



Executive Committee

Tue 17 Mar
2026
6.30 pm

Oakenshaw Community Centre
Castleditch Lane
B98 7YB

If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact
Eve Davies

Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH
Tel: (01527) 64252 (Ext. 3397)
e.mail: eve.davies@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

GUIDANCE ON FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS

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.

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:	Sharon Harvey (Chair)	Bill Hartnett Jen Snape
	Jane Spilsbury (Vice-Chair)	Monica Stringfellow Ian Woodall
	Juliet Barker Smith	
	Juma Begum	

1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. Minutes (Pages 7 - 12)

4. Leader's Announcements

5. Inclusive Play Policy Statement (Pages 13 - 70)

6. Empty Homes Strategy (Pages 71 - 96)

7. Climate Change Strategy 2026 to 2031 (Pages 97 - 148)

8. Quarter 3 2025/26 Performance Monitoring Report (Pages 149 - 158)

9. Permission to Revoke the First Homes Policy (Pages 159 - 164)

10. Shared Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2026-2029 (Pages 165 - 212)

11. Renters Right Act 2025 (Pages 213 - 226)

12. Introduction of Enforcement of littering from Vehicles (Pages 227 - 236)

13. Revision of Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy (Pages 237 - 260)

14. Pride in Place Programme Governance Model (Pages 261 - 270)

15. Redditch Council Plan Update Report (Pages 271 - 304)

16. Quarter 3 2025/26 Finance Monitoring Report (Pages 305 - 342)

17. Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Pages 343 - 356)

18. Minutes / Referrals - Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc.

To receive and consider any outstanding minutes or referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc. since the last meeting of the Executive Committee, other than as detailed in the items above.

19. To consider any urgent business, details of which have been notified to the Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting

20. Exclusion of the press and public

Should it be necessary, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, during the course of the meeting to consider excluding the public from the meeting on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged, it may be necessary to move the following resolution:

“That, under S.100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter(s) on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs (to be specified) of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act”.

These paragraphs are as follows:

Subject to the “public interest” test, information relating to:

- Para 1 – any individual;
- Para 2 – the identity of any individual;
- Para 3 – financial or business affairs;
- Para 4 – labour relations matters;

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- Para 5 – legal professional privilege;
- Para 6 – a notice, order or direction;
- Para 7 – the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime;
and may need to be considered as 'exempt'.

21. Grants to Voluntary Bodies Awarding of Grants (Pages 357 - 378)

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MINUTES

Present:

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

Also Present:

Councillors James Fardoe, Andrew Fry, Joanna Kane and David Munro

Officers:

Claire Felton, Debra Goodall, John Leach, Julie Lorraine and Guy Revans

Democratic Services Officers:

Jess Bayley-Hill and Eve Davies

97. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Jen Snape.

98. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

99. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader asked Members to note that there were a number of agenda packs for the meeting, the contents of which were clarified.

100. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

The minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 23rd February 2026 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

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101. COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTIONS 2026/27

The Interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer presented the Council Tax Resolutions 2026/27 report.

In doing so, the Committee was informed that Worcestershire County Council had agreed its Council Tax precept, thereby enabling Members to exercise their duty and vote on the Borough's Council Tax for 2026/27.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The calculation for the council tax requirement for the council's own purposes for 2026/27 (excluding parish precepts) as £7,571,719.791.2.2.
- 2) The following amounts be calculated for the year 2026/27 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - a) £64,256,433.00 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in section 31A(2) of the Act (taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils)(i.e., gross expenditure).
 - b) £56,618,713.21 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in section 31A(3) of the Act. (i,e gross income).
 - c) £7,637,719.79 being the amount by which the aggregate of 1.2.2(a) above exceeds the aggregate of 1.2.2(b) above, calculated by the council, in accordance with section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in section 31B of the Act).
 - d) £288.43 being the amount at 1.2.2(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1.1(a) above), calculated by the council, in accordance with section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (including parish precepts).
 - e) £66,000 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Feckenham Parish precept) referred to in section 34(1) of the Act.

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- f) £285.94 being the amount at 1.2.2(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 1.2.2(e) above by Item T (1.1 (a) above), calculated by the council, in accordance with section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no parish precept relates.
- g) £459.26 being the amount given by adding to the amount at 1.2.2(f) the amount for the special item relating to the parish of Feckenham 1.2.2(e), divided by the amount in 1.1(b) above.
- h) The amounts shown below given by multiplying the amounts at 1.2.2(f) and 1.2.2(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band, divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwelling listed in band D, calculated in accordance with section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands.

Valuation Band	Proportion of Band D	Feckenham Parish Council	Parish of Feckenham Total	All other Parts of the Council Area
A	6/9ths	115.55	306.18	190.63
B	7/9ths	134.80	357.20	222.40
C	8/9ths	154.06	408.23	254.17
D	1	173.32	459.26	285.94
E	11/9ths	211.84	561.32	349.48
F	13/9ths	250.35	663.37	413.02
G	15/9ths	288.87	765.44	476.57
H	18/9ths	346.64	918.52	571.88

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- 3) It is to be noted that for the year 2026/27, Worcestershire County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia, and Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority have issued precepts to the council in accordance with section 40 of the Act for each category of dwelling in the council's area as indicated below:

	Valuation Bands							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Worcestershire County Council	1,173.87	1,369.51	1,565.16	1,760.80	2,152.09	2,543.38	2,934.67	3,521.60
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	204.33	238.39	272.44	306.50	374.61	442.72	510.83	613.00
Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority	71.48	83.39	95.31	107.22	131.05	154.87	178.70	214.44

- 4) Having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 1.2.2(h) and 1.2.3 above, that Redditch Borough Council in accordance with sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby sets the amounts shown below as the amounts of council tax for 2026/27 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

Valuation Band	Proportion of Band D	Parish of Feckenham Total	All Other Parts
A	6/9ths	1,755.86	1,640.31
B	7/9ths	2,048.49	1,913.69
C	8/9ths	2,341.14	2,187.08
D	1	2,633.78	2,460.46
E	11/9ths	3,219.07	3,007.23
F	13/9ths	3,804.34	3,553.99
G	15/9ths	4,389.64	4,100.77
H	18/9ths	5,267.56	4,920.92

- 5) The Interim Director of Finance is authorised to make payments under section 90(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the collection fund by ten equal instalments between April 2026 to March 2027 as detailed below.

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	Precept (£)	Surplus/Deficit on Collection Fund (£)	Total to Pay (£)
Worcestershire County Council	46,626,160.00	(717,283.00)	45,908,877.00
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	8,116,150.65	(129,409.42)	7,986,741.23
Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority	2,839,196.32	(45,379.87)	2,793,816.45

6) The Interim Director of Finance be authorised to make transfers under section 97 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the collection fund to the general fund the sum of £7,513,456.36 being the council's own demand on the collection fund (£7,571,719.79) and parish precepts (£66,000) and the distribution of the surplus/deficit on the collection fund (-£124,263.43).

7) The Interim Director of Finance be authorised to make payments from the general fund to Feckenham Parish Council the sums listed above (£66,000) by two equal instalments on 1st April 2026 and 1st October 2027 in respect of the precept levied on the council.

8) The above resolutions to be signed by the Chief Executive for use in legal proceedings in the Magistrates' Court for the recovery of unpaid council taxes.

9) Notices of the making of the said council taxes signed by the Chief Executive are given by advertisement in the local press under section 38(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

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

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

103. TO CONSIDER ANY URGENT BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PROCUREMENT SERVICES PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING AND WHICH THE CHAIR, BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, CONSIDERS TO BE OF SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING

There was no urgent business for discussion at the meeting.

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The Meeting commenced at 6.31 pm
and closed at 6.35 pm

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Inclusive Play Policy Statement

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Juliet Barker-Smith
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Ruth Bamford Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services
Report Author	Ishrat Karimi Fini Parks and Events Service Manager Ishrat.karimifini@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk 01527 881204
Wards Affected	Astwood Bank & Feckenham Ward and Winyates Ward (Arrow Valley Country Park) West Ward (Morton Stanley Park) Other Wards: Abbey, Astwood Bank and Feckenham, Batchley & Brockhill, Central, Church Hill, Greenlands, Headless Cross and Oakenshaw, Lodge Park, Matchborough, West and Winyates Wards.
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Yes
Relevant Council Priority	Community and Housing
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 RESOLVE that:-

- 1) the Inclusive Play Policy Statement be adopted;**
- 2) the detailed audit of play provision at Arrow Valley Country Park (against the Plan Inclusive Play Areas [PiPA] accreditation criteria/checklist) be approved;**
- 3) the proposals for Arrow Valley Country Park improvements will be implemented during 2026/27 and strategic and local sites by April 2028;**
- 4) subject to completion of resolution 3 above, authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to apply for accreditation for the Arrow Valley Country Park play area against the PiPA standard;**

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- 5) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to develop plans to make the play space in Arrow Valley Country Park a Borough wide exemplar for accessible and inclusive play;
 - 6) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Culture to commission an assessment of Morton Stanley Park against the PiPA standard, which should include establishing the viability of gaining accreditation;
 - 7) the Inclusive Play Policy Assessment and Design Checklist be approved as a tool for improving the accessibility and inclusivity of all other play areas in the Borough; and
 - 8) To NOTE that a budget bid of £300,000 in the capital programme was approved by Council in March 2026 as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2028/29 to pay for inclusive play improvements and for additional officer support.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Redditch Borough Council owns and manages 44 equipped play areas.
- 2.2 The 2023 Play Assessment showed that 91.6% of households are within a 10-15 minute walk of an equipped play area. However, access varies by ward. The wards with the high levels of deficiency, as identified through the Play Accessibility Study, are Crabbs Cross (42.1% with no access), Astwood Bank and Feckenham (27.7%) and Headless Cross and Oakenshaw (13.7%).
- 2.3 In December 2023, the Executive Committee adopted the Play Investment Strategy with a commitment to investment up to £2 million in equipped play over a 10-year period. This investment will reduce deficiencies in play provision and upgrade existing play spaces.
- 2.4 This policy responds to the legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, which places an anticipatory duty on the Council to identify and remove barriers to access for disabled people.
- 2.5 The policy has been developed through comprehensive research of national guidance from PiPA Play, Fields in Trust, Sensory Trust, Scope UK and Play England, as well as review of emerging play sufficiency frameworks in Wales and Scotland.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

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- 3.1 The policy recognises that achieving high standards of accessible and inclusive play involves real challenges. Constraints include spatial limitations, public open space pressures, maintenance budgets and the diverse needs of children with disabilities.
- 3.2 Plan Inclusive Play Areas (PiPA) is the UK's only independent accreditation system for evaluating accessible and inclusive play area design. The PiPA standard is exceptionally high. Only one play space in the West Midlands has achieved accreditation. Achieving the highest tier requires inclusive or accessible toilet provision. Currently, only Arrow Valley Country Park and Morton Stanley Park have accessible toilet provision.
- 3.3 The policy takes a pragmatic three phase approach that balances ambition with practical constraints:
- 3.4 Inclusive play will be prioritised at Arrow Valley Country Park and other strategic parks. All remaining play areas will also be reviewed to identify opportunities to enhance inclusivity within the available budget.

1: Arrow Valley Country Park – The Council will carry out an assessment against the Plan Inclusive Play Areas (PiPA) standard and use the results to inform proposals for renewal and enhancement. The Council will then seek external accreditation against this national standard. Arrow Valley Country Park will be promoted as an exemplar accessible and inclusive play space.

2: Other Strategic Parks – Learning from the Arrow Valley Country Park audit will be applied to Morton Stanley Park to establish the feasibility, viability and resources required to achieve the PiPA standard.

3: Other Play Spaces – For all other outdoor equipped play areas, the Council will seek to improve accessibility and inclusivity through use of an Inclusive Play Policy Assessment and Design Checklist. This tool will assist with achieving greater accessibility and record the impacts of planned changes at the design stage.

4. Play investment and Audit – The Council will continue to deliver improvements to play areas across the Borough in line with the priorities identified through the existing Play Audit and Investment Plan, over a 10 year period.

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- 3.5 The Council will require play companies and contractors to propose changes using the checklist that increase accessibility and inclusivity. This will form part of design briefs and tender evaluation criteria.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In December 2023, the Executive Committee adopted the Play Investment Strategy with a commitment to invest up to £2 million in equipped play over a 10-year period.
- 4.2 The Council has identified that an additional capital allocation investment of £300,000 will be required to deliver the significant contribution of the proposed improvements and supporting inclusive play priorities across the Borough as highlighted through the recent audit. This funding is essential to ensure that identified deficiencies can be addressed comprehensively and that upgraded play areas meet modern accessibility, safety, and quality standards. Without this investment, the programme would need to be significantly scaled back, risking delays or reductions in the delivery of priority improvements across the Borough.
- 4.3 The additional £300,000 will enable the Council to progress a balanced and equitable investment programme, ensuring that facilities across all wards receive the level of enhancement required. This allocation will support the design, procurement, and installation of inclusive play features, as well as associated infrastructure improvements. The funding request reflects both the rising costs of play equipment and the need to create high-quality, accessible spaces that align with the Council's commitment to inclusive and sustainable community amenities.
- 4.4 There is an opportunity for play area improvements to be considered through the Community Investment Reserve, subject to bids being submitted. This means that any potential improvements would not impact the existing capital budgets. The Community Investment Reserve totals £1.6 million, which was approved in March 2026.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council must comply with the Equality Act 2010, which includes the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149) and the Duty to Make Reasonable Adjustments (Section 20).

- 5.2 The duty is anticipatory. This means the Council must identify and remove barriers before disabled people encounter them. The Inclusive Play Policy sets out an ambition to exceed the legal minimum and to provide an exemplar play space at Arrow Valley Country Park and if viable Morton Stanley Park.
- 5.3 The policy ensures the Council meets its legal obligations by embedding inclusivity into design and management of other play spaces from the outset.
- 5.4 The policy aligns with emerging play sufficiency legislation. Wales introduced play sufficiency duties in 2010 and Scotland followed in 2023. England is expected to introduce similar requirements through the Planning and Infrastructure Bill 2025.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 The policy establishes a clear framework for inclusive play provision that can be readily adopted or adapted under any future local government reorganisation arrangements. The standards and principles are transferable regardless of governance structure. This initiative offers a helpful "springboard" towards unitarisation in setting out the ambition for any new authority to build on regarding the promotion of inclusive play.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The policy supports the Green, Clean & Safe priority. The Redditch Council Plan commits to "protect and enhance open spaces", "ensure large developments provide better green space and invest in existing open spaces", and ensure "the protection and provision of open spaces through the Local Plan". The Plan aspires to make Redditch "a green and healthy place, preserving our open spaces".
- 6.6 The policy also supports the Community & Housing priority, which includes key objectives to "provide high quality play provision" and "work with partners to improve health and wellbeing". The Plan identifies improvements to play area provision as a key project.
- 6.7 Accessible play provision removes barriers that prevent disabled children and their families from enjoying play opportunities close to home. This contributes to health, wellbeing and social inclusion.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 The policy supports the Council Plan's 'green thread' by promoting sensory-rich environments that incorporate natural materials and opportunities to interact with nature. This helps children develop environmental awareness from an early age.
- 6.6 Accessible play provision located within walking distance of homes reduces reliance on car journeys. The policy's focus on connected networks of play spaces supports active travel.
- 6.7 Play equipment procurement will continue to consider sustainable materials and suppliers with environmental accreditation where these meet the performance and safety requirements.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.8 The policy directly addresses equalities by ensuring children with disabilities can access high-quality play opportunities.
- 6.9 The policy requires co-design approaches for children with disabilities and their families for new play area projects. This ensures provision reflects lived experience rather than assumptions about needs.
- 6.10 The policy takes a family-centred approach, recognising that siblings must be able to play together and that parents and carers (who may themselves have disabilities) need good sightlines and access.
- 6.11 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken. The assessment concluded that the policy will have positive impacts for children with disabilities and their families by removing barriers to play provision. No negative impacts were identified.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The main risks and mitigating actions are:
- 7.2 Failure to provide accessible play provision would breach the Equality Act 2010. The policy mitigates this by establishing clear standards and embedding inclusivity into procurement processes.
- 7.3 Economic pressures could affect the investment programme. The policy's phased approach allows progress to continue at different rates depending on available budget. The policy recognises that existing sites may have constraints.

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- 7.4 Officers may require additional knowledge about inclusive play design. The policy addresses this by requiring play companies to demonstrate understanding of inclusive play principles and by promoting consultation with children with disabilities and their families.
- 7.5 Without clear policy, inclusive play provision may be inconsistent. The policy mitigates this by setting clear standards and requiring inclusive play to be specified in design briefs and assessed in tender evaluation.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERSAppendices

- 8.1 Appendix A Redditch Play Assessment site list (August 2024)
- 8.2 Appendix B Inclusive Play Policy Assessment and Design Checklist (December 2025)
- 8.3 Appendix C Inclusive Play Policy Statement (January 2026)
- 8.4 Appendix D Redditch Play Investment Strategy (November 2023)

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Juliet Barker-Smith	21.01.26
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Guy Revans	21.01.26
Financial Services	Julie Lorraine	8.02.26
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings/ Jess Bayley-Hill	23.02.26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green	28.01.26
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matthew Eccles	12.02.26

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Sort Order	URN	Site Name	Play Hierarchy Existing	Play Hierarchy Future (Post Investment)	Strategic Park	Toilet Provision
1	196	Arrow Valley Countryside Centre	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	Arrow Valley Country Park	Accessible WCs
2	194	Forge Mill Play Area	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	Arrow Valley Country Park	Accessible WCs
3	356	Arrow Valley Park - Ball Court	Local	Local	Arrow Valley Country Park	Accessible WCs
4	165	Batchley Gardens Play Area	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	Brockhill Park and Batchley Pool	None
5	164	Brockhill Park	Local	Local	Brockhill Park and Batchley Pool	None
6	178	Morton Stanley - Play	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	Morton Stanley Park	Accessible WCs
7	187	Morton Stanley - Skate and Risky Play	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	Morton Stanley Park	Accessible WCs
8	242	Abbeydale Playing Field	N/A	Neighbourhood		None
9	192	Astwood Bank Park Play Area	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood		None
10	184	Banners Lane	Local	Neighbourhood		None
11	171	Bengrove	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood		None
12	359	Birchfield Road Playing Field	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood		None
13	183	Cardington Close	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood		None
14	193	Feckenham Playing Fields	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood		None
15	215	Forest View / The Pleck	N/A	Neighbourhood		None
16	185	Glover Street	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood		None
17	358	Greenlands Playing Field	Local	Neighbourhood		None
18	176	Lodge Pool Drive	Local	Neighbourhood		None
19	182	Lowlands Lane	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood		None
20	168	Mayfields Park	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood		None
21	177	Sandon Close	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood		None
22	180	Springvale Road	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood		None
23	198	Britannia Close	Local	N/A		None

Sort Order	URN	Site Name	Play Hierarchy Existing	Play Hierarchy Future (Post Investment)	Strategic Park	Toilet Provision
24	354	Cleeve Close	Local	N/A		None
25	162	Dale Road	Local	N/A		None
26	200	Eathorpe Close	Local	N/A		None
27	179	Yeadon Close	Local	N/A		None
28	181	Birchfield Road ~ Rear of 417	Local	Local		None
29	189	Birchfield Road Playing Fields	Local	Local		None
30	188	Carlton Close	Local	Local		None
31	357	Dingleside Field	Local	Local		None
32	161	Dolphin Road	Local	Local		None
33	172	Hedgerows	Local	Local		None
34	170	Heronfield Close	Local	Local		None
35	173	High Trees	Local	Local		None
36	163	Kings Oak	Local	Local		None
37	201	Matchborough Rocks	Local	Local		None
38	199	Mill Hill	Local	Local		None
39	169	Northleach Close	Local	Local		None
40	175	Ravensmere Field	Local	Local		None
41	166	Rowan Crescent	Local	Local		None
42	167	Terrys Playing Fields	Local	Local		None
43	191	Throckmorton	Local	Local		None
44	190	Tredington Close	Local	Local		None

Redditch Inclusive Play Policy Design Checklist

Name of Site	
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Play Hierarchy	Local Level <input type="checkbox"/>	Neighbourhood Level. <input type="checkbox"/>
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Local level spaces will be expected to provide at least 50% inclusive play equipment

Neighbourhood level spaces will be expected to provide at least 50% inclusive play equipment

Strategic Park?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Accessible Toilet Provision - Is there accessible toilet provision on site (or nearby) within 500m?		
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Yes (on site). <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes (wider area). <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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If a Strategic Park with accessible toilet provision, also carry out a full PiPA assessment with the aim of achieving a minimum of PiPA Bronze Standard

Brief description of proposed improvements

Inclusive Play Policy Assessment

Complete the following sections, provide further comments as appropriate. The assessment should consider the 'whole' play area and its setting (not just the equipment that is being upgraded)

Universal Design -will the proposals:			
Remove or reduce barriers to access from walking routes, car parks (where provided) and public transport?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Provide firm, level surfaces suitable for wheelchairs and mobility aids	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Provide clear sightlines and intuitive navigation	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Provide equipment accessible to children with varying abilities	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Provide seating at different heights throughout the space	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Provide quiet areas for time-out alongside active zones	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Score (Count number of "Yes" responses)		-	-

Provide further comments where there are constraints that limit or prevent positive change against these criteria. (You may also consider the role of the wider green space in meeting these criteria).

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Physical Play -will the proposals:

Equipment accessible to wheelchair users including transfer platforms, ramps or ground-level access	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Activities for different physical abilities and challenge levels	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Upper and lower body activities	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment allowing children with varying mobility to play together	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Space for wheelchair manoeuvring at equipment (minimum 1.8m diameter)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Score (Count number of 'Yes' responses)		-	-

Provide further comments where there are constraints that limit or prevent positive change against these criteria. (You may also consider the role of the wider green space in meeting these criteria).

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Sensory-Rich Environments -will the proposals:

Engagement of at least three senses across the play area	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Strong colour contrast and visual interest	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Tactile elements (varied textures, materials, temperatures)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Auditory elements (sounds, musical features, quiet zones)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Natural materials for creative and sensory play	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Score (Count number of 'Yes' responses)		-	-

Provide further comments where there are constraints that limit or prevent positive change against these criteria. (You may also consider the role of the wider green space in meeting these criteria).

--

Social Play -will the proposals:

Spaces where disabled and non-disabled children can play together	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment and features accommodating children with different abilities simultaneously	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Seating at various heights integrated throughout the space	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Areas for group activities and games	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Spaces for carers and parents to supervise and participate	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Score (Count number of "Yes" responses)		-	-

Provide further comments where there are constraints that limit or prevent positive change against these criteria. (You may also consider the role of the wider green space in meeting these criteria).

--

Creative Play -will the proposals:

Loose materials (where appropriate) and natural features	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Open space for imaginative play and exploration	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Features for den-building and storytelling?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Quiet areas for contemplative play	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Score (Count number of "Yes" responses)		-	-

Provide further comments where there are constraints that limit or prevent positive change against these criteria. (You may also consider the role of the wider green space in meeting these criteria).

