reducing carbon emissions, the project contributes to creating a clean and green environment. Additionally, addressing fuel poverty and enhancing resident well-being supports sustainable development and improves the overall quality of life for the community. This initiative also fosters economic growth through job creation in the green sector and promotes the council's commitment to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions by 2040.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 Residential energy consumption is a significant contributor to carbon emissions. Improving home energy efficiency is crucial to achieving net-zero goals.
- 6.4 Enhanced home energy efficiency can lead to improved health outcomes for residents by reducing exposure to cold and damp conditions.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 The WHLG program targets households most affected by high energy costs, helping to alleviate fuel poverty and its associated health and social inequalities.
- 6.5 The programme will ensure that all eligible residents, regardless of background, have access to the benefits of the retrofit measures.

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7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 Identified Risks and Mitigation Strategies:

1. Lack of Resident Participation:

- Risk: Insufficient resident engagement may lead to low participation in the WHLG program.
- Mitigation: Develop and implement a comprehensive engagement strategy, including outreach and education efforts, to encourage resident participation. Utilise partnerships with community groups and Act on Energy to increase awareness and involvement.

2. Challenges in Finding Qualified Contractors:

- Risk: Difficulty in securing suitably qualified and experienced contractors to undertake retrofit works.
- Mitigation: Conduct a robust procurement process to secure experienced PAS 2035 retrofit installers/contractors. Establish a reserve list of qualified professionals to ensure project continuity.

3. Supply Chain Issues for Retrofit Materials:

- Risk: Disruptions in the supply chain may lead to delays in obtaining necessary materials for retrofit works.
- Mitigation: Monitor supply chain trends and establish contingency plans for securing retrofit materials. Engage with multiple suppliers to diversify sources and minimize risk.

4. Overspending or Financial Mismanagement:

- Risk: The project may exceed its budget or face financial mismanagement.
- Mitigation: Implement strict financial monitoring and reporting processes. Submit regular financial reports to MNZH to ensure adherence to the budget and transparency.

5. Delays in Project Delivery:

- Risk: The project may face delays in implementation, affecting timelines and outcomes.
- Mitigation: Develop a detailed project timeline with built-in contingencies to address potential delays. Maintain regular communication with contractors and stakeholders to ensure timely progress.

6. Negative Publicity or Community Dissatisfaction:

- Risk: Issues during the project may lead to negative publicity or community dissatisfaction.

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- Mitigation: Maintain transparent communication with the community throughout the project. Address any concerns or feedback promptly and effectively to build trust and support.

7. Poor Quality Work Being Delivered:

- Risk: The quality of retrofit works may not meet required standards, leading to dissatisfaction and potential rework.
- Mitigation: Conduct regular quality checks and inspections throughout the retrofit process. Ensure contractors adhere to PAS 2035 standards and address any issues promptly.

8. Complexity of Working Across Two Grant Funding Streams:

- Risk: Managing both the WHLG and WHSHF funding streams may lead to administrative complexities and potential overlaps.
- Mitigation: Establish clear guidelines and protocols for managing both funding streams. Ensure coordination and communication between teams to streamline processes.

9. Misunderstanding of Eligibility Requirements by Residents:

- Risk: Residents may misunderstand the eligibility requirements for the WHLG program.
- Mitigation: Provide clear and accessible information to residents about eligibility requirements. Offer assistance through community engagement events and support from Act on Energy.