--

--

Provision for Neurodiversity - will the proposals:

Balance of stimulating and calming areas	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Spaces with reduced sensory input	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Clear structure and predictable layout	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Visual boundaries helping children understand the space	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Score (Count number of "Yes" responses)		-	-

Provide further comments where there are constraints that limit or prevent positive change against these criteria. (You may also consider the role of the wider green space in meeting these criteria).

--

Other Comments or Observations

Are any other changes being introduced which will make the play area more accessible or inclusive?

--

Scoring Summary

Theme	Score	Maximum Score
Universal Design		6
Physical Play Opportunities		5
Sensory Play Opportunities		5
Social Play Opportunities		5
Creative and Imaginative Play		4
Provision for Neurodiversity		4
Total Score		29

Target score – The minimum score that should be exceeded is 20 / 29. This may not be achievable in all circumstances, particularly where small scale changes are being implemented.

Note: Where the score for each theme is low (below 50%) consider what actions or changes can be made to achieve more accessible and inclusive play.

Completed by	
Date	

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Redditch Borough Council

Inclusive Play Policy Statement

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This policy sets out the Council's commitment to providing accessible and inclusive play opportunities for all children and young people. It establishes standards and principles that will guide the design, investment and improvement of play provision across the Borough. It proposes an approach to achieve accreditation against the national Plan Inclusive Play Areas (PiPA) standard for Arrow Valley Country Park and an assessment of the viability and resources required to also apply this to Morton Stanley Park. A process for incremental improvements for other play spaces is proposed with mechanisms to achieve this.

2 Definitions

The UK Play Safety Forum and Children's Play Policy Forum recommend these definitions:

*An **Accessible Play Space** is a space which is barrier-free, allows users access to move around the space and offers participation opportunities for a range of differing abilities. Not every child of every ability will be able to actively use everything within an accessible play space.*

*An **Inclusive Play Space** provides a barrier-free environment, with supporting infrastructure, which meets the wide and varying play needs of every child. Disabled children and non-disabled children will enjoy high levels of participation opportunities, equally rich in play value.*

3 Context

3.1 Legal Framework

The Council must comply with the Equality Act 2010. This includes:

- The Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149);
- The Duty to Make Reasonable Adjustments (Section 20);

- Prohibiting discrimination against nine protected characteristics, including disability (alongside age, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).

4 Vision and Aims

4.1 Vision

This Inclusive Play Policy sets out the ambition that:

“Every child deserves equal opportunities for play. We will take a planned approach to removing barriers that prevent access, creating play areas that meet the wide and varying needs of all children”.

The vision will be achieved by:

- Adopting a planned approach to removing and reducing barriers to accessing play;
- Creating spaces where disabled and non-disabled children play together;
- Sharing information about accessible provision.

5 Play Provision in Redditch

Redditch Borough Council has 44 play spaces across the Borough.

Strategic Parks

Redditch Borough Council has four Strategic Parks which typically provide a much greater range of visitor facilities and experiences and service a larger catchment. These are Arrow Valley Country Park, Morton Stanley Park, Brockhill Park & Batchley Pool and Overdale Park.

Each of these green spaces varies in terms of character, scale, and the visitor offer. However, Arrow Valley Country Park given its scale, range of facilities and central location is assumed to serve Redditch and act as a destination space for other areas of the Borough.

Arrow Valley and Morton Stanley Park both include ‘Neighbourhood Level’ play provision based on the Council’s Play Hierarchy. Brockhill Park & Batchley Pool has ‘Local Level’ play provision and Overdale Park has no formal equipped play provision.

Redditch Borough Council Play Hierarchy

Neighbourhood Level Play Provision

- Serve children within 800m walking distance (approximately 10-15 minutes walking time based on national standards¹);
- Typically, a minimum activity zone of 1000 square metres;
- Typically, at least 8 types of equipment;
- More diverse play opportunities (including sensory play) for a wider age range.

Local Level Play Provision

- Serve children within 400m walking distance (approximately 5-10 minutes walking time based on national standards¹);
- Typically, a minimum activity zone of 400 square metres;
- Typically, at least 5 types of equipment.

The walking times cited above are presented as a guide, based on national guidance. It is accepted that some people including disabled people and children may take longer to walk the distances shown.

Appendix A contains a List of Council play spaces and their hierarchy.

6 National Standards

There is a lack of national standards for accessible and inclusive play. Plan Inclusive Play Areas (PiPA) is the UK's only independent accreditation system for evaluating accessible and inclusive play area design

¹ Based on a review of data from 1) Fields in Trust (2018) Standards Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard and 2) Natural England (2023) Green Infrastructure Standards and 3) The Chartered Institute for Highways and Transportation.

PiPA sets out 3 core elements - Accessibility, Nurturing the Senses and Dynamic Play. In order to achieve the standard a formal assessment is carried out against 5 key areas:

- Plan to Go
- Plan to Access
- Plan to Play
- Plan for Rest & Recharging
- Plan for Engagement

The PiPA standard is an exceptionally high one as evidenced by only one play space in the West Midlands having achieved accreditation. Achieving the highest tier(s) against the standard also requires inclusive / accessible toilet provision. Currently, only Arrow Valley Country Park and Morton Stanley Park have accessible toilet provision.

There are significant constraints associated with achieving high standards of accessible and inclusive play within Redditch.

- The Redditch Play Investment Strategy seeks to renew, sustain and enhance existing play facilities;
- Scale of investment / proposed changes at each play space varies (and some play spaces will experience only minor change);
- Spatial and physical constraints – Local level spaces are smaller than Neighbourhood level spaces offering less opportunity for delivering accessible and inclusive play;
- Public open space – high levels of use, anti-social behaviour, vandalism and limited maintenance budgets means that many spaces have limited sensory play;
- Diverse and complex needs of disabled children – within small play spaces there is limited scope to address the needs and circumstances of all disabled children equally.

These issues are not unique to Redditch and are real challenges for all providers of outdoor equipped play. This play policy seeks to set out a pragmatic approach that balances a commitment to more inclusive play with real world constraints.

7 Providing Accessible and Inclusive Play in Redditch

To achieve the vision and aims of this policy, Redditch Borough Council will

1. Carry out an assessment of Arrow Valley Country Park against the PiPA standard and use the results of this audit to inform proposals for renewal and enhancement. The Council will then seek to achieve external accreditation against this national standard. Arrow Valley Country Park will be promoted to all residents and visitors as an exemplar accessible and inclusive play space.
2. The learning from the audit of Arrow Valley Country Park will be applied to Morton Stanley Park to establish the feasibility, viability and the scale of resources required to achieve the PiPA standard.
3. For all other outdoor equipped play areas, the Council will seek to improve the current level of accessibility and inclusivity of play provision.
 - To achieve this an Inclusive Play Policy Assessment and Design Checklist (Appendix B) has been created as a tool to assist with achieving greater accessibility and inclusiveness of play spaces and to record the impacts of the planned changes at the design stage.
 - The Council will require play companies / contractors to propose changes using this checklist that will increase the accessibility and inclusivity of play spaces. This will form part of the design brief and the tender evaluation criteria applied to the award of contracts.

Appendix A – List of Play Spaces & Hierarchy

Appendix B - Inclusive Play Policy Assessment and Design Checklist

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**LANDSCAPE
& HERITAGE**

Redditch Play Investment Strategy

November 2023

Issue number: 4

Status: FINAL

Date: 30 November 2023

Prepared by: AS

Authorised by: AS

Redditch Play Investment Strategy

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2	Approach and Methodology	2
3	Recommendations and Analysis	7

1 Introduction

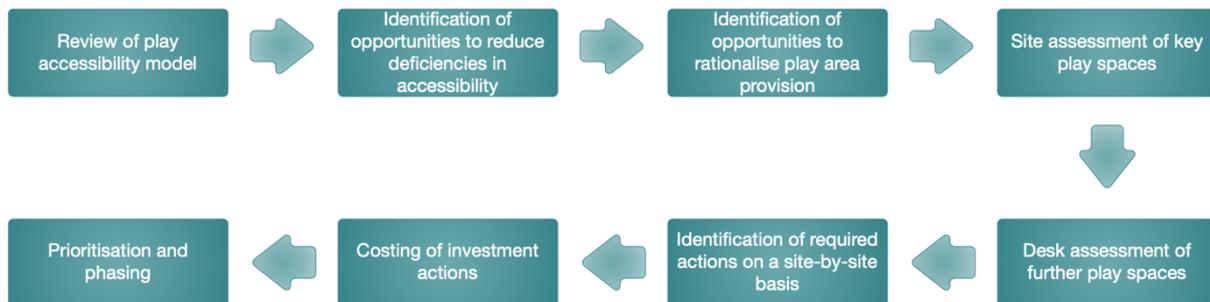
CFP was commissioned by Redditch Borough Council to carry out a Play Investment Strategy in September 2023. The Strategy considers the expenditure required over the next ten years to maintain the Borough's outdoor equipped play areas to a high standard and of maintaining and enhancing the accessibility of these play spaces.

The study is based on the earlier play assessment which considered the distribution and accessibility of outdoor equipped play across Redditch borough.

The study recognises the contribution of outdoor equipped play spaces provided by other organisations such as Parish Councils, private landowners and associated management companies in terms of the supply and accessibility. However, the investment strategy focuses on Redditch Borough Council assets only.

2 Approach and Methodology

The Play Investment Strategy is based on the following approach:



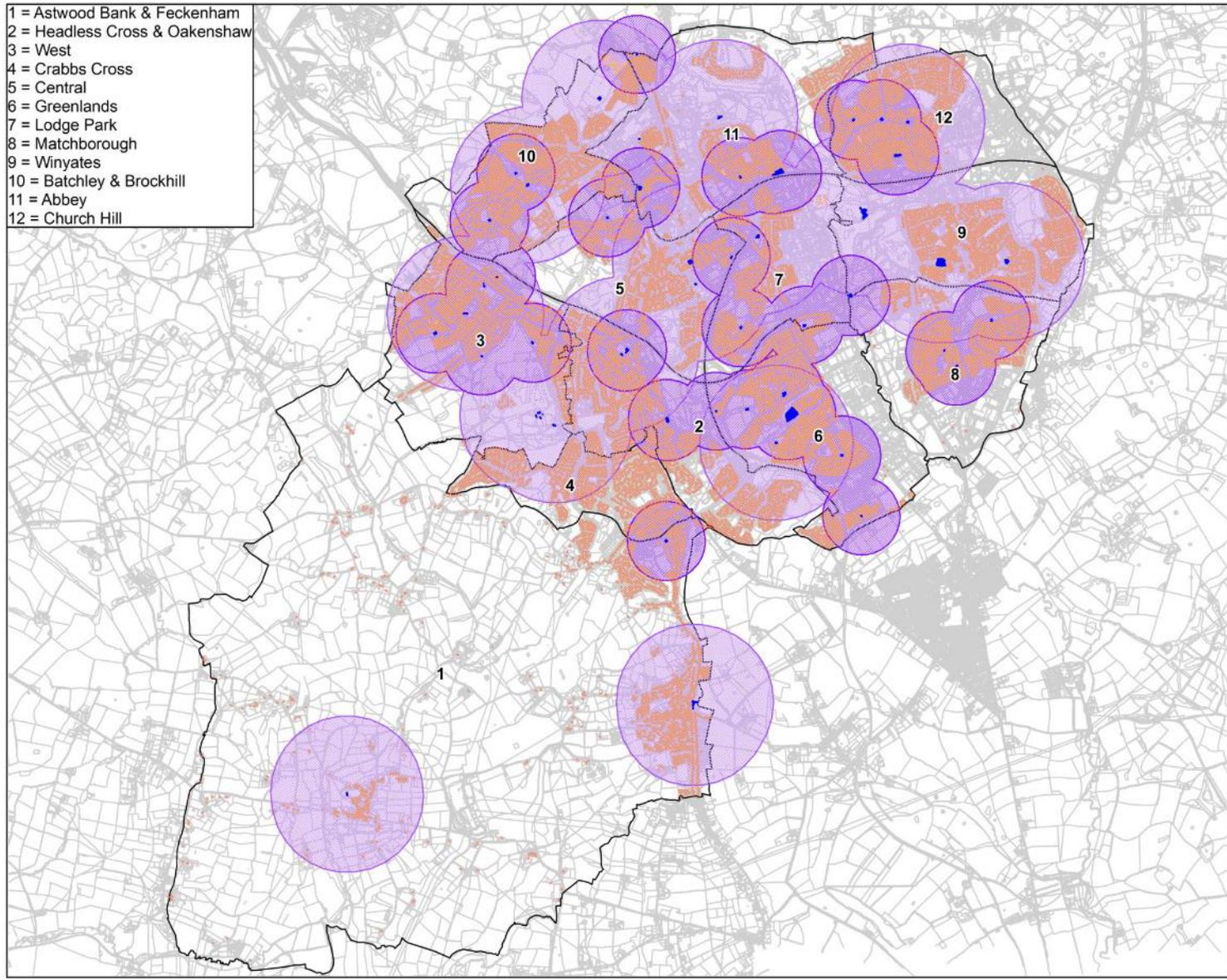
Play Accessibility Model

The Redditch Play Accessibility Model classifies outdoor equipped play spaces as local or neighbourhood level provision, depending on the range of equipment and age ranges catered for. The model is based on:

- Local Play Spaces - aimed at children who can go out to play independently, accessible within 400m (5 mins walking time);
- Neighbourhood provision - aimed at older children within 800m (10 mins walking time)

Based on this accessibility model approximately 91.6% of all households in Redditch currently have access to a play space within a walk time of up to 10 minutes. This is shown in Figure 2 below.

- 1 = Astwood Bank & Feckenham
- 2 = Headless Cross & Oakenshaw
- 3 = West
- 4 = Crabbs Cross
- 5 = Central
- 6 = Greenlands
- 7 = Lodge Park
- 8 = Matchborough
- 9 = Winyates
- 10 = Batchley & Brockhill
- 11 = Abbey
- 12 = Church Hill



Redditch and Bromsgrove Play

Figure 2
All Play Provision by Hierarchy (Buffered @400m / 800m)

Legend

- Play Provision
- 400m buffer for local play
- 800m buffer for neighbourhood play
- Residential areas
- Borough & Ward Boundaries
- OS Base

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Reducing Deficiencies in Access

Whilst the current level of play provision in Redditch is good, approximately 8.4% of households in the Borough do not have access to a suitable outdoor play spaces within a walk of up to ten minutes. This deficiency in access is not uniform and some wards have lower levels of access to play space than others. The wards with the high levels of deficiency, as identified through the Play Accessibility Study, are Crabbs Cross (42.1% with no access), Astwood Bank and Feckenham (27.7%) and Headless Cross and Oakenshaw (13.7%).

The play investment strategy has considered whether it is feasible and practicable to upgrade a selection of local level play spaces to neighbourhood level play spaces where this would reduce the deficiencies in accessibility. The creation of a new play space in Crabbs Cross ward (on existing green space) has also been considered.

Rationalising Play Area Provision

The play investment strategy has also considered where selected play areas that offer poor play value or are in poor condition could be removed without adversely affecting (or with minor impact) on the overall level of accessibility could be removed (when they reach the end of their serviceable lifespan, fail to meet European / National standards, or risk becoming unsafe).

Rationalising play provision, will help ensure that staff time and maintenance budgets can be used more effectively to maintain those play spaces that provide greater play value. Resources can also be directed towards those play spaces that are better used with greater footfall and which experience greater wear and tear, rather than those that are subjected to repeated vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Annual maintenance costs for play spaces within Redditch are approximately £65,000 (split approx. 58% staff time for inspections & maintenance and 42% equipment & materials). This equates to approximately £1,550 on average per play space per annum to maintain to a safe standard. Capital investment is then required on a 10 to 15 year

cycle for replacement of play equipment along with safety surfacing, fencing, signage and furniture.

Site Assessment and Desk Assessment of Play Spaces

Where play spaces were identified by RBC Officers that there was scope for upgrading from Local provision to Neighbourhood provision, these were visited by the consultants' team with support from RBC officers. Other play spaces were assessed through a desktop exercise and through online meetings between the consultants' team and RBC officers.

Identification of Actions

The site and desk assessment process identified a series of agree actions on a site-by-site basis. This has been a detailed assessment process looking at individual items of equipment, surfacing, fencing and entrances, signage and site furniture for each play space.

The identified actions have focused on:

- Play spaces that can feasibility be upgraded from Local to Neighbourhood level provision with the provision of additional items of play equipment or replacing outdated equipment with new;
- Play spaces that are in reasonable condition but will require some investment in the next three years;
- Play spaces that are in reasonable condition but will require some investment in the next five years.

Costing of Actions

Detailed quotations and cost estimates from a range of play companies for work in Redditch and Bromsgrove over the last three years have been collated, reviewed and analysed to create a database of costs and a set of standard rates. These rates have been applied to the identified and recommended actions for each site to produce play space enhancement specifications and cost sheets.

A contingency allowance of 10% has been applied to each site cost estimate.

An inflationary allowance has been applied to the site-based costings based on the anticipated year of delivery. The cost summary in spreadsheet form allows different inflationary allowances to be applied and modelled.

Prioritisation and Phasing

The table below sets out the principles that have been used to determine the priority rating and proposed timescales for investment. The overarching principle is to provide equality of access across the Borough addressing identified deficiencies, and then continue to invest in play spaces to ensure they are safe, comply with standards and offer good play value.

Where play spaces are to be decommissioned at the end of life, where they fail to meet standards or are becoming uneconomic to repair, we propose that removals should follow investment that addresses known deficiencies in accessibility (priority rating 1 and 2).

Investment Principles	Priority Rating	Year
Address deficiencies by creating new play spaces (equality of access)	1	1
Address deficiencies by increasing hierarchy level : Upgrade Local to Neighbourhood	2	2
Investment in play spaces with a 1- 3 year life span (Neighbourhood)	3	3
Investment in play spaces with a 1- 3 year life span (Local)	4	4
Decommission / remove sites when feasible (end of life / failing to meet standards / uneconomic to repair)	5	4
Invest in play spaces with a 3-5 year life span or where upgrades have been identified (Neighbourhood)	6	5
Invest in play spaces with a 3-5 year life span or where upgrades have been identified (Local)	7	6
Retain and maintain (typically good for 5 years +). Deliver other investment where there is funding through planning gain	8	7 to 10

3 Recommendations and Analysis

The play investment strategy is based on the following recommendations:

- Creation of 2 new Neighbourhood level play spaces at Forest View (2023/24) and Abbeydale Playing Fields (2024/25)
- Upgrading 3 play spaces from Local to Neighbourhood level provision (2024/25)
- Upgrading a further 4 Neighbourhood play spaces (2025/26)
- Upgrading a further 3 Local play spaces (2026/27)
- Following this decommissioning of 6 existing place spaces that are 'end of life' (2026/27)
- Upgrading a further 3 Neighbourhood play spaces (2027/28)
- Upgrading a further 6 Local play spaces (2028/29)

And provisional costs for:

- Investing on a further 17 play spaces, that are currently in good condition but will need upgrading in the future (2029/30 onwards)

The table below summarises the costs.

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029/30 - 2033/34	Total
No. of play spaces	1	5	4	8	3	6	17	44
Cost	£137,995	£398,463	£173,649	£118,690	£118,514	£136,560	£670,000	£1,753,871
Inflation @ 5%	£0	£19,923	£17,799	£18,709	£25,540	£37,729	£319,895	£301,600
Total	£137,995	£418,386	£191,447	£137,399	£144,054	£174,290	£989,895	£2,055,471

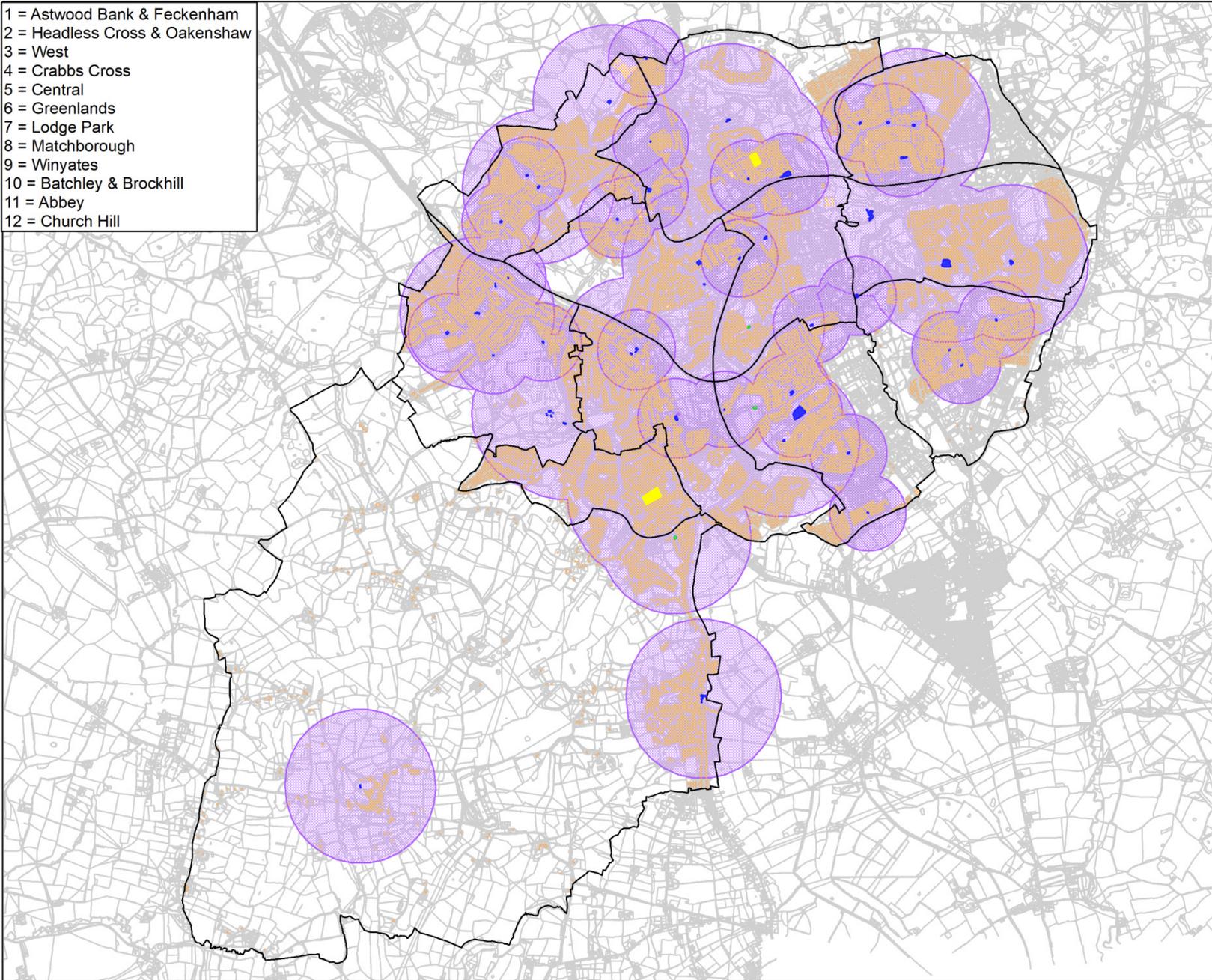
A more detailed breakdown by site and year is shown below. Detailed costs on a site by site basis are included in Appendix A.