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jen Snape	May 2025
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Judith Wills	19/05/2025
Financial Services	Bob Watson	19/05/2025
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor - Governance	21/05/2025

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Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matthew Eccles, Climate Change Manager	19/05/2025
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Executive Committee
2025

10th June

Shareholders Committee Annual Report 2024/25

Relevant Lead Member		Councillor Sharon Harvey
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services
Report Author Jess Bayley-Hill	Job Title: Principal Democratic Services Officer Contact email: jess.bayley-hill@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: (01527) 64252 Ext: 3072	
Wards Affected		No specific ward relevance
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		Sustainability
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to consider the content of the Shareholders Committee's Annual Report 2024/25 and, subject to any changes, to RECOMMEND to Council that the report be noted.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Shareholders Committee is required to produce an annual update to Council on the performance of Rubicon Leisure Limited.
- 2.2 The appendix to this report contains the Shareholders Committee's Annual Report for 2024/25.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The Shareholders Committee forms a key part of the governance structure for the Council's company; Rubicon Leisure Limited.
- 3.2 Arrangements for the operation of the Shareholders Committee were reviewed and reported for Members' consideration at the Annual Council meeting held in May 2024.
- 3.3 As a result of this review, a requirement was introduced, in the terms of reference for the Shareholders Committee, directing the Committee to report to Full Council annually on the performance of the trading activities of Rubicon Leisure Limited.

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- 3.4 As this change to the terms of reference for the Committee was introduced in May 2024, this is the first time that an Annual Report has been produced on behalf of the Shareholders Committee.
- 3.5 The report is being presented for the consideration of the Executive Committee prior to Council because the Shareholders Committee is a sub-committee of the Executive Committee.
- 3.6 Subject to any amendments that Members may request to the content of the Shareholders Committee's Annual Report, the Executive Committee is invited to consider referring the report to Council for consideration. Members are asked to note that the Chair of the Shareholders Committee will be required to present the report for the consideration of Council.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no specific legal implications.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 There are no specific implications in respect of Local Government Reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The report supports the Council priority of sustainability.
- 6.3 The purpose of the Shareholders Committee is to fulfil all duties that are reserved to Redditch Borough Council as shareholder in Rubicon Leisure Limited. The Annual Report helps to demonstrate how the Committee is fulfilling this role as well as the Committee's conclusions in respect of the performance of Rubicon Leisure Limited.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.4 There are no specific climate change implications.

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Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.5 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There is a risk that if the Annual Report is not approved by the Executive Committee and referred to Council, Members will not have the assurance that Rubicon Leisure Limited is performing satisfactorily. In addition, Council will not receive confirmation as to whether the Shareholders Committee is performing its duties effectively.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Shareholders Committee Annual Report 2024/25

Background Papers

Committee Terms of Reference – Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

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Redditch Borough Council
Shareholders Committee
Annual Report
2024 – 2025

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Chair's Foreword

As Chair of the Shareholders Committee, I am pleased to be able to introduce this report which details the performance and impact of services which are managed under the Rubicon umbrella.

The Rubicon remit is wide ranging - from sports facilities at the Abbey Stadium and Pitcheroak Golf Course to heritage at our beautiful Forge Mill and culture at the Palace Theatre. These are prized and valued assets which we must be proud to support and uphold.

It is essential that Redditch Borough Council continues to invest in the physical infrastructure and scrutinises the financial details of Rubicon.

This is not simply about profitability and popularity, although we can see both of these rising. These assets are essential for residents, promoting health, wellbeing and a sense of pride in our town. We must ensure that we safeguard these for all of our futures.

There is still progress to make, but we can observe a clear upwards trajectory, of which we should be supportive and celebratory.

I would like to make a personal statement of gratitude towards all of the Rubicon staff - both paid and voluntary - who are contributing every day towards the success and viability of Rubicon.



Councillor Sharon Harvey
Chair, Shareholders Committee
Redditch Borough Council

Introduction

The annual report outlines the work undertaken by Redditch Borough Council's Shareholders Committee in the 2024 – 2025 municipal year. This is the first annual report to have been prepared on behalf of the Shareholders Committee, as this was a new requirement introduced at the Annual Council meeting in May 2024.

The Shareholders Committee is an integral part of the governance arrangements for the Council's company; Rubicon Leisure Limited, which was established in 2018. Rubicon Leisure Limited manages many of the Council's leisure and cultural assets on behalf of the authority, including the Abbey Stadium, the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre, Forge Mill Needle Museum and Pitcheroak Golf Course.

Currently, Rubicon Leisure Limited is the Council's only company. The role of the Shareholders Committee is distinct from the role of the Rubicon Board. The Rubicon Board, comprising Executive and Non-Executive Directors, is responsible for running the business and the proper delivery of services. There are officers at the Council responsible for managing the client side of the business, who monitor the service contract. The Shareholders Committee holds the Board to account and is responsible for a number of reserved matters, detailed in the articles of the company. A diagram relating to the governance structure for Rubicon Leisure Limited can be viewed at Appendix 1 to the report.

Matters reserved to the Shareholders Committee include:

- Approval of the company's annual Business Plan
- Approval of the appointment, remuneration and dismissal of the Managing Director of the company
- Approval of the appointment or dismissal of Directors on the Board
- Approval of above inflation pay increases and any other remuneration packages
- Approval of litigation defences or claims for the company
- Approval of the appointment of bankers and auditors for the company

The Shareholders Committee is a Sub-Committee of the Executive Committee. Any recommendations arising from meetings of the Shareholders Committee, that are not within the remit of the Committee to determine or do not relate to reserved matters, should be presented for the consideration of the Executive Committee.

Whilst a lot of the reports that are considered at meetings of this Committee contain exempt information, relating to the financial and business affairs of the company, the content of this report is public.

Membership

The Members of the Shareholders Committee are all Members of the Executive Committee. In 2024/25, the membership of the Committee was as follows:



**Councillor Sharon
Harvey (Chair)**



**Councillor Bill Hartnett
(Vice-Chair)**



**Councillor Joe
Baker (Until
April 2025)**



**Councillor Jen
Snape**



**Councillor Ian
Woodall**

Review of the Shareholders Committee – May 2024

In May 2024, the Committee terms of reference for the Shareholders Committee were reviewed. This review took place in a context in which the Shareholders Committee had been in existence for six years and it was felt to be appropriate to assess whether meetings were being conducted in accordance with best practice.

Following the review, Officers identified that the Shareholders Committee should ideally be a Sub-Committee of the Executive Committee, rather than of Council and should not form part of the political balance. Group Leaders were consulted and agreed that the Committee should be updated to become a sub-committee of the Executive Committee.

At the same time, the terms of reference for the Shareholders Committee were reviewed and updated. Amendments to the terms of reference included the introduction of a new requirement for the Shareholders Committee to prepare an Annual Report detailing the Committee's activities during the municipal year.

The changes to the structure and terms of reference for the Shareholders Committee were approved by Members at the Annual Council meeting held in May 2024.

Members of the Committee

As the Shareholders Committee is a Sub-Committee of the Executive Committee, all Members of the Committee must also be members of the Executive. The Executive Committee determined nominations to the Shareholders Committee at a meeting of the Executive Committee held in June 2025.

Whilst only Executive Committee members can be appointed to a sub-committee of the Executive, it has been recognised that the work of the Shareholders Committee will be of interest to all Members. Consequently, group leaders are invited to attend meetings of the Shareholders Committee to participate in the debate, although any group leader who is not also a member of the Shareholders Committee cannot take part in the vote. In addition, all Redditch Borough Councillors are entitled to attend meetings of the Committee to observe the proceedings, although they can only contribute to the debate at the discretion of the Chair.

Prior to the first meeting of the Shareholders Committee in the 2024/25 financial year, held in August 2024, training was provided to Members to help clarify their roles and responsibilities on this Committee.

Meetings of the Committee in 2024/25

Meetings of the Shareholders Committee were scheduled to take place in August, December, February and April.