The impact of this on the play accessibility will be to increase the accessibility of play provision across the Borough so that 96.1% (currently 91.6%) of households have access to a good quality play spaces within 10 minutes walk. Those households without access against this standard typically have access to a play space within 1250m (with the exception of a small number of households in the more rural Astwood Bank and Feckenham Ward).

Figure 2 below shows the impact of the play investment proposals in terms of improved accessibility.

URN	Site Name	RBC Condition Rating	Current Play Hierarchy	Play Investment Action	Play Investment Cost(£)	Play Hierarchy Future	Priority Rating	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029/30 - 2033/34	Total
215	Forest View / The Pleck	Create New Play Space	N/A	Create new Neighbourhood	£137,995	Neighbourhood	1	£137,995							£137,995
242	Abbeydale Playing Field	Create New Play Space	N/A	Create new Neighbourhood	£115,995	Neighbourhood	2		£115,995						£115,995
184	Banners Lane	Good 1-3 Years	Local	Upgrade to Neighbourhood	£76,475	Neighbourhood	2		£76,475						£76,475
176	Lodge Pool Drive	Good 1-3 Years	Local	Upgrade to Neighbourhood	£73,725	Neighbourhood	2		£73,725						£73,725
358	Greenlands Playing Field	Good 5+ years	Local	Upgrade to Neighbourhood	£64,948	Neighbourhood	2		£64,948						£64,948
191	Throckmorton	Good <1 Year	Local	Upgrade	£67,320	Local	2		£67,320						£67,320
183	Cardington Close	Good 1-3 Years	Neighbourhood	Upgrade	£50,484	Neighbourhood	3			£50,484					£50,484
194	Forge Mill Play Area	Good 1-3 Years	Neighbourhood	Repairs & Maintenance	£5,500.00	Neighbourhood	3			£5,500					£5,500
182	Lowlands Lane	Good 1-3 Years	Neighbourhood	Upgrade	£97,209	Neighbourhood	3		£97,209						£97,209
180	Springvale Road	Good 1-3 Years	Neighbourhood	Upgrade	£20,456	Neighbourhood	3			£20,456					£20,456
188	Carlton Close	Good 1-3 Years	Local	Upgrade	£30,107	Local	4				£30,107				£30,107
167	Terrys Playing Fields	Good 1-3 Years	Local	Upgrade	£28,583	Local	4			£28,583					£28,583
161	Dolphin Road	Good 1-3 Years	Local	Removal	£10,000	Local	5			£10,000					£10,000
198	Britannia Close	Parks to be considered for removal	Local	Removal	£10,000	N/A	5			£10,000					£10,000
354	Cleeve Close	Parks to be considered for removal	Local	Removal	£10,000	N/A	5			£10,000					£10,000
162	Dale Road	Parks to be considered for removal	Local	Removal	£10,000	N/A	5			£10,000					£10,000
200	Eathorpe Close	Parks to be considered for removal	Local	Removal	£10,000	N/A	5			£10,000					£10,000
179	Yeadon Close	Parks to be considered for removal	Local	Removal	£10,000	N/A	5			£10,000					£10,000
171	Bengrove	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Upgrade	£43,120	Neighbourhood	6					£43,120			£43,120
185	Glover Street	Good for 3-5 years	Neighbourhood	Upgrade	£29,920	Neighbourhood	6					£29,920			£29,920
177	Sandon Close	Good for 3-5 years	Neighbourhood	Upgrade	£45,474	Neighbourhood	6					£45,474			£45,474
357	Dingleside Field	Good 5+ years	Local	Upgrade	£18,546	Local	7						£18,546		£18,546
201	Matchborough Rocks	Good 5+ years	Local	Upgrade	£8,195	Local	7						£8,195		£8,195
199	Mill Hill	Good 5+ years	Local	Upgrade	£29,920	Local	7						£29,920		£29,920
181	Birchfield Road ~ Rear of 417	Good for 3-5 years	Local	Upgrade	£38,314	Local	7						£38,314		£38,314
166	Rowan Crescent	Good for 3-5 years	Local	Repairs & Maintenance	£5,500	Local	7						£5,500		£5,500
190	Tredington Close	Good for 3-5 years	Local	Upgrade	£36,086	Local	7						£36,086		£36,086
196	Arrow Valley Countryside Centre	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£50,000	Neighbourhood	8							£50,000	£50,000
356	Arrow Valley Park - Ball Court	Good 5+ years	Local	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Local	8							£30,000	£30,000
192	Astwood Bank Park Play Area	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£50,000	Neighbourhood	8							£50,000	£50,000
165	Batchley Gardens Play Area	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£50,000	Neighbourhood	8							£50,000	£50,000
359	Birchfield Road Playing Field	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£50,000	Neighbourhood	8							£50,000	£50,000
189	Birchfield Road Playing Fields	Good 5+ years	Local	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Local	8							£30,000	£30,000
164	Brockhill Park	Good 5+ years	Local	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Local	8							£30,000	£30,000
193	Feckenham Playing Fields	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£50,000	Neighbourhood	8							£50,000	£50,000
172	Hedgerows	Good 5+ years	Local	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Local	8							£30,000	£30,000
170	Heronfield Close	Good 5+ years	Local	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Local	8							£30,000	£30,000
173	High Trees	Good 5+ years	Local	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Local	8							£30,000	£30,000
163	Kings Oak	Good 5+ years	Local	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Local	8							£30,000	£30,000
168	Mayfields Park	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£50,000	Neighbourhood	8							£50,000	£50,000
178	Morton Stanley - Play	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£50,000	Neighbourhood	8							£50,000	£50,000
187	Morton Stanley - Skate and Risky Play	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£50,000	Neighbourhood	8							£50,000	£50,000
169	Northleach Close	Good 5+ years	Local	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Local	8							£30,000	£30,000
175	Ravensmere Field	Good 5+ years	Local	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Local	8							£30,000	£30,000
SUB-TOTAL					£1,753,871			£137,995	£398,463	£173,649	£118,690	£118,514	£136,560	£670,000	£1,753,871
INFLATION		SET RATE HERE ->		5.0%	INFLATION INDEX (MULTIPLIER)			1.0000	1.0500	1.1025	1.1576	1.2155	1.2763	1.4775	
TOTALS									£418,386	£191,447	£137,399	£144,054	£174,290	£989,895	£2,055,471

- 1 = Astwood Bank & Feckenham
- 2 = Headless Cross & Oakenshaw
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- 7 = Lodge Park
- 8 = Matchborough
- 9 = Winyates
- 10 = Batchley & Brockhill
- 11 = Abbey
- 12 = Church Hill



Redditch and Bromsgrove Play

Figure 2
Impact of Proposed
Investment on
Accessibility

Legend

- Play Provision
- Play to be upgraded to neighbourhood
- Creation of new neighbourhood provision
- 400m buffer for local play
- 800m buffer for neighbourhood play
- Residential areas
- Borough & ward boundaries
- OS Base

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Appendix A – Detailed Costs by Site

URN	242
Site Name	Abbeydale Play Field
Assessment	Create new Neighbourhood Play Space (which allows decommissioning of Dolphin Road (161) and Dale Road (162) whilst increasing accessibility

Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
	Allowance for creation of a toddler and junior equipped play area. Neighbourhood level play space.	1	Item	£100,000.00	£100,000
			Item		£0
			Item		£0
			Item		£0
			Item		£0
Surfacing					
			Sqm		£0.00
			Sqm		£0.00
Fencing / Gates					
			Item		
			Item		
			Item		£0.00
Furniture					
			Item		£0.00
			Item		£0.00
			Item		£0.00
Groundworks & removals					
			Item		£0.00
			Item		£0.00
			Item		£0.00
			Sqm		£0.00
			Lin m		£0.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
	RP11 Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					
					£105,450.00
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£10,545.00
Total					£115,995.00

URN	215
Site Name	Forest View / The Pleck
Assessment	Create new Neighbourhood Play Space

Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
	Allowance for creation of a toddler and junior equipped play area, with active play equipment for teenagers. Neighbourhood level play space.	1	Item	£120,000.00	£120,000
			Item		£0
			Item		£0
			Item		£0
			Item		£0
			Item		£0
Surfacing					
			Sqm		£0.00
			Sqm		£0.00
Fencing / Gates					
			Item		
			Item		
			Item		£0.00
Furniture					
			Item		£0.00
			Item		£0.00
			Item		£0.00
Groundworks & removals					
			Item		£0.00
			Item		£0.00
			Item		£0.00
			Sqm		£0.00
			Lin m		£0.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					£125,450.00
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£12,545.00
Total					£137,995.00

URN	184
Site Name	Banners Lane
Assessment	Upgrade to Neighbourhood Level



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
New	Bespoke Steel Swing Frame with Flat & Cradle Seats & Deco Plates	1	Item	£2,182.00	£2,182
New	Carousel with Bars Inground	1	Item	£2,644.00	£2,644
New	Bespoke Two Tower Unit with Net and Steel Slide	1	Item	£12,039.81	£12,040
New	Jumper Six Sided, 1.08 x 1.08 x 1.08m, with Grey SBR Tiles, Inground	1	Item	£4,392.88	£4,393
New	Octopus Spring Seesaw, Inground	1	Item	£2,575.00	£2,575
New	Talk & Tumble, Classic, Inground	1	Item	£1,839.00	£1,839
Surfacing					
New	Wetpour surfacing	400	Sqm	£65.00	£26,000.00
New	Wetpour surfacing for extension	80	Sqm	£65.00	£5,200.00
Fencing / Gates					
Existing	Self closing gates - Retain	2	Item		
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain	1	Item		
New	Dog grids	2	Item	£1,500.00	£3,000.00
Furniture					
Existing	Bench - Retain	2	Item		
Existing	Litter Bin - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Play area signage (freestanding)	2	Item		
New	Litter bin - additional	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
New	Repaint benches	2	Item	£150.00	£300.00
New	Play area signage (fence mounted)	2	Item	£300.00	£600.00
Groundworks & removals					
New	Breakout tarmac	1	Item	£250.00	£250.00
New	Breakout safer surfacing	1	Item	£250.00	£250.00
New	Play equipment	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for extension	80	Sqm	£35.00	£2,800.00
New	Remove some existing fencing and reinstall	25	Lin m	£2,000.00	£1,000.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					£69,522.69
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£6,952.27
Total					£76,474.96

URN	171
Site Name	Bengrove
Assessment	Upgrade



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	Junior Multi-play unit - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Springer - Retain	2	Item		
Existing	Infant multi-play unit - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Spinner Bowl - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Junior Swings - Retain	1	Item		
New	New climbing pegs for junior multi play unit	10	Item	£25.00	£250.00
New	Replace bar for whale springer	1	Item	£100.00	£100.00
New	Octopus Spring Seesaw, Inground	1	Item	£2,575.00	£2,575.00
New	Bespoke Steel Swing Frame with Flat & Cradle Seats & Deco Plates	1	Item	£2,182.00	£2,182.00
New	Jumper Six Sided, 1.08 x 1.08 x 1.08m, with Grey SBR Tiles, Inground	1	Item	£4,392.88	£4,392.88
Surfacing					
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain	400	Sqm		
New	Safer surfacing for extension	200	Sqm	£65.00	£13,000.00
Fencing / Gates					
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain	73	Lin m		
New	Dog grids	2	Item	£1,500.00	£3,000.00
New	Bow top fencing for extension	30	Lin m	£60.00	£1,800.00
Furniture					
Existing	Bench - Retain	2	Item		
Existing	Litter Bin - Retain	2	Item		
New	Play area signage (fence mounted)	2	Item	£300.00	£600.00
Groundworks & removals					
New	Dig out seesaw inc disposal	1	Item	£250.00	£250.00
New	Dig out spider inc disposal	1	Item	£700.00	£700.00
New	Removal & disposal of gates	2	Item	£200.00	£400.00
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for extension	200	Sqm	£35.00	£7,000.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					£39,199.88
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£3,919.99
Total					£43,119.87

URN	183
Site Name	Cardington Close
Assessment	Upgrade - minor upgrading to ball court & small extension to play.



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	Carousel - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Single piece equipment - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	MUGA - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Junior Multi-play unit - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Spinner Bowl - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Springer - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Toddler Swings - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Shelter - Retain	1	Item		
New	Basketball Goal, Nylon Net Inground	2	Item	£2,020.14	£4,040.28
New	Talk & Tumble, Classic, Inground	1	Item	£1,839.00	£1,839.00
New	Goal ends	2	Item	£2,000.00	£4,000.00
Surfacing					
Existing	Tarmac surfacing - Retain	175	Sqm		
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain	175	Sqm		
New	Safer surfacing for extension	200	Sqm	£65.00	£13,000.00
New	MUGA Paint & Sports Markings. Paint the playing area in different colours - with line markings for 5-a-side, Mini Tennis and Basketball	1	Item	£3,215.00	£3,215.00
Fencing / Gates					
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain	1	Item		
New	Bow top fencing for extension	30	Lin m	£60.00	£1,800.00
New	Partial rebound fencing for MUGA	60	Lin m	£300.00	£18,000.00
Furniture					
Existing	Litter Bin - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Dog Grid - Retain	2	Item		
Existing	Bench - Retain	2	Item		
New	Litter Bin - additional	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
New	Play area signage (fence mounted)	2	Item	£300.00	£600.00
Groundworks & removals					
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for extension	200	Sqm	£35.00	£7,000.00
New	Removal & disposal of goal ends	2	Item	£700.00	£1,400.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					£45,894.3
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£4,589.4
Total					£50,483.7

URN	357
Site Name	Dingleside Field
Assessment	Retain as Local level provision



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	Basketball Hoop - Retain	1	Item		
New	Remove existing goal ends & reinstate	2	Item	£250.00	£500.00
New	Basketball Goal, Nylon Net Inground	1	Item	£2,250.00	£2,250.00
New	Supply & install 2 No. junior football goals	2	Item	£800.00	£1,600.00
Surfacing					
Existing	Turf - Retain				
New	Tarmac surfacing for ball sports	88	Sqm	£85.00	£7,480.00
New	Paint & Sports Markings. Basketball hoop	1	Item	£250.00	£250.00
Fencing / Gates					
N/A					
Furniture					
New	Pine Bench with Backrest, Inground	2	Item	£600.00	£1,200.00
New	Litter bin	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
Groundworks					
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for basketball hoop.	88	Sqm	£35.00	£3,080.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£0.00	£0.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£0.00	£0.00
Sub-total					£16,860.00
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£1,686.00
Total					£18,546.00

URN	191
Site Name	Throckmorton
Assessment	Upgrade skate and muga - Retain as Local level



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rate	Cost
Equipment					
New	Skate driveway - Remove	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
New	Skate rail - Remove	2	Item	£500.00	£1,000.00
New	MUGA - Remove	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
Existing	Shelter - Retain	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
Surfacing					
Existing	Tarmac surfacing - Retain				
New	Precast concrete skate bowl	1	Item	£50,000.00	£50,000.00
New	MUGA Paint & Sports Markings. Paint the playing area in different colours - with line markings for 5-a-side, Mini Tennis and Basketball	1	Item	£3,250.00	£3,250.00
Fencing / Gates					
New	Repaint MUGA frame	1	Item	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Furniture					
Existing	Litter Bin - Retain	1	Item		
Groundworks					
Existing	Dig out timber planter incl DSP	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					£61,200.00
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£6,120.00
Total					£67,320.00

URN	358
Site Name	Greenlands
Assessment	Upgrade to Neighbourhood Level



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	Climber - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	MUGA - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Adult outdoor fitness - Retain	1	Item		
New	Bespoke Steel Swing Frame with Flat & Cradle Seats & Deco Plates	1	Item	£2,182.00	£2,182.00
New	Carousel with Bars Inground	1	Item	£2,644.00	£2,644.00
New	Bespoke Two Tower Unit with Net and Steel Slide	1	Item	£12,039.81	£12,039.81
New	Jumper Six Sided, 1.08 x 1.08 x 1.08m, with Grey SBR Tiles, Inground	1	Item	£4,392.88	£4,392.88
New	Octopus Spring Seesaw, Inground	1	Item	£2,575.00	£2,575.00
New	Talk & Tumble, Classic, Inground	1	Item	£1,839.00	£1,839.00
Surfacing					
Existing	Tarmac surfacing - Retain				
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain				
New	Safer surfacing for new play area	250	Sqm	£65.00	£16,250.00
Fencing / Gates					
New	Bow top fencing for new play area	60	Lin m	£61.00	£3,660.00
New	Supply 1m High Prosafe Self Closing Single Gate Powder Coated Yellow for new play area	1	Item	£1,210.96	£1,210.96
Furniture					
Existing	Litter Bin - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Bench - Retain	1	Item		
New	Pine Bench with Backrest, Inground - additional	2	Item	£600.00	£1,200.00
New	Litter bin - additional	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
New	Play area signage (fence mounted)	2	Item	£300.00	£600.00
Groundworks					
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for extension	250	Sqm	£35.00	£7,000.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					£59,043.65
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£5,904.37
Total					£64,948.02

URN	199
Site Name	Mill Hill
Assessment	Retain as Local level provision



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	MUGA - Retain	1	Item		
New	Combination Street Work Out Pro 2 Powder Coated Orange	2	Item	£4,470.29	£8,940.58
New	BLOQX 1 with Coated Corner in Orange/Grey/Night Sky Blue	2	Item	£5,497.14	£10,994.28
Surfacing					
Existing	Tarmac surfacing - Retain				
New	MUGA Paint & Sports Markings. Paint the playing area in different colours - with line markings for 5-a-side, Mini Tennis and Basketball	1	Item	£3,215.00	£3,215.00
Fencing / Gates					
N/A					
Furniture					
New	Pine Bench with Backrest, Inground	1	Item	£600.00	£600.00
New	Litter bin	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
Groundworks					
N/A					
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					£27,199.86
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£2,719.99
Total					£29,919.85

URN	201
Site Name	Matchborough Rocks
Assessment	Retain as Local level provision



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	Climber - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Single piece equipment - Retain	1	Item		
New	Balance beams	1	Item	£3,000.00	£3,000.00
New	Wobble bridge	1	Item	£3,000.00	£3,000.00
Surfacing					
Existing	Grass Matting - Retain				
Existing	Turf - Retain				
Fencing / Gates					
N/A					
Furniture					
Existing	Bench - Retain	1	Item		
Groundworks					
N/A					
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					£7,450.00
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£745.00
Total					£8,195.00

URN	176
Site Name	Lodge Pool Drive
Assessment	Upgrade to Neighbourhood Level



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
New	Bespoke Steel Swing Frame with Flat & Cradle Seats & Deco Plates	1	Item	£2,182.00	£2,182.00
New	Carousel with Bars Inground	1	Item	£2,644.00	£2,644.00
New	Bespoke Two Tower Unit with Net and Steel Slide	1	Item	£12,039.81	£12,039.81
New	Jumper Six Sided, 1.08 x 1.08 x 1.08m, with Grey SBR Tiles, Inground	1	Item	£4,392.88	£4,392.88
New	Octopus Spring Seesaw, Inground	1	Item	£2,575.00	£2,575.00
New	Talk & Tumble, Classic, Inground	1	Item	£1,839.00	£1,839.00
New	Bespoke Tower with Steel Slide and Bannister Bars	1	Item	£7,890.00	£7,890.00
Surfacing					
New	Safer surfacing	264	Sqm	£65.00	£17,160.00
Fencing / Gates					
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Self closing gates - Retain	2	Item		
New	Repaint bow top fencing	75	Lin m	£10.00	£750.00
New	Dog grids	2	Item	£1,500.00	£3,000.00
Furniture					
Existing	Litter Bin - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Bench - Retain	2	Item		
New	Litter Bin - additional	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
New	Play area signage (fence mounted)	2	Item	£300.00	£600.00
Groundworks & removals					
New	Breakout Tarmac	1	Item	£250.00	£250.00
New	Breakout Safer sufacing	1	Item	£250.00	£250.00
New	Remove Play equipment	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base	300	Sqm	£35.00	£7,000.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					£67,022.69
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£6,702.27
Total					£73,724.96

URN	161
Site Name	Dolphin Road
Assessment	Removal after investment in Abbeydale Playing Fields

Meeting Notes
There have been internal conversations previously about removing this site and Dale Road and replacing with upgraded provision at Terry's Playing Field. However, Terry's playing field is site which suffers ASB & has different audience which may benefit more from older provision (Teen/Adult).
Equipment is dated – swings need replacing. Could remove slide and replace with a multi-play unit.
Resurface entire area with wetpour.
Replace benches and bins.
Base costs on proposals sent through by Richard (7491b> cost planning > client quotes > FW Kompan - Initial proposals - Dolphin Rd

Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost	Notes
Equipment						
Existing	Basketball Hoop	1	Item			
Existing	Carousel	1	Item			
Existing	Single Slide	1	Item			
Existing	Junior Swings	2	Item			
Existing	Toddler Swings	1	Item			
New	Removal and resinste to grass	1	item	£10,000	£10,000	
Surfacing						
Existing	Tarmac surfacing					
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					
Fencing / Gates						
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Self closing gates - Retain	2	Item			
Furniture						
Existing	Bench	2	Item			
Existing	Litter Bin	1	Item			
Existing	Play area signage (freestanding)	1	Item			
Groundworks & removals						
Site Security (Prelims)						
Sub-total					£10,000.00	
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item			
Total					£10,000.00	

URN	166
Site Name	Rowan Crescent
Assessment	3-5 years

Meeting Notes
Recently refurbished for £28k – new climbing frame installed, and swings repainted = a low priority site.
Will only need allowance repair / general upkeep costs. £1k a year for 5 years.

Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rate	Cost	Notes
Equipment						
Existing	Adult outdoor fitness	1	Item			
Existing	Springer	1	Item			
Existing	Spica	1	Item			
Existing	Seesaw	1	Item			
Existing	Junior Swings	1	Item			
Existing	Toddler Swings	1	Item			
Existing	Infant multi-play unit	1	Item			
New	General upkeep and maintenance costs	5	Years	£1,000.00	£5,000.00	
Surfacing						
Existing	Tarmac surfacing - Retain					Enitre site
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around multi play unit
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around toddler swing
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around springer
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around spica
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around junior swing
Fencing / Gates						
Existing	Dog Grid - Retain	2	Item			
Existing	Fencing - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Maintenance Gate - Retain	1	Item			
Furniture						
Existing	Litter Bin		Item			
Existing	Play area signage (freestanding)	1	Item			
Existing	Bench		Item			
Groundworks & removals						
Existing	Planting					
Site Security (Prelims)						
N/A						
Sub-total					£5,000.00	
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£500.00	
Total					£5,500.00	

URN	167
Site Name	Terrys Playing Field
Assessment	1-3 yrs

Meeting Notes
Would need a complete refurbishment and possible extension to play area. However, location means it might be more suitable to have older provision on site (next to football club so attracts older children/young adults).
Potential to remove play and replace with MUGA or adult outdoor fitness.
However other MUGA's are nearby including Kings Oak, Batchley Pond.

Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rate	Cost	Notes
Equipment						
Existing	Junior Multi-play unit	1	Item			
Existing	Single piece equipment	1	Item			Play Car
Existing	Springer	1	Item			
Existing	Junior Swings	1	Item			
Existing	Toddler Swings	1	Item			
New	Combination Street Work Out Pro 2 Powder Coated Orange	2	Item	£4,470.29	£8,940.58	
New	BLOQX 1 with Coated Corner in Orange/Grey/Night Sky Blue	2	Item	£5,497.14	£10,994.28	
Surfacing						
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Entire site
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around multi play unit
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around play car
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around springer
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around junior swing
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around toddler swing
Fencing / Gates						
Existing	Bow top fencing	1	Item			
Existing	Self closing gates	2	Item			
Existing	Maintenance Gate	1	Item			
Existing	Swing barrier	1	Item			
Furniture						
Existing	Litter Bin	1	Item			
Existing	Bench	1	Item			
Existing	Play area signage (freestanding)		Item			
New	1800 Newport Steel Bench Incl. K3T Bolts Powder Coated Black or Gre	2	Item	£550.00	£1,100.00	
New	Litter bin	2	Item	£500.00	£1,000.00	
Groundworks & removals						
Existing	Hedges / Trees					
New	Removal of play equipment	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	
Site Security (Prelims)						
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00	
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00	
Sub-total					£25,984.86	
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£2,598.49	
Total					£28,583.35	

URN	177
Site Name	Sandon Close
Assessment	3-5 yrs

Meeting Notes
Close proximity to Lodge Pool Drive which has potential to be upgraded to neighbourhood.
RSS equipment is now in poor condition. All equipment needs replacing like 4 like.
Could look at extending the play space to square it off – current triangle space is awkward and would make it easier in future to replace play equipment.
Surfacing would just need skim over the top.
Replace goal ends with mini goals - £800 each
MUGA in good condition.

Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rate	Cost	Notes
Equipment						
Existing	Basketball Hoop	2	Item			
Existing	Goalposts	1	Item			
Existing	Junior Multi-play unit	1	Item			
Existing	MUGA	1	Item			
Existing	Seesaw	1	Item			
Existing	Toddler Swings	1	Item			
Existing	Junior Swings	1	Item			
New	Bespoke Steel Swing Frame with Flat & Cradle Seats & T	1	Item	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	
New	KOMPAN 3 Way Seesaw Inground 40cm	1	Item	£1,880.00	£1,880.00	
New	Bespoke Two Tower Unit with Net and Steel Slide	1	Item	£12,039.81	£12,039.81	
New	Goal ends	2	Item	£800.00	£1,600.00	
Surfacing						
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					Around junior swing
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					Around toddler swing
Existing	Tarmac surfacing					MUGA
Existing	Rubber Mulch surfacing					
Existing	Tarmac surfacing					Around Basketball
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					Around multi play unit
Existing	Turf					Around goalposts
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					Around seesaw
New	Wetpour surfacing - skim over existing	154	Sqm	£55.00	£8,470.00	
New	Wetpour surfacing for extension	100	Sqm	£65.00	£6,500.00	
Fencing / Gates						
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Dog Grid - Retain	2	Item			
New	Bow top fencing	30	Lin m	£60.00	£1,800.00	
Furniture						
Existing	Play area signage (freestanding)	1	Item			
Existing	Litter Bin	2	Item			
Existing	Bench - Retain	2	Item			
New	Play area signage (fence mounted)	2	Item	£300.00	£600.00	
New	Litter bins	2	Item	£500.00	£1,000.00	
Groundworks & removals						
New	Removal of play equipment	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for extension	100	Sqm	£35.00	£3,500.00	
Site Security (Prelims)						
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00	
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00	
Sub-total					£41,339.81	
Contingency @ 10%					£4,133.98	
Total					£45,473.79	

URN	180
Site Name	Springvale Road
Assessment	1-3 yrs

Meeting Notes
Equipment is outdated (25 yrs). Located next to a primary school and good use.
Upgrade play equipment and replace like for like. Potential to 'join up' the surfacing and add additional item of equipment.
Fencing is fine but bollards along the road entrance need replacing.
Upgrade goal ends - £800 each
MUGA in good condition.

Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rate	Cost	Notes
Equipment						
Existing	Basketball Hoop	1	Item			
Existing	Goalposts	1	Item			
Existing	Junior Multi-play unit	1	Item			
Existing	Spica	1	Item			
Existing	Junior Swings	1	Item			
Existing	Toddler Swings	1	Item			
New	Bespoke Two Tower Unit with Net and Steel Slide	1	Item	£12,039.81	£12,040	
New	Bespoke Steel Swing Frame with Flat & Cradle Seats & Deco Plates	1	Item	£2,182.00	£2,182	
New	Junior Spica in Red	1	Item	£820.00	£820.00	
New	Carousel with Bars Inground	1	Item	£2,644.00	£2,644.00	
New	Goal ends	2	Item	£800.00	£1,600.00	
Surfacing						
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around multi play unit
Existing	Tarmac surfacing - Retain					Around basketball
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around toddler swing
Existing	Tarmac surfacing - Retain					Entire site
Existing	Rubber Mulch surfacing - Retain					Around spica
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around junior swing
Existing	Turf - Retain					Around goalposts
New	Wetpour surfacing for extension	90	Sqm	£65.00	£5,850.00	
Fencing / Gates						
Existing	Fencing - Retain	1	Item			
New	Bollards along road entrance	3	Item	£150.00	£450.00	
Furniture						
Existing	Litter Bin	1	Item			
Existing	Bench - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Play area signage (freestanding)	1	Item			
New	Litter bin - additional	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00	
New	Play area signage (fence mounted)	2	Item	£300.00	£600.00	
Groundworks & removals						
Existing	Planting					
New	Remove Play equipment	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for extension	90	Sqm			
Site Security (Prelims)						
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00	
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00	
Sub-total					£18,596.00	
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£1,859.60	
Total					£20,455.60	

URN	181
Site Name	Birchfield Road ~ rear of 417
Assessment	3-5 yrs

Meeting Notes
Equipment is aged and outdated (22 years)
Replace equipment like for like and resurface the entire area using same footprint.
Keep bench but replace bin.
Refurbish 1 gate and replace 1 with dog grid.

Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rate	Cost	Notes
Equipment						
Existing	Junior Multi-play unit	1	Item			
Existing	Carousel	1	Item			
Existing	Toddler Swings	1	Item			
Existing	Junior Swings	1	Item			
New	Bespoke Tower with Steel Slide and Bannister Bars	1	Item	£7,890.00	£7,890.00	
New	Bespoke Steel Swing Frame with Flat & Cradle Seat	1	Item	£2,182.00	£2,182.00	
New	Carousel with Bars Inground	1	Item	£2,644.00	£2,644.00	
Surfacing						
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					Around mutli play unit
Existing	Tarmac surfacing					Entire site
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					Around carousel
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					Around junior swing
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					Around toddler swing
New	Safer surfacing - wetpour	221	Sqm	£65.00	£14,365.00	
Fencing / Gates						
Existing	Self closing gates	2	Item			
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain	1	Item			
New	Refurbish self closing gate	1	Item	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	
New	Dog grid	1	Item	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	
Furniture						
Existing	Bench - Retain	2	Item			
Existing	Litter Bin	1	Item			
Existing	Play area signage (freestanding)	1	Item			
New	Litter bin	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00	
New	Play area signage (fence mounted)	1	Item	£300.00	£300.00	
Groundworks & removals						
New	Remove play equipment	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	
Site Security (Prelims)						
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00	
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00	
Sub-total					£34,831.00	
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£3,483.10	
Total					£38,314.10	

URN	182
Site Name	Lowlands Lane
Assessment	1-3 yrs

Meeting Notes
Play area outdated (20 years). Climbing frame and swings to be replaced like for like.
Remove BMX and current skate area and replace with upgraded skate area / potential to skate bowl.
Furniture – replace shelter with a group bench, new bin, new partial rebound fencing down length of the MUGA.
Fence the play area off to keep separate from teen area.

Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rate	Cost	Notes
Equipment						
Existing	Basketball Hoop - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Skate driveway	1	Item			
Existing	Junior Multi-play unit	1	Item			
Existing	Skate ramps	3	Item			
Existing	Skate Pipe	2	Item			
Existing	MUGA - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Toddler Swings	1	Item			
Existing	Junior Swings	1	Item			
Existing	Tennis courts - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Sports area	1	Item			
New	Bespoke Tower with Steel Slide and Bannister Bars	1	Item	£7,890.00	£7,890.00	
New	Bespoke Steel Swing Frame with Flat & Cradle Seats & D	1	Item	£2,182.00	£2,182.00	
New	Skate driveway	1	Item	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	
New	Skate ramps	2	Item	£2,500.00	£5,000.00	
New	Skate pipe	1	Item	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	
Surfacing						
Existing	Tarmac surfacing - Retain					
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					
New	Precast concrete skate bowl	1	Item	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	
Fencing / Gates						
New	Bow top fencing to separate play areas	35	Lin m	£60.00	£2,100.00	
New	Partial rebound fencing	40	Lin m	£275.00	£11,000.00	
Furniture						
Existing	Play area signage (freestanding)	1	Item			
Existing	Litter Bin	1	Item			
Existing	Shelter	1	Item			
New	Group bench	1	Item	£1,250.00	£1,250.00	
Groundworks & removals						
	Remove Play equipment	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	
Site Security (Prelims)						
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00	
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00	
Sub-total					£88,372.00	
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£8,837.20	
Total					£97,209.20	

URN	185
Site Name	Glover Street
Assessment	3-5 yrs

Meeting Notes
Recently refurbished for £20,500, but a high use site.
Allowance for general upkeep and maintenance e.g. new bearings etc (£7-10,000)
Replace horizontal panels on MUGA
If scope allows, could consider extending the site to the North slightly and adding 1 or 2 more bits of play equipment.

Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rate	Cost	Notes
Equipment						
Existing	MUGA - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Junior Multi-play unit - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Seesaw - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Spinner Bowl - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Climber - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Springer - Retain	2	Item			
Existing	Toddler Swings - Retain	2	Item			
Existing	Jumper - Retain	1	Item			
New	General upkeep and maintenance costs	1	Item	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	
New	Carousel with Bars Inground	1	Item	£2,644.00	£2,644.00	
New	Talk & Tumble, Classic, Inground - Infant multi play unit	1	Item	£1,839.00	£1,839.00	
Surfacing						
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around multi play unit
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around seesaw
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around spinner bowl
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around climber
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around springer
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around swings
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					Around jumper
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain					MUGA
New	Safer surfacing for possible extension	40	Sqm	£65.00	£2,600.00	
Fencing / Gates						
Existing	Fencing - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Swing barrier - Retain	1	Item			
New	Partial rebound fencing	20	Lin m	£250.00	£5,000.00	
Furniture						
Existing	Litter Bin - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Bench - Retain	1	Item			
Groundworks & removals						
Existing	Planting					
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for possible extension	40	Sqm	£35.00	£1,400.00	
Site Security (Prelims)						
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00	
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00	
Sub-total					£16,433.00	
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£1,643.30	
Total					£18,076.30	

URN	188
Site Name	Carlton Close
Assessment	1-3 years

Meeting Notes
Again RSS equipment which shows signs of wear.
Replace all equipment like for like. Install a new backboard for the basketball hoop. Roughly £35-40,000
Wetpour entire surface.
Replace gate with dog grid.

Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost	Notes
Equipment						
Existing	Basketball Hoop - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Seesaw	1	Item			
Existing	Single Slide	1	Item			
Existing	Junior Swings	1	Item			
Existing	Toddler Swings	1	Item			
New	Octopus Spring Seesaw, Inground	1	Item	£2,575.00	£2,575.00	
New	Bespoke Tower with Steel Slide and Bannister Bars	1	Item	£7,890.00	£7,890.00	
New	Bespoke Steel Swing Frame with Flat & Cradle Seats & Deco Plates	1	Item	£2,182.00	£2,182.00	
New	Ladybird Springer	1	Item	£860.00	£860.00	
New	Basketball hoop backboard	1	Item	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	
Surfacing						
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					Around junior swing
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					Around toddler swing
Existing	Tarmac surfacing					Entire site
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					Around seesaw
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing					Around slide
Existing	Tarmac surfacing - Retain					Around basketball
New	Safer surfacing - wetpour skim over existing	364	Sqm	£55.00	£20,020.00	
Fencing / Gates						
Existing	Fencing - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Self closing gates	2	Item			
New	Dog grid	1	Item	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	
Furniture						
Existing	Bench	2	Item			
Existing	Litter Bin	1	Item			
Existing	Play area signage (freestanding)	1	Item			
New	1800 Newport Steel Bench Incl. K3T Bolts Powder Coated Black or C	2	Item	£550.00	£1,100.00	
New	Litter bin	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00	
New	Play area signage (fence mounted)	1	Item	£300.00	£300.00	
Groundworks & removals						
Existing	Planting					
New	Remove Play equipment	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	
Site Security (Prelims)						
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00	
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00	
Sub-total					£27,370.00	
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£2,737.00	
Total					£30,107.00	

URN	190
Site Name	Tredington Close
Assessment	3-5 yrs

Meeting Notes
Only a MUGA and shelter on site and both in good condition.
Would just need an assessment of the tarmac surfacing. Is potential to add line markings.
The wooded area could potentially be tidied up and install 1 or 2 pieces of natural play equipment.

Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rate	Cost	Notes
Equipment						
Existing	MUGA - Retain	1	Item			
Existing	Shelter - Retain	1	Item			
New	Balance beams	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	
New	Wobble bridge	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	
Surfacing						
Existing	Macadam surfacing					MUGA
New	Tarmac surfacing	352	Item	£70.00	£24,640.00	Depends on condition assessment of tarmac at end of 5 yrs
New	MUGA Paint & Sports Markings. Paint the playing area	1	Item	£3,215.00	£3,215.00	
Fencing / Gates						
N/A						
Furniture						
Existing	Play area signage (freestanding)	1	Item			
N/A						
Groundworks & removals						
N/A						
Site Security (Prelims)						
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00	
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00	
Sub-total					£32,805.00	
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£3,280.50	
Total					£36,085.50	

URN	194
Site Name	Forge Mill Play Area
Assessment	1-3 yrs

Meeting Notes
Recently refurbished so will be good for 5-10+ years.
Allowance of £1000 a year for general maintenance and upkeep over 5 years.

Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rate	Cost	Notes
Equipment						
Existing	Play Panel	1	Item			Creative workshop
Existing	Sand Play	2	Item			
Existing	Play Panel	1	Item			Music panel
Existing	Sand Pit	1	Item			
Existing	Spinner Bowl	1	Item			
Existing	Springer	4	Item			
Existing	Toddler Swings	1	Item			
Existing	Single piece equipment	1	Item			Talk tubes
Existing	Spica	1	Item			
New	General upkeep and maintenance costs	5	Years	£1,000.00	£5,000.00	
Surfacing						
Existing	Grass Matting					
Existing	Turf	20	Sqm			
Existing	Rubber Mulch surfacing	75	Sqm			
Fencing / Gates						
N/A						
Furniture						
N/A						
Groundworks & removals						
N/A						
Site Security (Prelims)						
N/A						
Sub-total					£5,000.00	
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£500.00	
Total					£5,500.00	

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive

17th March 2026**Empty Homes Strategy**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bill Hartnett
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Judith Willis Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services
Report Author	Job Title: Senior Housing Strategy Officer
Maria Bailey	Contact email: maria.bailey@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 07768 307628
Wards Affected	No specific ward relevance
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Not Applicable
Relevant Council Priority	Community and Housing
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** to Council that: -

- 1) The Redditch Borough Council Empty Homes Strategy 2026 – 29 be adopted.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 According to the national council tax database for 2025, there were 542,276 empty homes recorded in October across England, representing 2.1% of all homes. Action to tackle empty homes has a significant potential to address national housing needs.
- 2.2 In October 2025, Redditch Borough had 660 empty homes, of which 320 had been empty for more than 6 months. At the same time there were 943 households on the housing register seeking affordable housing.
- 2.3 Redditch Borough Council is committed to identifying empty homes and developing options for bringing them back into use as quickly as possible. The empty homes strategy sets out priorities and actions to

Executive

17th March 2026

tackle empty homes across the Borough and to use the most effective interventions to do so.

- 2.4 The aim of the strategy is to:
- help alleviate housing need
 - improve housing conditions
 - offer a wider choice of housing to residents
 - minimise the blight that can result where properties are left empty and neglected.
- 2.5 Empty homes can have a negative impact on a local area for several reasons, they:
- attract pests and vermin
 - can become a focal point for illegal activities such as anti-social behaviour, vandalism and fly tipping
 - increase the risk of squatting
 - fall into disrepair – increasing renovation costs and possible risks to the public if structures are unsafe
 - increase pressure on public resources.
- 2.6 An empty home is a dwelling which is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished. There are two main types of empty homes. Short term empty homes are dwellings which have been unoccupied for under six months. It is often the case that these are in the process of sale. Short term empty homes naturally occur as people's circumstances change, and they move between homes.
- 2.7 Long term empty homes are dwellings which have been unoccupied and are substantially unfurnished for six months or longer. Bringing long term, privately owned empty homes back into use is the focus of this strategy. Rather than representing a natural process of change, long term empty homes indicate there may be other factors leading to a property remaining empty.
- 2.8 Residential properties remain empty for various reasons, for example resolving legal ownership as part of an inheritance process. Other factors include new homes waiting for a buyer, owners abandoning properties, owners having a lack of funds for repairs and refurbishment,

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17th March 2026

waiting for planning consent or decision, repossession and perceived difficulties in renting. There is also evidence that some owners have sentimental attachment to a property and are reluctant to part with it for emotional reasons.

- 2.9 There is no act of parliament that creates a duty on local housing authorities to tackle empty homes. However, Councils do have a general housing duty to review housing conditions and needs as laid out in the Housing Act 1985.
- 2.10 National policy focuses on empowering local authorities to bring vacant dwellings back in to use, guided by a local empty homes strategy. Local authorities have the discretion to charge empty home owners council tax premiums and have a range of legislative powers to tackle empty homes.
- 2.11 Since April 2013 local authorities have been able to charge a council tax premium on homes, empty for more than 2 years, that is, an amount charged on top of the council tax due. In April 2024, this was extended to properties empty for more than one year.
- 2.12 Some empty home owners are exempt from paying council tax. The key reasons for this are the owner: is deceased and the property is subject to probate, has moved to hospital or into a care home or the owner is a charity.
- 2.13 The Local Government Association (LGA) has developed good practice guidance for tackling empty homes. LGA good practice approaches focus on systematically identifying and recording empty homes in their areas and engaging, encouraging and using enforcement (where necessary) to bring homes back in to use. Legislative powers for tackling empty homes can be found in appendix 1 to this report
- 2.14 Across the wider West Midlands, the proportion of empty homes varies widely by local authority area. In October 2025, Stratford upon Avon had the highest number of long-term empty homes per 1000 dwellings at 18.38 and Solihull the least at 5.51. Redditch featured amongst the lowest 10 local authorities at 8.43 empty homes per 1000 dwellings.
- 2.15 The strategic approach to tackling empty homes and delivering on our commitment, is centred around three priority areas:

Priority 1 - Develop systems, processes and multi-agency working
Priority 2 - Improve intervention pathways, resources and performance

Executive

17th March 2026

Priority 3 - Strengthen early intervention, engagement and monitoring**3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- 3.1 This Empty Homes Strategy will be implemented by the Private Sector Housing Team and additional funding has been provided through Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant to increase an existing officer's part time role to provide a pro-active approach to Empty Homes.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 A contribution of £7,681 from Redditch Borough Council's Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant (26/27) has been agreed to support the funding of the part-time empty homes officer, referred to above in 3.1. Funding was agreed by Executive on the 13th January 26 (Homelessness Prevention, Rough Sleeper and Domestic Abuse Grants Funding 2026/27 Report).

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is no act of parliament that creates a duty on local housing authorities to tackle empty homes. However, councils do have a general housing duty to review housing conditions and needs as laid out in the Housing Act 1985.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**Local Government Reorganisation**

- 6.1 This Strategy meets the Government's requirement that local authorities continue to deliver high quality and sustainable services for residents during local government reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 Tackling Empty Homes positively impacts:

- Community and Housing

Climate Change Implications

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17th March 2026

-
- 6.3 Bringing Empty Homes back into use will include improvements to the condition and efficiency of the private sector housing stock within Redditch which will positively impact on the Council's approach to mitigate Climate Change

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 No specific equalities and diversity implications have been identified.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 This strategy aims to mitigate risks to the local community from neglected housing.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Redditch Borough Council Empty Homes Strategy 2026 –
29

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive

17th March 2026**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bill Hartnett, Portfolio Holder for Housing	24.02.26
Assistant Director	Judith Willis Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services	24.02.26
Financial Services	Julie Lorraine, Director of Finance	24.02.26
Legal and Democratic Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor - Governance and Jess Bayley-Hill, Principal Democratic Services Officer	23.02.26
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Bough, Strategic Housing and Business Support Manager	13.02.26

Redditch Borough Council

Empty Homes Strategy 2026 – 2029



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Priority 1 - Develop systems, processes and multi-agency working

Priority 2 - Improve intervention pathways, resources and performance

Priority 3 - Strengthen early intervention, engagement and monitoring

Appendix 1 - Legislative Powers for Tackling Empty Homes

Appendix 2 – Strategy Action Plan

Foreword

I am delighted to introduce this updated Redditch Empty Homes Strategy, as addressing the issue of Empty Homes continues to be a key priority for maximising the use of our existing housing stock.

Safe and secure homes should provide stability for people living across Redditch Borough. However, empty homes in our communities can lead to vandalism and other crimes as well as diminishing the quality of the environment overall. At a time of high housing need and increasing homelessness, empty homes are a waste of a valuable opportunity to provide a family with somewhere to build a successful future.

The aim of this strategy is to further improve our current approach to make the best use of all existing housing across our Borough, and it reflects a step change in our commitment to bringing empty homes back into use.

Whilst Redditch Borough Council already helps willing empty home owners with problems they may be experiencing; we have been able to secure Homelessness Prevention Grant funding to invest additional resources to provide a more proactive approach. We aim to contact owners of empty properties, empty for more than 6 months, and work collaboratively to find the right solutions to complex situations.

This strategy will not punish homeowners with valid reasons for vacancy (e.g. in care, serving in the armed forces), instead it targets those who allow assets to fall into disrepair, reducing housing availability for Redditch residents.

The Council carefully monitors the number of empty homes across the Borough. We are committed to finding new ways of ensuring, wherever possible, all housing is brought back into use, including adopting best practice, learning from successful approaches elsewhere and talking to our empty home owners to find out what support they need.

We are looking forward to seeing this new approach to tackle the scandal of empty homes, bringing them back to life as warm safe places to live.