At every meeting of the Committee, there were a number of standard items of business that were considered by Members. This included:

- Quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports, which detailed the performance of Rubicon Leisure Limited during the previous quarter of the Financial Year. These performance reports highlighted performance in relation to the range of services and activities provided by Rubicon Leisure Limited across the different leisure venues. Members welcomed positive feedback on improving performance, including in respect of increasing numbers of customers using services managed by the company.
- Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports, which provided updates to Members on the financial performance of the company, including of specific venues managed by the company. These reports also highlighted any budget pressures as they emerged. The Committee welcomed the positive trajectory of the financial performance of the company compared to previous years.
- Updates on Council support to Rubicon Leisure Limited were provided for Members' consideration at every meeting of the Committee. As Rubicon Leisure Limited is a Council company, the authority continues to provide some support services to Rubicon Leisure Limited through Service Level Agreements (SLAs). The Council is also a source of finance, including capital finance, to the company to enable it to grow and expand its offering and information relating to this support was highlighted for the Committee's consideration.

In line with the reserved matters for the Committee, Members considered and approved the company's annual Business Plan in February 2025. This business plan, which detailed the targets and aspirations for the company in 2025/26, was presented at an earlier date in the municipal year for the Committee's consideration than in previous years.

An annual budget report, detailing the company's budgetary plans for 2025/26, was also considered and approved at the meeting of the Committee held in February 2025. Again, this report, which outlined key budget aspirations, targets and pressures, was presented for the Committee's consideration at an earlier stage than in previous years.

No recommendations were made by the Shareholders Committee to the Executive Committee in 2024/25.

Informal Meetings of the Shareholders Committee with Rubicon Board

In previous years, members of the Shareholders Committee have highlighted a desire to meet with members of the Rubicon Board. Whilst these meetings have no formal status and decisions could not be taken at these meetings, Members felt that they would be helpful in order to develop a better understanding of each other's roles, responsibilities and respective aspirations for Rubicon Leisure Limited.

There had been a few informal meetings between members of the Shareholders Committee and Rubicon Board held in previous years, although these had been organised on an ad hoc basis. In 2024/25, informal meetings were scheduled to

take place close to the dates of the Shareholders Committee meetings, which was welcomed by Members.

The Shareholders Committee would like to thank members of the Rubicon Board for taking the time to attend these informal meetings. It is hoped that these informal meetings will continue in future years.

Looking to the Future

The Shareholders Committee has received a lot of positive feedback regarding the performance and financial management of Rubicon Leisure Limited during the 2024/25 municipal year. However, the Committee is not complacent and recognises that there is a need for Members to keep scrutinising the work of the company and to hold the Board to account for decisions that are taken. At a time when local authority budgets are challenging, this prudence remains important and will continue in 2025/26.

This report has been produced in a context in which significant changes are anticipated to local government as part of imminent Local Government Reorganisation in two-tier authority areas such as Worcestershire. Whichever Unitary Authority model is introduced in Worcestershire, Rubicon Leisure Limited will not be the only Council company in the county to be impacted by these changes. Consideration will therefore need to be given to the governance structure(s) for local authority companies that will be implemented as part of the move to Unitary Authority status.

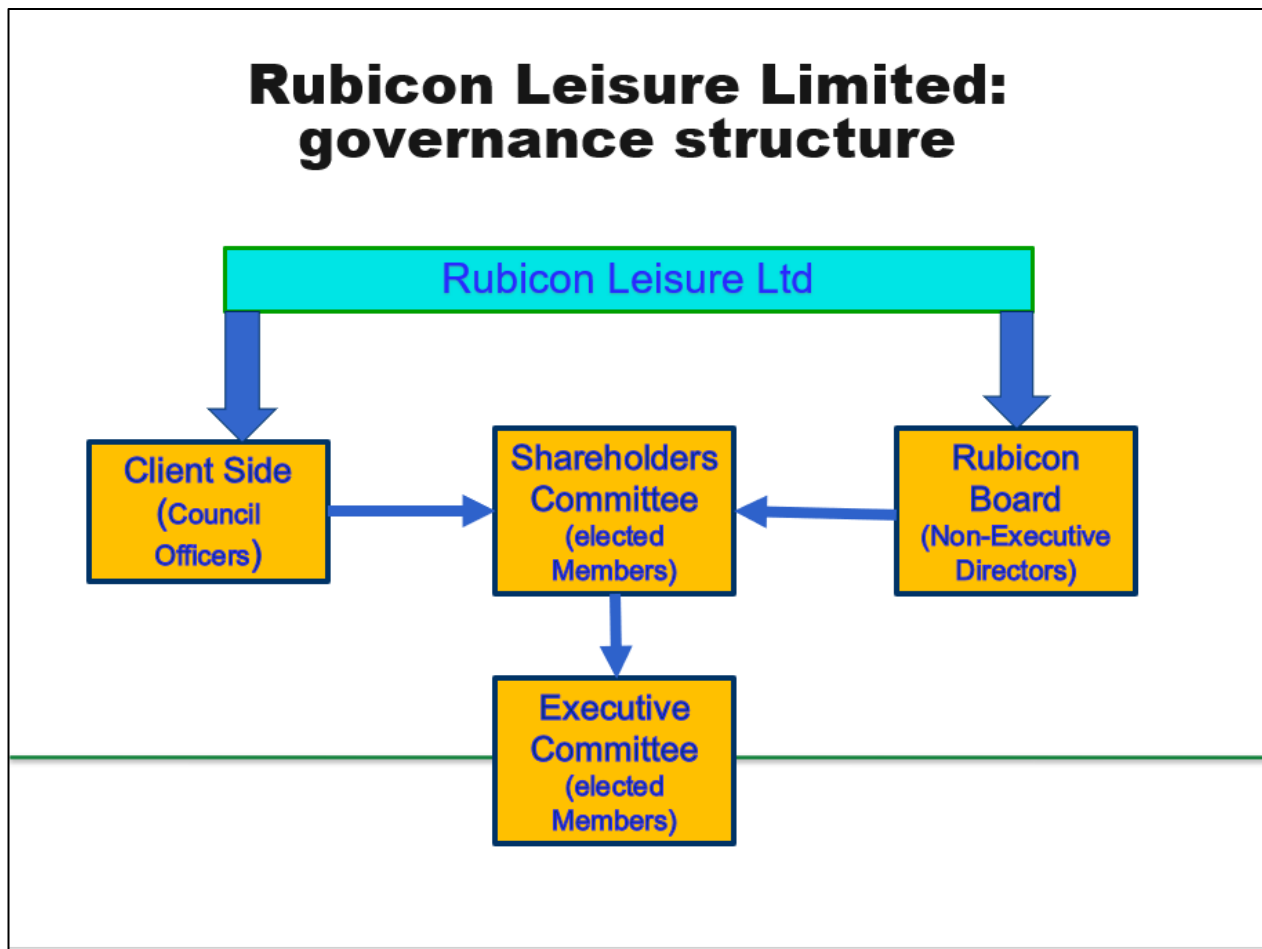
Conclusion

This is the first annual report from the Shareholders Committee, which has been produced during a year in which considerable changes have been made to the governance structure and operating arrangements for the Committee.

Members have welcomed positive updates on the performance of the services delivered by the company. The Committee is keen for this positive trajectory to continue, to the benefit of local residents who use the leisure and cultural services provided by Rubicon Leisure Limited.

However, there are challenges on the horizon and the Committee will need to remain mindful of these and to maintain vigilance in reviewing the work of the company to ensure that services continue to best meet the needs of customers.

Appendix 1 – Governance Structure



Appendix 2 – Expressions of Gratitude

The Shareholders Committee would like to thank all the members of the Rubicon Board for attending informal meetings with Committee members during the year.

The Shareholders Committee would also like to thank the following people who have either attended meetings or provided support in alternative ways to the Committee during the year:

- Peter Carpenter – Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer
- Ben Clawson-Chan – Managing Director, Rubicon Leisure Limited
- Nicola Cummings – Principal Solicitor – Governance
- Claire Felton – Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services
- Claire Green – Principal Solicitor (Contracts, Commercial and Procurement)