Councillor Bill Hartnett
Executive Member for Housing

Introduction

In October 2025, Redditch Borough had 660 empty homes, of which 320 had been empty for more than 6 months. There were 943 households on the housing register requiring affordable housing. This strategy lays out how the Council will address local empty homes, supporting home owners to bring properties back in to use as quickly as possible and to use enforcement where appropriate.

Redditch Borough Council is committed to ensuring housing is available to meet the needs of local communities. The Council aims to provide more homes for residents, reduce social housing registers and to increase the availability of affordable rental properties. Bringing empty homes back into use, is a key objective to support these goals.

The aim of this strategy is to:

- help alleviate housing need
- improve housing conditions
- offer a wider choice of housing to residents
- minimise the blight that can result where properties are left empty and neglected

Empty homes can have a negative impact on a local area for several reasons, they:

- attract pests and vermin
- can become a focal point for illegal activities such as anti-social behaviour, vandalism and fly tipping
- increase the risk of squatting
- fall into disrepair – increasing renovation costs and possible risks to the public if structures are unsafe
- increase pressure on public resources

Our commitment

Redditch Borough Council is committed to identifying empty homes and developing options for bringing them back into use as quickly as possible. We will do this by setting out clear priorities and actions to tackle empty homes across the Borough and to use the most effective and appropriate interventions.

What is an empty home?

An empty home is a dwelling which is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished. There are two main types of empty homes. Short term empty homes are dwellings which have been unoccupied for under six months. It is often the case that these are in the process of sale. Short term empty homes naturally occur as people's circumstances change, and they move between homes.

Long-term empty homes are dwellings which have been unoccupied and are substantially unfurnished for six months or longer. Bringing long-term, privately owned empty homes back into use is the focus of this strategy. Rather than representing a natural process of change, long-term empty homes indicate there may be other factors leading to a property remaining empty.

What are the reasons behind empty homes?

Residential properties remain empty for various reasons, for example resolving legal ownership as part of an inheritance process. Other factors include new homes waiting for a buyer, owners abandoning properties, owners having a lack of funds for repairs and refurbishment, waiting for planning consent or decision, repossession and perceived difficulties in renting. There is also evidence that some owners have sentimental attachment to a property and are reluctant to part with it for emotional reasons.

Some owners refuse to engage with the council, or they may be unaware of the issues with their property and the effect it is having on the local area. These are often the properties which can fall into disrepair and stand empty for numerous years. It is essential that the council understands the reasons and intentions behind the properties remaining empty to be able to tailor an approach to support the owner in reaching the best possible outcome.

Advantages of bringing empty homes back in to use

Advantages of bringing empty homes back in to use include:

- reducing and discouraging levels of anti-social behaviour, crime, fly-tipping and vandalism
- increasing the provision of affordable housing
- recovering debt owed to the council
- supporting corporate economic growth and development priorities, objectives and strategies
- improving an area, reducing environmental decline and local people's quality of life resulting from living near a long-term empty home
- reducing additional council tax premiums for home owners

National Context

According to the council tax database for 2025, there were 542,276 empty homes recorded in October across England, representing 2.1% of all homes. This number has risen by 8% since 2024. Of all empty homes, 309,856 were recorded as long-term empty, 57%.

Action to tackle empty homes has a significant potential to address national housing needs. At the end of June 2025, 86,650 households were in temporary accommodation across England and owed a main housing duty by the local housing authority.

National empty homes policy focuses on empowering local authorities to bring vacant dwellings back in to use, guided by a local empty homes strategy. Local authorities have the discretion to charge empty home owners council tax premiums and have a range of legislative powers to tackle empty homes (*appendix 1*). There is no act of parliament that creates a duty on local housing authorities to tackle empty homes. However, councils do have a general housing duty to review housing conditions and needs.

Council Tax Premiums

Since April 2013 local authorities have been able to charge a council tax premium on homes, empty for more than 2 years, that is, an amount charged on top of the council tax due. From April 2021, local authorities could charge a premium of up to 100% for dwellings that had been empty for between 2 to 5 years, up to 200% for dwellings that had been empty for between 5 to 10 years, and up to 300% for dwellings that have been empty for 10 years or more. Since April 2024, local authorities have been able to charge a premium on properties empty for more than 1 year.

In 2025, 291 out of 296 local authorities charged a premium on empty homes. Across England, 153,000 home owners were charged a premium, 28.2% of all empty homes. Some empty home owners are exempt from paying council tax. The key reasons for this are the owner:

- is deceased and the property is subject to probate
- has moved to hospital or into a care home
- is a charity

Good Practice

The Local Government Association's (LGA) 2023 report, *A Practical Approach for Councils on Dealing With Empty Homes*, lays out recommendations for best practice identified through case studies and research exploring local authorities' empty homes approaches. LGA good practice approaches focus on systematically identifying and recording empty homes in their areas and engaging, encouraging and using enforcement to bring homes back in to use. Case studies in the report cover the benefits of well-trained and dedicated staff working to effective procedures.

Local Context

Redditch is situated in the north of Worcestershire and has a population of 87,847. In December 2025, there were 943 people on the housing register in need of affordable housing. In October 2025, Redditch Borough Council had 660 empty homes, of which 320 had been empty for more than 6 months. Bringing empty homes back into residential use, could contribute to meeting the Borough's housing needs.

National data shows that in October 2025 there were 33,215 long-term empty homes, across the wider West Midlands area (1), representing 1.26% of all dwellings or 12.6 per 1000 dwellings. Across the region, the number of empty homes increased by 4782 (16.8%) between October 2024 and October 2025.

The proportion of empty homes varies widely by local authority area. In October 2025, Stratford upon Avon had the highest number of long-term empty homes per 1000 dwellings at 18.38 and Solihull the least at 5.51. Redditch featured amongst the lowest 10 local authorities at 8.43 empty homes per 1000 dwellings.

Number of Long-Term Empty Homes in Worcestershire

Local Authority	Per 1000 Dwellings	Number Long-Term Empty Homes 2025	Number Long-Term Empty Homes 2024	Change since October 2024	
Bromsgrove	8.88	384	369	15	4.0 %
Malvern Hills	15.97	621	626	-5	-0.8 %
Redditch	8.43	320	283	37	13.0 %
Worcester	14.53	698	653	45	7.0 %
Wychavon	13.71	857	886	-29	-3.3%
Wyre Forest	7.40	364	337	27	8%
Worcestershire	11.59	3244	3154	90	2.9%

Source: Council Tax Base Oct 2025 & Oct2024

Wychavon achieved a reduction in the number of empty homes over the period, one of the top 5 highest reductions across the wider West Midlands. Rugby achieved the highest reduction, 212 empty homes brought back in to use since 2024. Birmingham saw the highest increase at 1654 empty homes.

(1) In the context of the Council Tax Base, the wider West Midlands refers to Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire. West Midlands and Worcestershire (ONS)

When the number of long term empty homes and all empty homes in Redditch are compared with the number of dwellings in the area, we can see that approximately half have been empty, for less than 6 months. This indicates a relatively higher turnover when compared with the data for Worcestershire as a whole and England.

Local Authority	Proportion of Empty Homes 2025	Proportion of Long-Term Empty Homes 2025
Redditch	1.74%	0.84%
Worcestershire	1.91%	1.16%
England	2.10%	1.20%

In October 2025, there were 320 long-term empty homes in Redditch. The table below shows how these were dispersed over council tax banding. Just over 87% of all empty homes are in bands A to C.

Council Tax Banding	Number	Percentage
A	120	37.5
B	111	34.7
C	48	15.0
D	20	6.3
E	15	4.7
F	2	0.6
G	2	0.6
H	2	0.6

Of all 660 empty homes, 380 were paying full council tax. 134 were paying a premium, which constitutes 20.3% of all empty homes. This was slightly above the county average of 19.3% and below the average for England of 28.2%. There are 146 properties exempted from paying council tax. The reasons for this are varied but most commonly, the owner is deceased and their estate is in probate, or the owner has moved to receive or provide care elsewhere.

From April 2026, Redditch Borough Council premiums will be charged as follows, (where an empty home owner does not qualify for an exemption):

Time Empty	Council Tax Premium
1-5 years	100%
5-10 years	200%
10 years plus	300%

Local Good Practice

Wychavon and Malvern district councils have recently developed their empty homes resources. In 2024, Wychavon appointed a dedicated Empty Homes Officer, who has made progress, bringing long-term empty properties back in to use.

Wychavon District Council & Malvern Hills District Council

Both Worcestershire district councils have a full-time, dedicated empty homes officer working in the private sector housing team. The council tax and private sector housing teams work together, sharing data on a weekly basis to maintain an up to date and accurate empty homes data base.

Local Government Association recommended processes are used to track and monitor empty homes. Wychavon District Council has a target of bringing 30 homes back into use between 2024 and 2028, as part of the We Are Wychavon Plan. Empty homes officers use a range of tools to achieve their aims. Tools include informing property owners of support available as early as possible and using enforcement where necessary. Successful joint working with council tax colleagues also ensures owners of empty homes are paying the correct council tax premiums.

Empty Homes Strategic Priorities

Our approach to tackling empty homes and delivering on our commitment, is centred around three priority areas:

Priority 1

Develop systems, processes and multi-agency working

Priority 2

Improve intervention pathways, resources and performance

Priority 3

Strengthen early intervention, engagement and monitoring

The strategy action plan (appendix 2) lays out details of how each of the strategic priorities will be delivered.

Accountability

Officers will implement the action plan, and progress will be monitored through regular performance reports.

Appendix 1 Legislative Powers for Tackling Empty Homes

Legislation	Summary of Power	Lead Department	Timescale	Priority Use	Notes / Practical Considerations	If Owner Cannot Be Located
Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949	Require owner to keep property free from rats/mice and remove accumulations of waste.	Private Sector Housing/ Worcestershire Regulatory Services	Quick	First-line	Can be used immediately if infestations or waste are visible. Covers gardens and interiors. Cost recovery.	Serve notice to last known address, affix to property, and proceed with works in default if no response. Recover costs via local land charge.
Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 s.29	Secure unsecured or dangerous empty building to prevent unauthorised entry.	Private Sector Housing (with Legal & Property Services)	Quick	First-line / Escalation	48 hrs notice unless urgent. Works in default recoverable from owner.	Affix notice to property and proceed to secure if no owner contact. Charge costs to property as a land charge.
Building Act 1984 s.77 & s.78	Order owner to make building safe (s.77) or take emergency action (s.78).	Private Sector Housing/ Building Control	Quick (s.78) / Medium (s77)	First-line / Escalation	s.78 allows immediate works if imminent danger. Cost recoverable from owner.	Proceed under s.78 without owner consent if imminent danger. For s.77, serve notice to last known address and property. Charge

Legislation	Summary of Power	Lead Department	Timescale	Priority Use	Notes / Practical Considerations	If Owner Cannot Be Located
						costs as land charge
Building Act 1984 s.79	Require repair/restoration or demolition of ruinous/dilapidated buildings affecting amenity.	North Worcestershire Building Control	Medium	Escalation	Limited to amenity impact. Can require rubbish removal from site.	Serve notice to last known address and property. Works in default possible if no owner found. Costs recoverable.
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 s.215	Require improvement of land/building where condition harms local amenity.	Planning Enforcement	Medium	First-line / Escalation	Minimum 28 days compliance. Used for overgrown/derelict sites.	Serve notice to last known address and affix to site. Works in default if no owner found; costs recovered as land charge.
Housing Act 2004	Require works to remove Category 1 or 2 hazards under HHSRS.	Private Sector Housing	Medium	First-line / Escalation	Enables works in default, fines. Powers of entry included.	Serve to last known address and property. If no access, use power of entry (with warrant if needed). Works in default recoverable.

Legislation	Summary of Power	Lead Department	Timescale	Priority Use	Notes / Practical Considerations	If Owner Cannot Be Located
Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO)	Take control of empty home to let/manage it.	Private Sector Housing, Strategic Housing and Business Development Manager (with Legal & Cabinet approval)	Medium / Long-term	Escalation	Must be empty 6+ months. High capital and management resource required.	Can proceed even without contact, reasonable steps to locate owner required, then apply to First-tier Tribunal.
Enforced Sale Procedure (LPA 1925 s.103)	Force sale of property to recover debts over £1,000.	Legal Services (triggered by Private Sector Housing, Council Tax Recovery, or Housing Strategy)	Medium	Escalation / Last resort	Simpler than CPO. Can be linked to works in default or council tax arrears.	Ownership not required for contact, sale can proceed based on registered title and debt charge.
Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO)	Acquire property without owner consent to bring into use.	Private Sector Housing, Strategic Housing and Business Development Manager (with Legal & Cabinet approval)	Long-term	Last resort	Cabinet approval required. Must show voluntary action attempts first.	Can proceed without contact, but must evidence reasonable attempts to trace owner. Notice published and posted on site.
Housing Act 1985 s.17	Compulsory purchase to improve housing stock or bring empty homes	Private Sector Housing, Strategic Housing and	Long-term	Last resort	Needs Secretary of State approval. High cost. Disposal to	Can proceed without contact, but must evidence

Legislation	Summary of Power	Lead Department	Timescale	Priority Use	Notes / Practical Considerations	If Owner Cannot Be Located
	into use.	Business Development Manager (with Legal & Cabinet approval)			RSL/developer/owner-occupier.	reasonable attempts to trace owner. Notice published and posted on site.

Empty Homes Strategy – Action Plan

This action plan has been developed in line with the Local Government Association’s Empty Homes Toolkit, which promotes a staged approach focused on accurate data, early engagement, proportionate enforcement and strong partnership working.

The plan reflects LGA best practice by prioritising the establishment of reliable data and governance arrangements first, followed by structured engagement and intervention pathways, and then scaling up early intervention and enforcement activity once systems are embedded.

The phased delivery model ensures the Council builds capability incrementally, demonstrates value for money, and uses enforcement powers proportionately and effectively to bring empty homes back into use.

Priority 1 – Develop systems, processes and multi-agency working.

Action	KPI / Measure	Start	End	Key Milestones	Responsible Team(s)
Develop systems to record and track empty homes across the district	Centralised empty homes system goes live, 100% of known empty homes logged and tracked	1 st Aug 2026	1 st January 2027	System design complete (1 st August 2026); Go-live (Jan 2027)	Private Sector Housing (Lead), Council Tax
Develop and embed data-sharing processes between PSH and Council Tax	Data-sharing arrangement agreed; routine data transfer embedded as business as usual	1 st July 2026	1 st Sept 2026	Data-sharing agreement signed (1 st July 2026); Automated / routine transfer in place (1 st Sept 2026)	Council Tax (Lead), Information Management, Private Sector Housing
Participate in joint departmental and agency working group for complex cases	Quarterly meetings held; minimum 5 complex cases reviewed and actioned per year	15 th June 2026	Ongoing	First meeting attended (15 th June 2026)	Private Sector Housing (Lead), Council Tax, Planning, Building Control, Legal Services,

					Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Review options for public reporting of empty homes	Online reporting route improved and promoted; baseline established for number of public referrals	1 st July 2026	31 st Dec 2027	Online updates completed (1 st Oct 2026); Communications campaign launched (Dec 2026)	Web Team (Lead), Private Sector Housing, Communications, Customer Services

Priority 2 – Improve intervention pathways, resources and performance

Action	KPI / Measure	Start	End	Key Milestones	Responsible Team(s)
Review PSH processes using support, advice, incentives and enforcement	Baseline established for case progression times; standard empty homes case pathway approved and implemented	1 st September 2026	1 st December 2026	Process mapping completed (30 th Sep 2026); Pathway approved (1 st December 2026)	Private Sector Housing (Lead), Legal Services, Finance, Strategic Housing
Identify range of support, incentives and enforcement options	Menu of support and enforcement tools agreed and documented	1 st October 2026	1 st March 2027	Options appraisal completed (1 st December 2026); Toolkit approved (1 st March 2027)	Private Sector Housing (Lead), Strategic Housing
Develop scoring matrix aligned to LGA Empty Homes Toolkit	Scoring matrix designed and applied to 100% of empty home cases	1 st November 2026	1 st March 2027	Draft criteria (1 st December 2026); Full implementation (1 st March 2027)	Private Sector Housing (Lead)
Analyse effectiveness of empty homes	Annual performance report produced; improvement	1 st December	1 st February 2028 (then	Baseline dashboard (1 st November 2027); Year-end	Private Sector Housing (Lead),

processes	actions agreed and tracked	2027	annual)	analysis (Feb 2028)	Strategic Housing
Identify and explore good practice to address barriers	Benchmarking completed; practice note adopted and implemented	1 st December 2027	31 st March 2028	Desk research (Dec 2027); Peer engagement (Mar 2028); Practice adoption (Jun 2028)	Private Sector Housing (Lead), Strategic Housing, Empty Homes Regional Network
Develop targets to bring empty homes back into use	Annual and strategy-level targets set; quarterly monitoring in place	1 st Sept 2026	15 th Dec 2026	Baseline agreed (Oct 2026); Draft targets (Nov 2026); Sign-off (Dec 2026)	Private Sector Housing

Phase 3 – Strengthen early intervention, engagement and monitoring

Action	KPI / Measure	Start	End	Key Milestones	Responsible Team(s)
Develop early intervention processes for newly identified empty homes	From go-live, 100% of newly identified empty homes contacted within 12 weeks	1 st Nov 2026	28 th Feb 2027	Workflow design complete (30 Nov 2026); Go-live (Feb 2027)	Private Sector Housing (Lead), Council Tax
Create survey to establish effectiveness of early intervention for previous empty homes owners	Survey designed and issued	1 st Jan 2027	31 st Mar 2027	Survey design (Feb 2027)	Private Sector Housing
Consult previous owners of empty	Annual survey completed; action	1 st April	30 th June	Findings Report (June	Private Sector Housing

homes	log agreed and monitored	2027	2027	2027)	(Lead)
Monitor and report on homes brought back into use	Annual empty homes performance report published	1 st Jan 2027	Ongoing	First annual report published (Apr 2027)	Private Sector Housing
Explore options to increase homes brought back into use (complex / multi-agency cases)	Options appraised annually; at least one new delivery option piloted	1 st Jan 2027	31 st Dec 2027	Long list (Mar 2027); Shortlist & pilots (Jul–Sep 2027); Appraisal (Dec 2027)	Multi-Agency Working Group (Lead), Legal, Finance, Registered Providers / Partners

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Executive Committee
202617th March**Climate Change Strategy 2026 - 2031**

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	The green thread
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) **The Council's Climate Change Strategy 2026–2031 be approved; and**
- 2) **an annual review of the Climate Change Strategy be reported to Council.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Redditch Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and committed to place climate considerations at the centre of decision-making. The proposed Climate Change Strategy 2026–2031 updates and replaces the previous Carbon Reduction Action Plan and sets out the pathway to Net Zero by 2040 for the Council's own operations, with a 50% reduction by 2030.
- 2.2 The Strategy aligns with the UK statutory target of Net Zero by 2050 and international commitments under the Paris Agreement; it also reflects the Council Plan's green thread, embedding climate action across services.
- 2.3 The Strategy focuses on priority themes where the Council has direct control or significant influence:
 - **Buildings – council estate** (energy efficiency and renewables),
 - **Residential buildings** (retrofit & fuel poverty),

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- **Transport** (fleet decarbonisation, EV infrastructure, active travel),
- **Planning & land use** (policies, Future Homes Standard readiness)
- **Biodiversity** (BNG delivery, parks, nature recovery),
- **Waste & food** (recycling, weekly food waste collections, Anaerobic Digestion feasibility),
- **Collaboration & engagement** (partners, businesses, communities), and
- **Governance & finance** (training, procurement, reporting).

2.4 Evidence base highlights (baseline & progress):

- **Domestic retrofit:** £1.81 million has been invested in social housing energy efficiency upgrades, alongside £260,000 for private home retrofits, with further funding streams set to deliver £4.27 million of improvements to council housing stock.
- **Council energy:** Energy consumption across council buildings has fallen by 20% since 2021, supported by solar PV installations and a 100% green energy tariff.
- **Area emissions context:** DESNZ local authority GHG statistics (2005–2023) provide the latest official picture for Redditch and Worcestershire. Emissions continue to decline, with Redditch achieving 3.5 tCO₂e per capita in 2023, below regional and national averages

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 **Delivery approach.** A cross-service programme will coordinate actions and contribute to delivering on the strategies milestones and outcomes, overseen by the Climate Change Manager. The Climate Change team also provide services with the expertise and guidance is required.

3.2 **Governance.** The Strategy will be embedded in the Council's performance framework with annual Cabinet reporting. Climate implications are already a standard section in committee reports; options to introduce a simple climate impact assessment tool for officers to utilise.

In addition, Assistant Directors will incorporate actions from the strategy within their service business plans and include date bound targets that will form part of the plans quarterly monitoring and reporting

Furthermore, to support tracking progress with the strategies milestones and outcomes a dashboard is being developed to allow the council to see the impact of these actions in terms of carbon savings and impacts on our residents.

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- 3.3 **Partnerships.** Continued collaboration with Worcestershire County Council (e.g., LEVI on-street charging), Rubicon Leisure, Registered Providers, Act on Energy, Midland Net Zero Hub, Worcestershire Regulatory Services, will maximise delivery capacity and funding leverage.
- 3.4 **Current Activity.** Key operational programmes include: PV at Abbey Stadium and lighting upgrades across the estate; Warm Homes retrofit; expansion of EV charging (including support to WCC's LEVI rollout); preparation for separate weekly food waste collections; and biodiversity improvements (mowing regimes, equipment electrification).

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The strategy will be delivered through a mix of existing revenue budgets, invest-to-save business cases, Capital Programme bids, and external funding as required by service areas. Any additional funding that requires an amendment to the Council's Budget Framework will be reported through the Executive Committee to Council.
- 4.2 The climate Change team will work with the Finance Services team to profile costs, savings, and funding sources through the Medium-Term Financial Plan, ensuring robust whole-life business cases. The Council will explore funding opportunities and partnerships with the private sector to bring in inward investment to the borough to deliver climate change projects.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).** Under the Environment Act 2021, a mandatory minimum 10% BNG applies to qualifying planning applications (major developments from 12th February 2024; small sites from 2nd April 2024). The strategy supports implementation through development management and local plan policy.
- 5.2 **Waste and recycling reforms.** The Government's Simpler Recycling requirements standardise collections nationally; separate household food waste collections are required by 31st March 2026, subject to transitional provisions. Preparatory work is underway to ensure operational readiness (collection systems, communications, and processing).
- 5.3 **Procurement and contracts.** Delivery will align with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and proposed sustainable procurement updates, incorporating whole-life carbon and social value where proportionate and lawful.

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6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**Local Government Reorganisation**

- 6.1 Any structural changes will be monitored. Programme sequencing (e.g., fleet transition and depot infrastructure) will be reviewed to minimise stranded costs, maintain service continuity, and align with any future operating model.
- 6.2 The strategy is constructed in a way that will allow it to be adapted to the new unitary authority.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The strategy gives effect to the green thread within the Council Plan by reducing emissions, improving resilience, lowering energy costs, and supporting a greener local economy.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 Approval will enable the Council's primary framework to reduce operational and area-wide emissions, improve air quality, and support adaptation and nature recovery.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 Actions are designed to reduce fuel poverty and improve health outcomes (e.g., domestic retrofit, air quality). Equality Impact Assessments will be completed for major programmes to ensure fair access and mitigate unintended impacts.
- 6.5 All documents will be produced accessibly in line with the Council's corporate accessibility guidance.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 **Funding availability and affordability** – *Mitigation*: phased delivery, external grant maximisation, robust invest-to-save business cases.
Market capacity and supply chain constraints – *Mitigation*: early engagement, framework procurement, regional collaboration (e.g., Midlands Connect / MNZH).

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Operational disruption during works – *Mitigation:* programme planning around service needs, contractor management, stakeholder communications.

Policy and regulatory change – *Mitigation:* horizon scanning, flexible delivery plans, governance oversight.

Data quality and benefits realisation – *Mitigation:* climate dashboard, baselines and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs); regular monitoring and reporting.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Climate Change Strategy 2026 - 2031

Executive Committee
202617th March**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jen Snape	19/02/2026
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Judith Wills	19/02/2026
Financial Services	Debra Goodall	19/02/2026
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor - Governance	14/01/2026
Policy Team	Rebecca Green	19/02/2026
Climate Change Team	Matthew Eccles	19/02/2026

Foreword: John Leach, Chief Executive

This Climate Change Strategy is designed to support the goals of the wider Council Plan, as we align all our efforts to deliver high-quality, reliable services for our residents.

Our approach here is practical and service-led: making energy efficiency upgrades to homes, adding solar PV and heat pumps to council buildings to reduce our carbon emissions, and improving biodiversity and soil health through land management strategies to ensure green spaces continue to thrive for the public.

We will continue to modernise the vehicle fleet that works for residents, expand local EV charging infrastructure, and embed sustainability into our planning and procurement, ensuring that our decisions support both service excellence and environmental responsibility.

It's not only about reducing emissions. We want to help create healthier homes, safer streets, and resilient communities. By aligning climate action with our organisational priorities – financial and organisational stability, strong governance, and community-focused delivery – we can make meaningful progress toward net zero while protecting the services people depend on.

As we look ahead, we recognise that Local Government Reorganisation will shape how services are delivered across the county. This strategy is designed to be adaptable: ensuring that our climate commitments remain central to decision-making, whatever the governance structure. We will work closely with partners to maintain continuity of projects, align priorities, and explore opportunities for joint procurement and shared infrastructure investment. By building flexibility into our approach, we can safeguard progress toward net zero while supporting a smooth transition for residents and staff.

Foreword: Councillor Jen Snape, Portfolio Holder for Climate Change

"This strategy takes a pragmatic approach to tackling climate change by focusing on actions that deliver real benefits for residents while safeguarding the services people rely on.

“Our priorities include improving energy efficiency in homes, particularly our council housing stock, to cut bills and tackle fuel poverty, reducing emissions from council buildings, supporting greener transport, and embedding biodiversity into planning and land use. These are practical and achievable steps, designed to make steady progress toward our net zero target.

“It is in all our interests to ensure that every improvement we make keeps one eye firmly on protecting the much-loved greenness that defines Redditch.

“From retrofitting homes and expanding renewable energy, to increasing tree cover and enhancing biodiversity, we want to balance progress with preservation. By working together, the council, our partners, and the community, we can create a healthier, more resilient borough while safeguarding the natural spaces that make Redditch special.”

Background & Introduction

What is climate change?

Climate change refers to the changing global and regional long-term weather patterns. Climate change is predominantly caused by the release of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere by human activity. These greenhouse gases trap heat from the sun warming the planet in a process called the enhanced greenhouse effect. Globally we are seeing severe consequences from more frequent and intense weather events such as droughts, heat waves, storms, rising sea levels and melting glacial ice, and we are seeing some of these impacts locally within the borough (most notable intense droughts, heat waves and storms). These extreme weather events disrupt peoples' lives both in terms of physical and mental wellbeing and economically and have wider implications on communities and ecosystems.

Climate change in a local context

In 2015, the UK and 195 other countries signed the Paris Agreement¹, where they agreed to limit mean global temperature rise to 1.5°C above preindustrial levels to avoid catastrophic impacts from climate change. In 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report² warning that urgent action was required to cut greenhouse gas emissions to limit global warming to 1.5°C; in order to reach this limit, CO₂ emissions need to decline by approximately 45% from 2010 levels by the year 2030, and reach net zero by approximately 2050.

The UK Government has committed to Net Zero by 2050. Local Authorities (LA) are key in taking and influencing action on climate change due to the services they deliver, their regulatory functions, strategic functions, procurement powers and responsibilities as major employers. Redditch Borough Council has set targets to reduce carbon emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieve Net Zero by 2040.

Modelling using the IPCC methodology for calculating Net Zero, suggests that Redditch Borough Council is currently on course to reach a 50% emissions reduction by around 2035 and Net Zero by around 2037—demonstrating strong progress but falling short of the Council's earlier targets of 50% by 2030 and Net Zero by 2040.

¹ 2015 Paris Agreement: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf

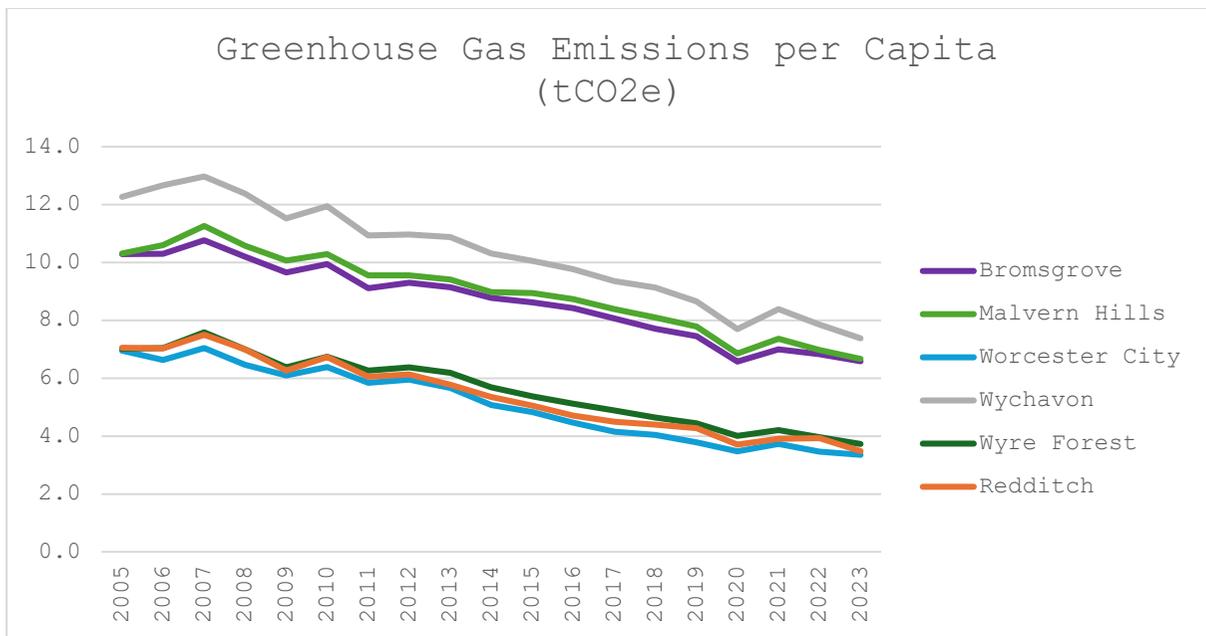
² 2018 IPCC report: <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

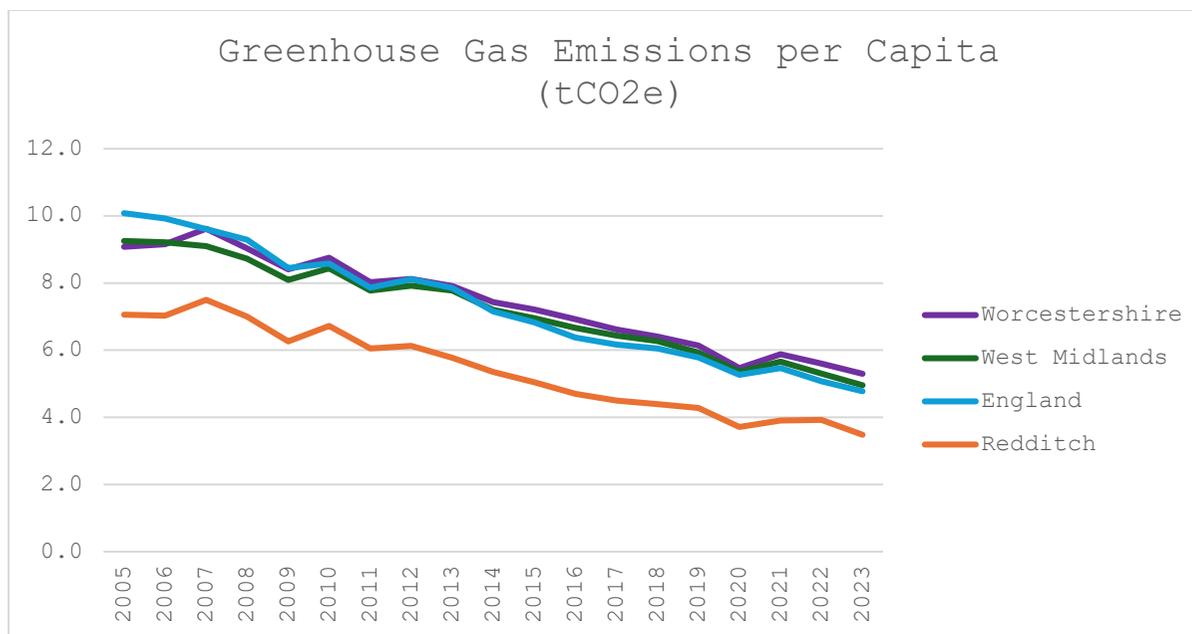
The actions and milestones set out in this Strategy—including large-scale retrofit programmes, expansion of solar PV on the Council estate, transport decarbonisation, planning policy improvements, biodiversity enhancements and strengthened governance—represent the essential additional effort required to close this gap and accelerate the borough’s pathway.

Effective monitoring, evaluation and transparent reporting of these milestones will be key to ensuring delivery remains on track. This will allow the Council to regularly assess progress, respond proactively where interventions need strengthening, and sustain the pace necessary to meet its Net Zero ambitions.

Improvements to the council’s emissions can be made on various levels, referred to as scopes. Scope 1 emissions are those that arise from the council’s combustion of fossil fuels – through the burning of gas in boilers and from internal combustion engine vehicles. Scope 2 emissions are those produced from electricity that the council purchases from the grid. Scope 3 emissions are those associated with products and services the council purchases (for example manufacturing and transport costs).

In 2023, the greenhouse gas emissions associated with Worcestershire were 3,253.5 ktCO₂e. The borough of Redditch was responsible for 303.1 ktCO₂e, and the emissions considered within the scope of local authority influence totalled 253.9 kt CO₂e.





The figures above show the per capita emissions of Redditch to regional and national statistics³. Redditch has consistently produced fewer emissions per person than Worcestershire, West Midlands and England averages, and continues to reduce emissions, with an average of 3.5 tCO2e per capita in 2023.

Within Worcestershire, Redditch performs consistently well as the second lowest producer of greenhouse gas emissions per person, performing in line with more urbanised districts within the county.

Redditch Borough Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. On the declaration of this, the council affirmed that it places the Climate Emergency at the centre of its decision-making process. A carbon reduction action was created plan in 2022 with targets to assist in the reduction of carbon emissions, both from council functions and the wider sphere of influence. This action plan follows on from the carbon

³ Data for figures: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics-2005-to-2023>

reduction action plan and considers actions the council will take to further reduce emissions (including carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases). This plan will be reviewed annually and refreshed after five years.

Residential buildings

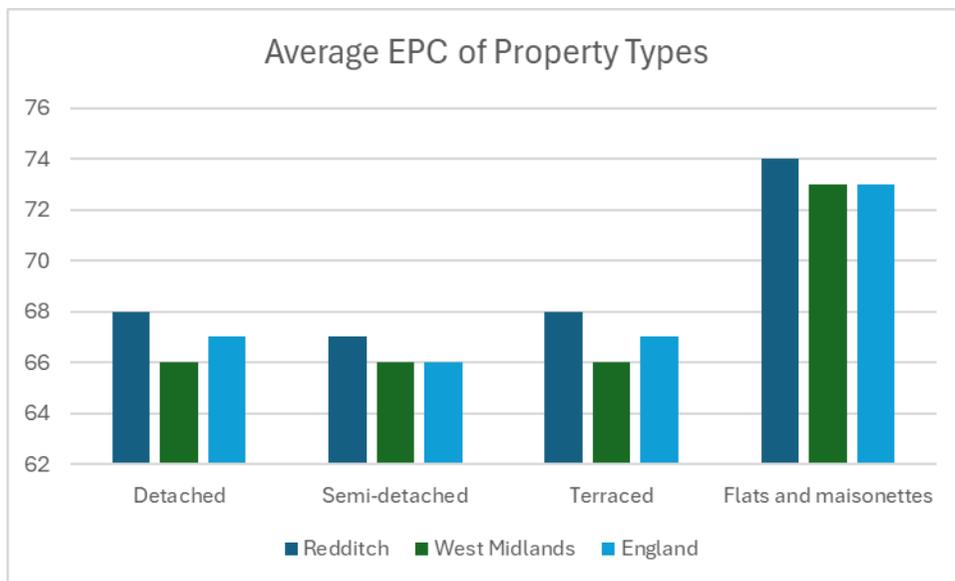
In Redditch it is estimated that 67.6% of homes are owner occupied, with 11.3% private rented and 21.1% social housing properties making up 5,531 homes across the borough. In 2024 RBC undertook 1200 surveys of its housing stock and have ongoing programme of 1340 surveys every year going. Over the five-year cycle of these surveys' officers will gain insight for future work in improving the energy efficiency of homes across the borough.

Making homes more energy efficient helps to reduce bills, which helps to combat fuel poverty across the borough. This has wider benefits as health risks from damp and mould are reduced, as well as reducing carbon emissions.

Since Redditch declared a climate emergency in 2019 RBC has utilised several government funding streams to support improving the energy efficiency of homes across the Borough. This has so far resulted in £1,810,368 of investment in social housing across the borough and seeing improvements made to 270 properties and 5 blocks of flats. For private homes, the council has used £260,000.00 of government funding to retrofit 18 homes across the borough.

Currently RBC is utilising Warm Homes Local Grant Funding to provide retrofitting works across both privately owned homes and private rented homes over the next 3 years and could see a further £576,876.92 worth of investment into the borough. RBC has is also utilising the Social Housing Fund which has allocated £2.17million, and combined with council contributions, £4.27 million is invested into this project to retrofit the 200 properties within the council's own housing stock. This work includes adding measures to homes such as insulation which reduces the heat lost, reducing the consumption of energy.

In addition, RBC is actively working in partnership with Act on Energy to advise, educate and inform occupiers on Energy efficiency, fuel supplies and the best practices to enable them in turn to lower bills, improve comfort and make best use of their homes. RBC will also be following up the Governments commitment to energy efficiency and will continue to apply and access government funding streams and actively review how RBC can use and encourage the deployment and use of Solar PB on its housing stock.



Energy efficiency score	Energy efficiency rating band
More than 91	A
81 to 91	B
69 to 80	C
55 to 68	D
39 to 54	E
21 to 38	F

The graph above shows Redditch's EPC ratings compared to the West Midlands and England. Redditch consistently has higher EPC scores than the averages for the West Midlands and England but still falls within the same bands for each property type.

As part of the clean growth strategy⁴, the national government have set targets for all fuel poor homes to be upgraded to EPC C by 2030 with an aspiration for as many homes as possible to be EPC B and C by 2035 where practical, cost-effective and affordable. Within the clean growth strategy there is also an aim to improve the energy performance of privately rented homes, with as many as possible upgraded to EPC C by 2030.

Future Milestones

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
Improve energy efficiency of new residential buildings across borough	Planning/housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore feasibility of new homes to be built operationally net zero RBC new social housing all to be high energy efficiency 	2028 2026-2031	Outcomes: Reduced energy bills Warmer homes – fewer illnesses Reduction in household carbon emissions Target: 100% all new RBC social housing EPC A
Improve EPC of council owned housing	Planning/housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retrofitting of council owned housing – Warm Homes Social Housing Fund (WHSHF) Secure further government funding for retrofit projects in line with Governments Warm Homes Plan Work towards all homes in the council’s housing stock at EPC C minimum 	2028 2026-2031 2030	Outcomes: Reduced energy bills Warmer homes and less instances of damp and mould which reduce associated health risks Improve each areas average EPC score above the national/regional average

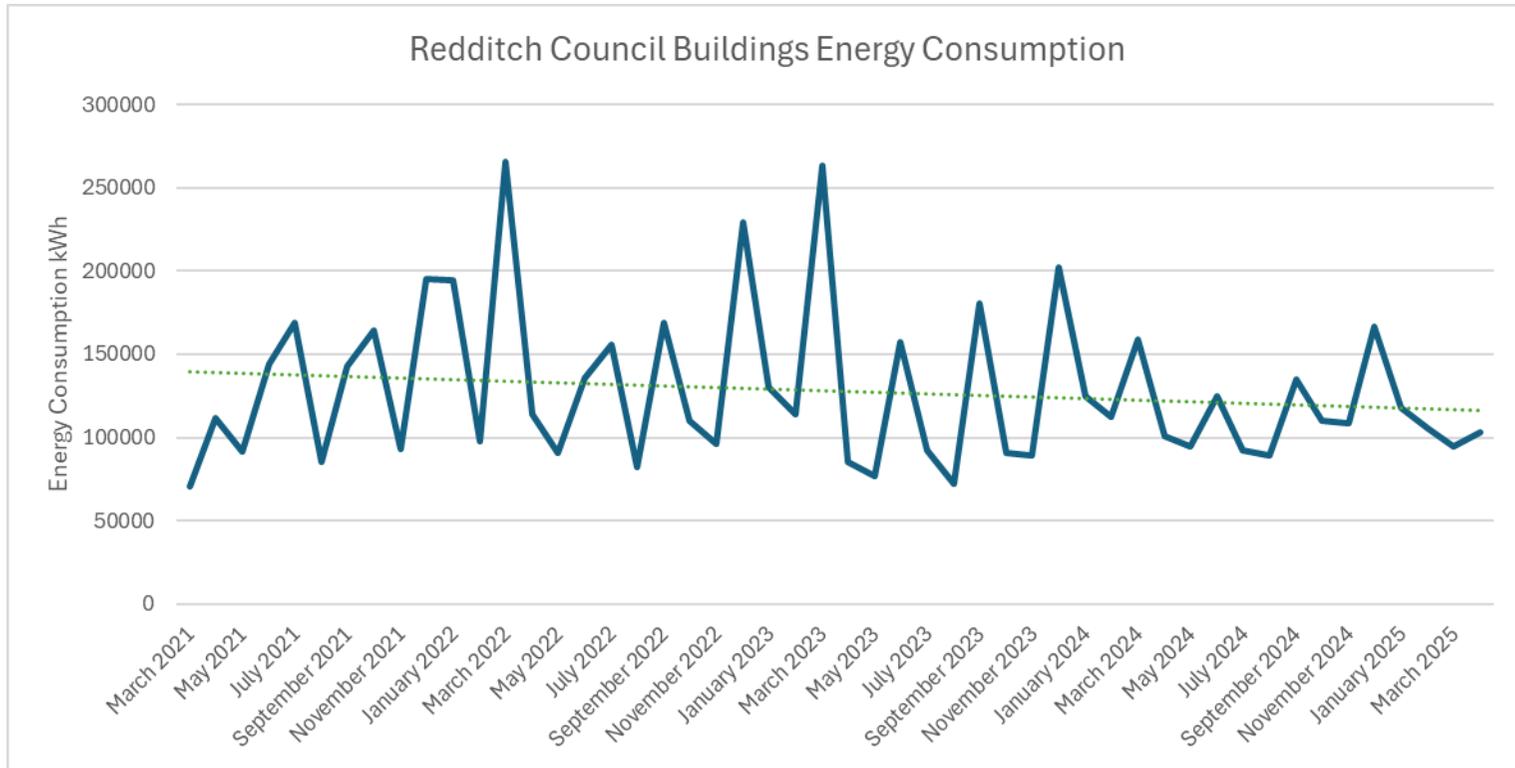
⁴ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ad5f11ded915d32a3a70c03/clean-growth-strategy-correction-april-2018.pdf>

				<p>Reduction in fuel poverty Reduced household carbon emissions Increased local supply chain employment opportunities, increased local skills base, support the transition to green economy Target: Up to 200 homes retrofitted under WHSHF Target: Ensure all homes meet 2030 MEES unless exemptions are applicable</p>
Retrofit houses with lowest EPC	Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the retrofitting of homes utilising the Warm Homes Local Grant (WHLG) funding • Secure funding for further retrofit projects in line with the Warm Homes Plan • Seek out partnerships to develop an offer for the able to pay market in line with government proposals in the Warm Homes Plan • Work with Energy Advice Service provider to support households needing support with energy bills to explore access to retrofit schemes and reduce fuel poverty • Identify and enable opportunities to retrofit listed buildings and residential properties in conservation 	<p>2028</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>March 2028</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>March 2027</p>	<p>Outcomes: Reduced energy bills Warmer homes and less instances of damp and mould which reduce associated health risks Improve each area’s average EPC score above the national/regional average Reduction in fuel poverty Reduced household carbon emissions Increased local supply chain employment opportunities, increased local skills base, support the transition to green economy</p>

		areas by publishing heritage appropriate retrofit guidance and delivering at least three pilot or demonstrator projects in partnership with conservation officers and housing providers-appropriate retrofit guidance and delivering at least three pilot or demonstrator projects, in partnership with conservation officers and housing providers		Target: 38 Private Homes retrofitted under WHLG by 2028
Council to actively support landlords with Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards of homes	Housing/WRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support landlords to progress towards MEES compliance (EPC C by 2030) by providing advice, guidance and signposting to funding, retrofit support and exemption routes, and by working with partners to remove local barriers to delivery 	2030	Outcomes: Reduced energy bills Warmer homes and less instances of damp and mould which reduce associated health risks Reduced household emissions

Buildings – council

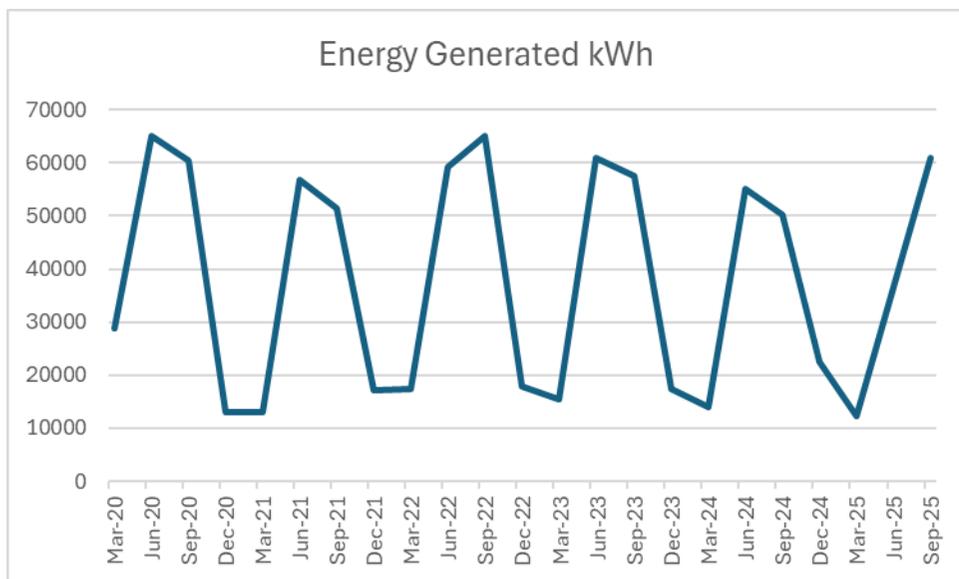
Reduction in energy consumption in council buildings reduces emissions released. The creation (and consumption) of renewable energy (e.g. from solar PV) reduced emissions further, as no greenhouse gases are released in the production of this energy. The council’s buildings have undergone significant improvements to reduce emissions, such as retrofitting solar panels* and heat pumps. As a result, fewer emissions are released in the process of powering these buildings. Where surplus energy is created, this is transferred back into the grid, creating green energy for other consumers. There are also economic benefits as less energy is purchased from external providers. Where the council does buy energy, it is on a 100% green tariff, which also helps to reduce emissions.



The chart shows purchased energy consumption across Council buildings. While monthly usage fluctuates seasonally, the overall trend has been downward since 2021, with an indicative reduction of around 20% based on the trendline. Winter peaks have also moderated. Part of this reduction reflects operational changes following the Covid-19 pandemic—such as different occupancy patterns and more hybrid working—so the trend should be interpreted alongside building-use data and service needs rather than as efficiency gains alone. Ongoing monitoring will help distinguish savings from behaviour/occupancy changes versus improvements from targeted energy-efficiency measures.

Currently the following council buildings in Redditch have solar PV installed which are generating electricity: Town Hall, Palace Theatre, Bredon House, Retreat Steet Sheltered Housing Site, Mendip House, Malvern House, Keats House, Chiltern House, St David’s House, Ibstock House, Downsell House, Gorsey Close Community Centre, Beoley Road West, Beoley Road Common Room, Arthur Jobson House, Auxerre House, Harry Taylor House, Crossgate House, Abbey Stadium and Redditch Crematorium

The council is seeking to increase the amount of PV on its buildings, with Abbey stadium currently having more work undertaken to increase the amount of PV.



The graph above shows the energy generated by solar PV installed on council owned buildings in Redditch. The seasonal dips are due to reduced levels of sunlight in winter, but even during these months energy is created by solar panels.

The Council is currently investigating NOx abatement options for its cremators to improve local air quality, while the potential transition to electric cremators will be considered at the next planned replacement window (approximately eight years), which would deliver longer-term carbon and air quality benefits.

Future Milestones

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
Improve efficiency/renewable energy generation of council buildings	Property Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and publish a strategic approach to identifying building improvement opportunities and funding sources, to inform future designs, planning decisions and capital investment. 	2028	Carbon emissions and energy use from Council-owned buildings reduce through improved efficiency, low-carbon technologies and increased on-site renewables, improving resilience and value for money. Target: Reduce carbon emissions from Council-owned buildings year-on-year, with an ambition to achieve EPC C or equivalent across the portfolio by 2030 where technically, financially and operationally feasible.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement energy efficiency upgrades to priority buildings in line with the building's improvement and funding strategy, where funding, approvals and business cases are in place. 	2026-2031	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities to reduce energy demand in Council buildings, including through behavioural and operational measures such as reducing 	2026	

		<p>internal temperatures where appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement energy efficiency upgrades to Council-owned listed buildings and properties within conservation areas, where applicable, using heritage-appropriate measures and subject to funding, consents and technical feasibility • Continue to deploy renewable energy technologies on Council owned buildings where technically and financially feasible, prioritising sites identified through feasibility work and capital planning 	<p>2027- 2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	
<p>Improve the energy efficiency and emissions performance of Redditch Crematorium through phased upgrades, cleaner technology and lower-carbon procurement.</p>	<p>Environmental Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2027, implement NOx abatement measures at Redditch Crematorium, subject to technical feasibility and funding, to improve air quality and reduce emissions. • From 2026 onwards, prioritise sourcing memorial products, including headstones, from local 	<p>2027</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	<p>Emissions from Redditch Crematorium are reduced over time through phased improvements, cleaner technology and lower-carbon procurement, delivering air-quality and climate benefits while maintaining service provision.</p>

		<p>or UK-based suppliers where practicable to reduce transport-related emissions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of the current cremator stack lifecycle, consider replacement with improved technology that reduces emissions and, where feasible, enables the recovery and use of waste heat to support nearby buildings or services. • 	2026-2031	
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Transport

The council's transport comprises of council owned vehicles (such as refuse collection lorries), vans and staff-owned vehicles. All of these vehicles have impacts on the environment, however, where possible a switch in fuel type or to electric reduces emissions released. Alongside council owned vehicles, across the borough emissions can be reduced by the public using electric cars. As well as releasing carbon emissions, petrol and diesel vehicles cause high rates air pollution, so switching to EV or public transport can help to reduce this. The council has expanded the available network of public EV chargers across the borough, encouraging more car users to switch to EV. Redditch is part of the Worcestershire County Council Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) scheme, and which has been awarded £3.5 million to supply, install and operate EV chargers into areas with limited off-street parking.

Staff mileage has been significantly reduced through agile working and officers working from home.

The council has been working with Zest to install public EV charge points across the Borough, to date 2 chargers have been installed with further planned over the coming years.

Dial A Ride is available as part of Redditch's vehicle fleet. As this fleet is expanding, options for electric or hybrid vehicles are being considered in order to reduce emissions. Where possible, Dial A Ride services strive to provide efficient journeys transporting several customers to one destination or picking up several customers from one destination/or nearby destinations and to make the routes as efficient as possible in terms of mileage. A cancellation policy has been introduced to ensure that drivers are not making unnecessary journeys to pick up points where the customer no longer wants the journey, as this has been an issue in the past and caused wasted journeys.

Redditch Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan⁵ has been created to improve active travel, with a key objective of 50% of local trips in towns and cities to be on foot or by bicycle by 2030. The plan aims to implement approximately 45kms of primary cycling routes with 11 secondary and 12 link cycling routes totalling 42kms, as well as creating a walking and wheeling network covering Redditch town centre core walking zone and 8 primary town centre walking and wheeling routes. A key benefit of the LCWIP will be the enhanced safety of highways and footways for everyone, as well as less congestion and saving money on transport costs.

⁵ https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-10/redditch_lcwip_final.pdf

Future Milestones

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
Supporting transition to zero emissions vehicles	All Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By the end of the strategy period, reduce staff business mileage by a further 10% compared to March 2026, through increased use of remote working, digital meetings and sustainable travel options. Identify and implement practical ways the Council can support staff to transition to electric vehicles, including policy review, infrastructure provision and incentives, where feasible By the end of the strategy period, increase uptake of public transport and active travel for Council business and commuting, through travel planning, policy support, communications and improved facilities where feasible Install electric vehicle charging infrastructure on suitable Council owned land, building on the current programme of work with Zest and supporting Worcestershire County Council in the delivery of the LEVI programme, where technically and financially feasible 	<p>2026-2028</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	<p>Emissions from Council-related travel reduce as business mileage falls and cleaner travel choices are adopted, supported by EV charging on Council land to enable long-term transport decarbonisation.</p> <p>Target: Reduce staff business mileage by 10% by the end of the strategy period (2031), compared to the March 2026 baseline. Support the ongoing phased rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure through the Zest partnership, contributing to delivery of up to 120 chargers across 30+ sites in Bromsgrove and Redditch, subject to feasibility and funding.</p>

Support wider public with transition to zero emission transport	Climate Change and Comms Economic Development and Regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support residents and businesses to transition to electric vehicles by providing information, signposting to grants and infrastructure, and enabling access to charging where feasible • Encourage and enable increased use of public transport and active travel by residents through partnership working, information, and support for local improvements where feasible • Support the growth of green jobs and skills locally by working with partners, employers and training providers to enable employment opportunities linked to the low carbon transition. • Embed and support delivery of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), including the implementation of priority routes where funding and delivery mechanisms are in place 	2026-2031 2026-2031 2026-2031 2026-2031	Transport emissions reduce as cleaner travel choices, including EVs, public transport and active travel, become more accessible, supporting improved air quality, health and growth in green jobs and skills.
Decarbonising of council's transport fleet	Environmental Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressively reduce emissions from the Council's fleet by prioritising replacement with newer, more efficient and lower-emission vehicles through the fleet replacement programme, and by adopting zero-emission or alternative fuel vehicles (such as HVO) where infrastructure, funding and operational requirements allow 	2026-2031	Fleet emissions reduce through phased replacement with more efficient, lower-emission and alternative-fuel vehicles, delivering lower fuel costs and improved air quality.

Planning and Land Use

A significant proportion of emissions can be reduced through future planning and developments. By meeting stricter energy standards and constructing buildings to a higher energy efficiency/with technology such as solar PV already installed, the council can contribute to a reduction in emissions across the borough.

The council considers the environmental impact of new developments when developing the local plan. While new developments cannot be built without creating emissions, the council seeks options which have the lowest impact on the environment.

The council has undertaken a research study into the decarbonisation of North Moons Moat industrial estate and based on these findings is looking to implement strategies to reduce carbon emissions here.

The local plan⁶ includes a climate change policy to ensure than new developments are constructed in an efficient and sustainable manner in order to be climate resilient and to contribute to reducing carbon emissions. Planning applications are judged against the following criteria:

- development should be placed in accessible locations in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Proposals should take account of the need for accessibility between any development site and key facilities and consider how flexible and smarter working practices can be maximised to reduce transport emissions;
- the energy efficiency of the development must be maximised through its siting and orientation, and through the adoption of energy conservation measures, including natural ventilation, heating, street trees and lighting;
- proposals must seek to meet the new national technical standards, excluding the additional optional standards;
- all new non-domestic development must be assessed against the BREEAM assessment method (or any other national scheme which supersedes it);
- all proposals must demonstrate that the use of sustainable, locally sourced and recycled materials has been considered and the waste hierarchy has been considered (waste minimisation, reuse and recycling) during construction;
- adaptation measures must be maximised, with particular emphasis on the provision, enhancement and retention of Green Infrastructure

⁶ <https://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/media/tbodcekr/adopted-borough-of-redditch-local-plan-no4-2011-2030.pdf>

As well as robust criteria to be met, the use of small-scale renewable technologies and low carbon vehicle infrastructure are encouraged.

Future Milestones

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
<p>Ensure the new Local Plan embeds strong climate change, sustainability and adaptation policies—covering buildings, transport, biodiversity, energy and infrastructure—to support delivery of the Climate Change Strategy when adopted.</p>	<p>Planning, Climate Change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By the next draft Local Plan stage, develop policy wording that embeds climate mitigation and adaptation requirements—such as Future Homes Standard (FHS) compliance for qualifying permissions—in line with national transition arrangements and the Council’s Climate Change Strategy. 	<p>2026-2029</p>	<p>The new Local Plan strengthens the planning framework so future development supports lower-carbon buildings, sustainable transport and enhanced biodiversity, helping align planning decisions with the Climate Change Strategy and improve resilience across the district.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, ensure ongoing collaboration between Climate Change, Planning Policy, and relevant service areas so that emerging Local Plan policies reflect current evidence, carbon-reduction priorities, adaptation needs and infrastructure opportunities. 	<p>2026-2029</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2028, develop and update the Local Plan evidence base relating to climate change, including renewable energy opportunities, sustainable transport, green infrastructure, nature recovery and resilience, to support sound policy drafting and examination. 	<p>2028</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2029, progress the Local Plan to the adoption stage in line with the Council’s 	<p>2029</p>	

		agreed timetable, ensuring climate-related policies are retained and strengthened through examination.		
Support the deployment of rooftop solar on commercial buildings through feasibility, partnerships and enabling delivery models (e.g., leases or PPAs), to reduce emissions and energy costs across the local economy.	Climate Change, Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2027, identify and prioritise commercial buildings suitable for rooftop solar using desk-based screening (roof size/orientation/age), basic structural/red-flag checks, and indicative grid capacity and planning considerations. • From 2026 onwards, engage targeted owners, landlords and tenants to understand appetite, lease terms, roof access/maintenance responsibilities, and preferred commercial models (rooftop lease, landlord-funded CAPEX, third-party PPA). • By 2028, establish preferred delivery routes (e.g., framework/partner for financed PPAs; guidance for landlord-funded installs), including outline heads of terms, standard due-diligence (structural surveys, warranties), and grid application approach. • From 2028, support a first tranche of viable schemes to progress (subject to surveys, consents, roof condition, and DNO connection), focusing on sites with 	<p>2027</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2028</p> <p>2028</p>	Increased deployment of rooftop solar on commercial buildings, supporting lower energy costs for businesses, reduced carbon emissions and greater local energy resilience through a growing pipeline of viable solar projects enabled by partnership working.

		strong business cases and willing counterparties.		
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Governance and Finance

In order for the council to make key improvements in carbon emissions and reach net zero by 2040, a key aspect is ensuring that net zero and carbon reduction targets are embedded across the council’s plans, and are then followed through.

Within the council staff there is a dedicated climate change team employing two FTE colleagues. As well as this within the elected members of the council, Councillor Snape is the portfolio holder for climate change. These roles ensure that climate change implications are considered within all aspects of council actions before they are passed.

All reports taken through the committee process have a required assessment of climate change implications included (the council is exploring using a climate impact assessment tool to support officers with this process).

Carbon literacy training has been provided to all members of the senior managers, with ongoing training provided to elected members and officers within in the council. The council is looking to review the provision of carbon literacy training to include all staff at all levels.

The Council will proactively identify, bid for and secure external funding to deliver priority actions in this Strategy, aligning bids with corporate priorities, value-for-money principles and partnership opportunities.

The council are auditing the current scope 3 emissions created through their operations with an aim to reduce these. These emissions refer to those that are out of control of the council, through the transport and production of good that the council uses.

Future Milestones

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
Reduction of scope 3 emissions through procurement, purchasing and audit	Legal, democratic Services, property, services, Economic Development and Regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review key day-to-day purchasing lines and suppliers to identify opportunities to reduce carbon impacts, waste and cost, and to inform more sustainable procurement decisions. • Undertake proportionate environmental impact assessments of key suppliers to identify Scope 3 emissions hotspots and opportunities to reduce carbon impacts through procurement and contract management. • Introduce a time-limited stationery amnesty while reviewing existing stock, to reduce unnecessary purchasing, minimise waste and use existing resources more effectively. • Embed processes for the return, reuse or appropriate recycling of unused IT equipment and electronic items, to reduce waste and Scope 3 emissions from purchasing. 	<p>2026</p> <p>2026-2027</p> <p>2026</p> <p>2026</p>	Scope 3 emissions are reduced through more sustainable procurement, improved use of resources and reduced waste across day-to-day Council operations
Audit of server rooms and IT usage for scope 3	Property Services and ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete an audit of Council-owned server rooms and on-premise IT usage to establish a baseline for energy use, utilisation and Scope 3 emissions • Develop an action plan to reduce emissions from server rooms and IT usage, identifying priority 	<p>2026</p> <p>2027</p>	Emissions associated with IT systems and data storage are better understood and reduced over time through improved efficiency, informed decision-making and supplier engagement

		<p>actions, responsibilities and opportunities for efficiency, consolidation or decommissioning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve understanding of emissions associated with cloud-based services and external data centres used by the Council, through supplier engagement and available reporting, to inform future IT and procurement decisions. 	2027	
Accurately identify the risks of climate change to the local area within the council's Corporate Risk Register	Legal, democratic, property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and assess the key climate-related risks to the local area and Council operations and incorporate these risks into the Council's Corporate Risk Register. • Regularly review and update climate-related risks within the Corporate Risk Register to reflect emerging evidence, local impacts and changes in policy or operations 	2026 2026-2031	Climate-related risks to the local area and Council services are clearly understood, monitored and managed through the Council's corporate risk framework
Implement a sustainable procurement policy that supports area-wide net zero ambitions and embeds tackling the climate emergency as a core	Legal, democratic, property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2026, implement updated procurement policy and guidance that encourages more sustainable and locally sourced procurement where appropriate, in line with legal and value-for-money requirements. • Work with Procurement to improve and consistently apply the Council's procurement tools, ensuring climate and carbon considerations are embedded across purchasing decisions. 	2026-2031 2026-2031	Procurement decisions increasingly support net zero ambitions by reducing Scope 3 emissions, strengthening local supply chains and embedding climate considerations into purchasing across the Council.

procurement priority				
Strengthen internal governance of energy purchasing and on-site generation to support carbon reduction and value for money	Property Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly review and monitor the Council's energy purchasing arrangements, prioritising green tariffs and lower-carbon options where they offer value for money and security of supply. Ensure solar photovoltaic systems on Council-owned buildings are appropriately maintained and optimised, including routine inspection and cleaning where required, to maximise performance and carbon savings. 	2026-2031 2026-2031	Energy purchasing and on-site generation are effectively governed and optimised, supporting carbon reduction, resilience and value for money across Council operations.
Report transparently on the Council's greenhouse gas emissions to support accountability, decision-making and progress tracking.	Property Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a climate change dashboard to report on the Council's greenhouse gas emissions and, where data is available, wider borough-level emissions, to support transparency and informed decision-making. Regularly monitor and report on the Council's greenhouse gas emissions to track progress against targets and inform future action. Ensure the Council meets all relevant statutory and voluntary requirements for greenhouse gas emissions reporting, in line with national guidance and best practice. 	2026 2026-2031 2026-2031	The Council's greenhouse gas emissions are accurately monitored, transparently reported and used to inform decision-making and continuous improvement.
Improve climate change awareness and carbon literacy	HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish details of climate awareness training undertaken by senior management and relevant Members (including Cabinet Members and 	2026	Staff and Members are better informed and equipped to consider climate change impacts, mitigation and

<p>across the Council through transparent leadership training and accessible learning opportunities for staff and Members.</p>		<p>Committee Chairs), to support transparency and leadership by example.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and embed ongoing climate change awareness training for staff and Members, including induction content for new starters, to support informed decision-making and action. • Provide an optional pathway for staff and Members to achieve a recognised carbon literacy certificate, where appropriate, to build organisational capacity for climate mitigation and adaptation. 	<p>2026</p> <p>2027</p>	<p>adaptation in decision-making, supported by transparent leadership and improved carbon literacy.</p>
<p>Embed a consistent climate impact assessment approach into Council decision-making to ensure climate implications are considered across all policies and reports.</p>	<p>Climate change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2026, review the current climate change commentary in committee reports and explore options for strengthening it into a proportionate climate impact assessment approach, including implications for officers preparing reports. • Pilot and embed a consistent climate impact assessment approach within committee and key decision reports, supported by guidance for officers. • From 2027 onwards, keep the climate impact assessment approach under review to ensure it remains proportionate, effective and aligned with best practice and organisational change. 	<p>2026</p> <p>2027</p> <p>2027</p>	<p>Climate implications are routinely and consistently considered in Council decision-making, supporting more informed, transparent and climate-aware outcomes.</p>
<p>Proactively identify and</p>	<p>Climate change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2026, proactively identify and track relevant external funding opportunities to 	<p>2026-2031</p>	<p>External funding is maximised to support the delivery of</p>

<p>secure funding to support the delivery of climate change mitigation and adaptation activity.</p>		<p>support climate change mitigation and adaptation projects, working with internal and external partners where appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the end of the strategy period, secure and deploy external funding, where available, to support priority climate change projects identified through the Climate Change Strategy and delivery plans. 	<p>2026-2031</p>	<p>climate change priorities, reducing reliance on core Council budgets and enabling wider action.</p>
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Biodiversity

Biodiversity is intrinsically linked with the climate crisis. The natural environment to the health and wellbeing of society and provides 'ecosystem services' to regulate our environment, produce clean air and pollinate our crops. Through increased biodiversity and the conservation and restoration of natural spaces, it is possible to reduce emissions helping to mitigate climate change by absorbing carbon from the air. However, climate change is a significant cause of biodiversity loss, as species and ecosystems are affected by changes in weather patterns and extreme weather events. Significant carbon dioxide emissions are caused by land use change, which is also a key driver for biodiversity and ecological loss. In severe cases, entire species and/or ecosystems can be lost, which can have devastating effects on human health and economic stability. As a Local Planning Authority, Redditch Borough Council is legally required to ensure that most new developments deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) under the Environment Act 2021. This means that any qualifying planning application must demonstrate a minimum 10% increase in biodiversity value compared to the pre-development state of the site.

The borough of Redditch contains several areas of land ranked moderate to high value for conservation and wildlife. Corridors of land linking these areas are also important for the ecology of the area. Where the public has access, co-benefits such as improved health and wellbeing are also of importance, contributing to higher quality of life. Arrow Valley Park has been awarded Green Flag status, an international quality mark for parks and green spaces, which ensures that the parks are accessible to the public, whilst also ensuring that the environment is protected. The Brown Hairstreak Butterfly has been a success story of conservation locally after they were assigned a wildlife protection order and can now be found in Morton Stanley Park.

The council has committed to mowing green spaces less in order to increase biodiversity, such as wildflower verges to help with insect populations. New planning and development projects include biodiversity net gain to ensure that biodiversity conservation continues. Within the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and Management and Maintenance Plans actions are include which will conserve and enhance biodiversity.

The environmental services team for Bromsgrove and Redditch have begun the transition to electric power tools, moving away from 2-stroke petrol tools. This includes 9 short reach hedge cutters, 6 long reach hedge cutters and 3 strimmer's. Electric chainsaws and blowers are being trialled with an aim to these being replaced as well.

Future Milestones

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
Reduce the Council's reliance on harmful pesticides by trialling alternative approaches, preparing for regulatory change, and adopting more environmentally responsible practices where feasible.	Property Services/ Environmental Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current pesticide stock levels and usage across relevant services to establish a baseline and identify opportunities for reduction. Continue to trial alternative equipment and non-chemical or lower-impact weed control methods, assessing effectiveness, cost and operational suitability. Keep pesticide use under review in response to emerging legislation and guidance on substances such as glyphosate, adapting practices as required to remain compliant and reduce environmental impact. Monitor developments in the market for alternative products, equipment and practices to further reduce reliance on harmful pesticides over time. 	<p>2026</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	The Council reduces its reliance on harmful pesticides over time through evidence-based trials, regulatory readiness and the adoption of lower-impact alternatives, supporting biodiversity and environmental protection.
Progressively transition Council equipment and machinery to battery-powered or lower-emission	Environmental Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2026, complete a stock audit of Council-owned equipment and machinery to understand age, usage, fuel type and opportunities for transition to lower-emission alternatives. From 2026 onwards, replace equipment and machinery with battery-powered or 	<p>2026</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	Council equipment and machinery become progressively lower-emission over time, reducing carbon impacts, noise and air pollution while maintaining service delivery.

alternatives where feasible.		lower-emission alternatives at end of life, where operationally suitable and financially viable.		
Improve biodiversity and carbon sequestration within Council-managed green spaces through changes to land management, including reduced mowing, habitat enhancement and improved soil health.	Planning, regeneration and leisure, Property Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify priority green spaces for biodiversity and soil-health improvements and secure funding, where available, to support changes in land management and enhancement projects. implement biodiversity-led management of selected green spaces, including reduced mowing regimes and habitat creation, where appropriate. Improve soil health within green spaces through appropriate management practices that enhance biodiversity and increase carbon sequestration, where feasible. From 2027, implement and expand biodiversity and soil-health improvement projects where evidence, funding and operational experience support wider roll-out. 	2026-2031	Council-managed green spaces support richer biodiversity, healthier soils and increased carbon sequestration, while continuing to meet community and operational needs.
			2026-2031	
			2026-2031	
Embed effective governance, monitoring and delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), while supporting opportunities to	Planning, regeneration and leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduce a clear mechanism to monitor, record and report on Biodiversity Net Gain outcomes from new developments, in line with national requirements and local planning processes. Identify and support opportunities to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain beyond statutory planning requirements, including off-site provision, 	2026-2031	Biodiversity Net Gain is effectively governed, monitored and delivered, contributing to enhanced biodiversity outcomes both through the planning system and wider voluntary action.
			2026-2031	

enhance biodiversity beyond statutory planning requirements.		<p>partnerships and Council-led land management where appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align Biodiversity Net Gain delivery with wider biodiversity, green space and climate objectives to maximise environmental benefits where possible. 	2027-2031	
Report on biodiversity actions and outcomes in line with the Council's Biodiversity Duty, ensuring delivery, transparency and continuous improvement.	All services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with relevant services to develop and implement action plans aligned with the priorities and actions set out in the Council's Biodiversity Duty Report. By the next statutory reporting deadline, complete and publish the Council's Biodiversity Duty Report, setting out progress, outcomes and next steps. From 2026, use biodiversity reporting to review progress, share learning and inform future policy, land management and investment decisions. 	2026 2031 2026-2031	The Council meets its Biodiversity Duty through clear reporting, coordinated delivery across services and continuous improvement in biodiversity outcomes.
Increase and manage tree cover as part of a wider approach to biodiversity, soil health and nature-based climate action.	Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase tree cover in suitable locations and develop a long-term tree management plan to ensure trees are appropriately managed as they establish and mature. Ensure new tree planting uses a mix of appropriate native and climate-resilient species to enhance biodiversity and reduce the risk of monoculture. 	2026-2031 2026-2031	Tree cover increases in a planned and resilient way, contributing to biodiversity, place-making and public engagement, while being integrated with soil-based approaches that deliver effective long-term carbon sequestration.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2026 onwards, integrate tree planting with soil-health and land-management practices that maximise biodiversity and carbon sequestration, recognising the role of healthy soils alongside tree cover. • From 2026 onwards, work with residents who wish to participate in greening initiatives, including tree planting and nature-friendly gardens, to support biodiversity and local environmental quality. • From 2026 onwards, provide public information and education on the role of trees in the borough, including species choice, lifespan, management needs and their relationship to biodiversity and carbon reduction. 	2026-2031	
			2026-2031	
			2026-2031	

Collaboration and Engagement

Redditch Borough Council has worked alongside Rubicon Leisure to reduce emissions in the local area. Heat from Redditch Crematorium is used to warm Abbey Stadium Sports Centre, which also has solar panels on its roof. Redditch Borough Council hosts an annual Green Fair. This is a family event to communicate the message of a low carbon future to the wider community as well as eco-friendly initiatives. Within Redditch there is a climate action group where residents can help to influence the climate action plan and have their say.

Climate officers are frequently working with those at risk from climate change, in particular lower income homes who are eligible for improvements to the energy efficiency of their homes through grants, often with the support of Act On Energy. This improves Redditch's health economy by improving air quality within homes and reducing damp and mould.

The council works with external bodies to reduce emissions further across the borough. Within the police force the exchange of evidence has become digitalised so that police staff take fewer journeys to collect evidence, thus reducing emissions and allowing officers to be available for more urgent needs.

Redditch Borough Council is a member of Worcestershire Public Sector Sustainability Group, helping to reduce emissions across the county.

Redditch Borough Council works with Midland Net Zero Hub, an organisation funded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, that supports decarbonisation projects across the Midlands. The council is working with MNZH to help deliver home improvement upgrades as part of Warm Homes Local Grant.

Redditch's leisure strategy⁷ aims to generate a high profile, safe, inclusive, well-connected and managed network of active travel networks, green and blue corridors, heritage trails, leisure and culture facilities. There is a green thread underpinning the leisure and culture strategy to ensure that the environment is considered and climate change mitigated where possible. Recommendations within the strategy include developing a better understanding of the biodiversity and green assets across the borough so that they can be improved; develop an investment plan for enhancing parks and open spaces; promote active travel routes within parks and open spaces. This can help to improve Redditch's health economy by encouraging people to become more active.

⁷ <https://moderngovwebpublic.redditchbc.gov.uk/documents/s46219/Appendix%20A%20-%20Leisure%20and%20Culture%20Strategy.pdf>

Outside of the public sector organisations RBC is an active member of the Better Environment group and works with 3rd sector organisations supporting residents across the borough with environmental projects or access to funding a resources in managing through the cost-of-living crisis, fuel poverty community clean ups and accessing transport across the borough.

Future Milestones

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
Work with local educational institutions to support climate change awareness, skills and engagement among children and young people.	Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2026, engage with local schools and educational institutions to identify opportunities for climate-related engagement and plan future events or activities. From 2026 onwards, deliver a rolling programme of climate change engagement activities with local schools and educational institutions, subject to capacity and partnership arrangements. 	<p>2026</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	Children and young people are better informed and engaged on climate change and sustainability, supported through partnership working with local educational institutions.
Engage with community groups to support, inform and shape local climate-related initiatives across the borough.	Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, engage with community groups through planned and proportionate meetings or forums to support local climate action and share information on Council priorities and activity. From 2026 onwards, ensure feedback and views from community engagement are captured, considered and, where appropriate, used to 	<p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	Community groups are actively engaged in climate action, with local knowledge and perspectives helping to shape and support delivery of the Council’s climate priorities.

		inform the Council's Climate Change Strategy delivery and action planning.		
Deliver inclusive community outreach to ensure those most affected by climate change are informed, heard and able to engage with local climate action.	Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, ensure community outreach and engagement activities are inclusive and designed to reach residents and groups most affected by climate change impacts. From 2026 onwards, deliver targeted community engagement workshops, where appropriate, to raise awareness, build understanding and support participation in local climate action. 	2026-2031 2026-2031	Community outreach is inclusive and accessible, enabling those most affected by climate change to engage with and contribute to local climate action.
Share best practice and collaborate with the County Council, neighbouring local authorities and public-sector partners to support delivery of net zero and climate resilience objectives.	Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, engage in regular partnership working with Worcestershire County Council, neighbouring local authorities and public-sector organisations to share best practice and support delivery of climate and net zero initiatives (for example, EV infrastructure and LEVI delivery). From 2026 onwards, work with partners to ensure continuity of climate change activity, data and learning in the event of Local Government Reorganisation, 	2026-2031 2026-2031	Climate action is strengthened through effective collaboration, shared learning and continuity of approach across the county, neighbouring authorities and the wider public sector, including through periods of organisational change.

		<p>supporting effective transition and shared approaches where required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to the outcomes of Local Government Reorganisation, support the alignment of climate priorities, actions and reporting across new or revised governance arrangements. 	2026-2031	
Support the exploration and development of community energy initiatives, including potential community microgrids and district heat networks, in partnership with local communities and specialist organisations.	Planning/housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2027, seek external expertise to assess the feasibility of community energy opportunities within the borough, including the potential for community microgrids or district heat networks and identification of suitable locations where appropriate. • By 2027, engage with community groups, parish councils and other local stakeholders to understand appetite for community energy projects and to raise awareness of potential opportunities and benefits. 	2027 2027	Communities are supported to explore and develop locally led energy solutions, contributing to decarbonisation, energy resilience and local benefit where feasible.
Engage and support local businesses to reduce emissions and improve energy efficiency, building on	Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2026 onwards, support the implementation of appropriate actions identified in the North Moons Moat Industrial Decarbonisation Study, working with businesses and partners where feasible. 	2026-2031	Local businesses are supported to understand and progress decarbonisation opportunities, building on evidence-based studies and partnership working to reduce emissions and strengthen the local economy.

evidence from local decarbonisation studies and partnership working.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2027 onwards, use learning from the North Moons Moat study to inform wider engagement with local businesses on decarbonisation opportunities, including energy efficiency, low-carbon heat and renewable energy. 	2027-2031	
Work in partnership with other public-sector organisations to identify and support opportunities to improve the energy efficiency and decarbonisation of public-sector buildings.	Property Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2027, identify opportunities to work with other public-sector organisations (such as the police, fire service, NHS and schools) where buildings are shared, co-located or in close proximity to Council assets, to explore joint energy efficiency or decarbonisation opportunities. 	2027-2031	Public-sector organisations work collaboratively to improve the energy efficiency and decarbonisation of buildings, reducing emissions, costs and duplication across the local public estate.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2027, work with partners to identify and pursue appropriate funding opportunities and delivery mechanisms to support energy efficiency and decarbonisation measures in shared or neighbouring public-sector buildings. 	2027-2031	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2028 onwards, support the implementation of joint energy efficiency and decarbonisation projects in public-sector buildings where funding, partner agreement 	2028-2031	

		and governance arrangements are in place.		
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Waste reduction and Food

The council operates weekly domestic waste collections, alternating between recycling and general waste collection. Commercial food waste is being collected by the council and in 2026 food waste bin collections will begin for households, which will reduce the amount of food waste going to landfill which releases vast amounts of methane. Redditch Borough Council is a 'collection authority' and the disposal of waste collected is the responsibility of Worcestershire County Council. Currently the County Council has a Waste Core Strategy that covers the period to 2027, the Council is signed up to the Worcestershire & Herefordshire Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS). The JMWMS sets out our targets for the reduction and recovery of household waste and runs until 2034.

Reducing residential and commercial waste has huge benefits for the environment and economically. By seeking alternatives to buying new/replacing items straight away, few materials are required. This means that from the start of a product's life-cycle, there are fewer emissions involved in extracting materials, manufacturing and transport, as well as the use of earth's resources. Within the borough, monthly repair cafes are held where broken items can be taken to be fixed, both saving money and reducing waste going to landfill.

With the statutory rollout of weekly food waste collections by March 2026 under the Environment Act 2021, Redditch Borough Council has an opportunity to better align waste management with low-carbon energy and resource recovery. The introduction of separate food waste collections supports national recycling objectives and creates the potential for organic waste to be treated through anaerobic digestion, a proven technology that can generate renewable biomethane and biofertiliser.

Recent regional analysis, including work supported by the Midlands Net Zero Hub, has highlighted the potential role anaerobic digestion could play in Worcestershire as part of a wider, integrated approach to waste, energy and land management. Where appropriate, anaerobic digestion can support decarbonisation of the energy system, reduce reliance on fossil gas, and return nutrients to soils through digestate.

By supporting the effective capture and treatment of food waste, the Council can help enable opportunities to convert unavoidable waste into valuable energy and soil-enhancing products, contributing to emissions reduction, energy resilience and the growth of low-carbon infrastructure across the county.

Future Milestones

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
<p>Increase recycling rates across the borough through improved communication, public engagement and targeted investment in recycling and waste reduction initiatives.</p>	<p>Environmental</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, deliver targeted communications to residents and businesses to improve understanding of what can be recycled, reduce contamination and encourage positive recycling behaviours across the borough. 	<p>2026-2031</p>	<p>Recycling rates increase across the borough as residents and communities are better informed, engaged and supported to reduce waste and recycle more effectively.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, undertake public engagement activities to encourage increased recycling and waste reduction, using feedback to shape future communications and initiatives where appropriate. 	<p>2026-2031</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2031, increase the borough-wide recycling rate to 50% of all household waste, supported by external funding where available and the delivery of community-led recycling and waste reduction projects. 	<p>2031</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2027, work with waste and recycling contractors and service providers to improve understanding of recycling performance, data quality and operational practices, and identify opportunities to increase recycling rates and reduce residual waste. 	<p>2027</p>	

Reduce overall waste arisings across the borough through behaviour change, reuse initiatives and targeted support for waste prevention.	Environmental and Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, deliver targeted public communications campaigns to encourage waste reduction and reuse, including participation in national initiatives such as Plastic Free July. 	2026-2031	Overall waste arisings reduce as residents, communities and the Council are better supported to prevent waste, reuse materials and reduce consumption.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, support initiatives that redistribute surplus food and reduce food waste, working with community organisations and partners where appropriate. 	2026-2031	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, support the development of community-led reuse initiatives, such as swap shops and furniture reuse schemes, to prevent waste and extend product lifespans. 	2026-2031	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, deliver regular internal communications and guidance to support staff in reducing waste in Council operations and in their own behaviours. 	2026-2031	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2031, reduce overall household waste arisings across the borough by 10% compared to the baseline year. 	2031	
Reduce food waste and associated	Environmental, Property Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026, support the distribution of food waste bins to households and relevant Council buildings across the borough as part 	2026-2031	Food waste is increasingly diverted from general waste through effective collection,

emissions by supporting the roll-out of separate food waste collections and encouraging effective use by households and Council services.		<p>of the national food waste collection programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, deliver targeted communications and engagement to encourage residents and Council services to use food waste collections correctly, reducing the amount of food waste placed in general waste. 	2026-2031	improved public participation and reduced methane emissions from disposal.
Manage the green waste service in a phased and sustainable way to support waste reduction and composting, while managing operational capacity and demand.	Environmental Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, manage and optimise the existing green waste collection service, recognising current capacity constraints and reviewing performance and demand to inform any future changes where feasible. 	2026-2031	Green waste is increasingly diverted from general waste through a well-managed, phased collection service that balances environmental benefit with operational capacity.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, deliver targeted communications to support correct use of the green waste service and manage resident expectations. 	2026-2031	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, monitor green waste volumes, contamination and operational impacts to inform future service development where feasible. 	2026-2031	
Support local food growing to improve food resilience, community wellbeing and	Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, encourage local food growing by sharing good practice, guidance and local growing initiatives through markets, communications and partnership working. 	2026-2031	Local food growing is supported through community-led initiatives, improved skills and access to funding, contributing to resilience, wellbeing and

environmental outcomes through engagement, demonstration and partnership working.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2026 onwards, support the delivery of local food growing demonstrations and learning opportunities, such as allotment or community garden demonstrations, where capacity and partnerships allow. 	2026-2031	more sustainable food systems.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2026 onwards, seek and secure external funding (for example from the National Lottery and other grant programmes) to support local food growing, skills and community-led initiatives where available. 	2026-2031	

Executive Committee
202617th March**Q3 Performance Report 2025/26**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jane Spilsbury
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Hannah Corredor, Assistant Director for Corporate Services & Transformation
Report Author Rebecca Green	Job Title: Policy Manager Contact email: r.green@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881616
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	All
Key Decision	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS**Executive Committee resolve that:-**

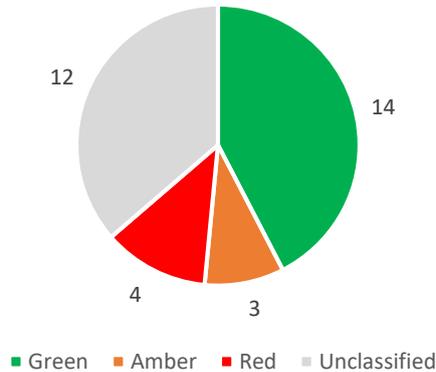
- 1. The Quarter 3 Performance Report for the period October to December 2025 attached at Appendix 1 be noted.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There are a total of 32 corporate measures for Redditch Borough Council. These are organised by the priorities set out in the Redditch Council Plan 2025 and can be found in a summary table at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The 32 corporate measures are either organisational or structured under the Council priorities:
 - Economy & Regeneration
 - Green, Clean & Safe Redditch
 - Community & Housing

The measures provide information against the key areas identified in the Council Plan and other important organisational data. Data is shown for the current quarter and the four quarters prior to allow for trend analysis.

Green indicators are on target/performing well against national averages, amber indicators are within tolerance and red indicators are off target. There are some measures which do not currently have a target or national average to compare against; these are currently unclassified.

Executive Committee
202617th March**Q2 Performance****2.3** Two new measures have been added for Q3:

- # active environmental enforcement cases
- # environmental enforcement fixed penalty notices

Where available, previous quarters data for these measures has been included.

2.4 Work to develop a new style of quarterly performance report began in Spring 2025, aligned to the priorities of the Council Plan. The streamlined report will continue to develop as measures are refined and will sit alongside the service business planning process.

The organisation is transitioning towards more informative, visual, and accessible performance reporting to strengthen delivery of both the Council Plan and individual Service Business Plans (SBPs). This shift is designed to ensure joined-up actions across services, enhancing outcomes for residents. The introduction of the SBP process in August 2025 marked a significant milestone in aligning operational activity with strategic priorities.

While the process will continue to evolve, it already reflects a commitment to greater transparency, accountability, and strategic alignment from the Senior Leadership Team. To support this transformation, a suite of Power BI dashboards is currently in development. These dashboards will provide dynamic, real-time insights into performance, enabling clearer tracking of progress against defined milestones and measures. By integrating SBPs with the

Executive Committee
202617th March

Council Plan implementation framework and corporate project monitoring, the dashboards will offer a unified reporting environment that supports proactive service management.

This initiative has been started for collation of the Q3 report; data and commentary for the corporate measures is now collected and stored in PowerBI. Project work on building individual reports for each corporate measure has begun with these initial builds aiming to be completed by the end of the financial year. This will reinforce ownership, improve clarity, and enhance decision-making across the organisation.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The quarterly performance reporting enables service areas to understand how they are delivering against key priorities and to respond in a timely manner.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Finance and performance reporting will continue to be aligned, with this report sitting alongside the quarterly financial reports.
- 4.2 Effective performance management supports the organisation in understanding needs and challenges and helps to inform financial decision making.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**Council Priorities**

- 6.1 This report is structured around the priorities identified in the Council:
- Economy & Regeneration
 - Green, Clean & Safe Redditch
 - Community & Housing
- 6.2 There is also a section on Organisational Priorities, which includes measures on the wider performance of the organisation.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.2 There are no climate change implications arising directly from this report; however, some the measures under the Green, Clean & Safe

Executive Committee
202617th March

priority contribute to our understanding of the Council's activities to support the climate change agenda.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.3 There are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Monitoring performance regularly will assist the Council in in effective identification and management of risks. It will also support the management of risks identified around robust decision making and the accuracy/effectiveness of performance data.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1- Q3 Performance Report 2025/26

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Jane Spilsbury	13/02/2026
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Hannah Corredor, Assistant Director for Corporate Services & Transformation	18/02/2026
Financial Services	Debra Goodall, Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services	18/02/2026
Legal Services	Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal Democratic and Procurement Services	18/02/2026
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green, Policy Manager	Author
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Judith Willis, Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services	18/02/2026

Executive Committee
2026

17th March

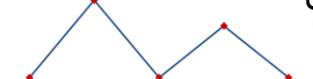
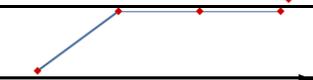
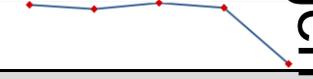
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Economy, Regeneration & Prosperity

Measure name	Type	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
Grant funding paid to businesses	£	£81,899.69	£115,645.43	£0	£12,426.32	£19,568.00	£23,366.20		⬆️	
This is the cumulative amount of grant paid for 2025/26. During Q3, 1 start-up grant was paid to a retailer and 1 growth grant was paid to a manufacturer.										
Business grant funding- % spent	%	49.30%	69.70%	0%	10.60%	17.00%	20%		⬆️	
A further 13 grants have been approved this quarter. 53% of funding has been allocated. Start-up grants and growth grants are now closed to new applicants as those grants already approved and being processed will exhaust all funding. The remaining grant is only available to participants in the Innovation Lighthouse programme.										

Green, Clean & Safe

Measure name	Type	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
% household waste recycled or composted	%	30.14	33.19	30.18	35.93%	33.00%		44%	↕	
Although a reduction on Q2, this represents the best performance for Q3 in the last 5 years. It is planned to develop more proactive engagement and communication with residents during 26/27. The implementation of the food waste collections will also increase performance in this area.										
# flytips	#	434	473	503	475	370	650		↕	
Average time taken to remove fly-tipping reported	# days	3	2.7	3.7	3	2.5	5		↕	
# active environmental enforcement cases	#			82	84	10				
# environmental enforcement fixed penalty notices	#	2	5	2	4	2				
No. of households supported by energy advice service (AoE)	#	368	349	282	196	184			↕	
% of green flags awarded	%	25	25	50	50	50	75		↕	
No change; new round of applications to be submitted end of Jan 26 for Morton Stanley and Overdale.										
# crimes recorded (excluding ASB)	#	1653	1538	1707	1,572	Data not available			↕	
For comparison, the figure for Q2 24/25 was 1623.										
ASB	#	245	268	370	344	Data not available			↕	
For comparison, the figure for Q2 24/25 was 345.										

*there is a lag with this data as it is obtained using verified figures from Police.uk and they are not currently available.

Community & Housing

Measure name	Type	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
% of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks (or agreed ext)	%	100	88.9	90	90	89	60%		⬆️	
% of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks (or agreed ext)	%	87.9	89.8	89.8	91.3	90	70%		⬆️	
No. of planning enforcement actions taken- cases opened	#	14	12	14	16	9				
No. of planning enforcement actions taken- cases closed	#	8	7	14	21	15				
% of Building Control applications determined within 5 weeks (or 8 weeks on agreement)	%		100	100	96	95		85	⬆️	
Number threatened with homelessness preventions	#	20	23	39	37	58				
# households in temporary accommodation- snapshot	#		54	47	38	41			⬇️	
% of households in temporary accommodation- + 6 weeks	%	9%	7%	4%	0%	0%	0		⬇️	
Void turnaround time	# days	20	21.7	24.7	32	30	22		⬇️	
<p>The target is for the annual average time for standards measured from the tenancy end date to the new tenancy start date. This excludes properties requiring major works, decant properties, insurance claims following a fire damaged properties and emergency dispersed units of accommodation. Electrical works have been taking longer this quarter; we've been liaising with the contractors to speed up the process to improve our performance.</p>										
Void rent loss	£	48,569.10	61,921.34	75,674.94	43,134.37	49,180.16			⬇️	

Organisational Priorities

Measure name	Type	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
% of media enquiries responded to within agreed timescales	#		100	100	100	100	100		⬆️	
Council Tax Collection Rate	%	82.60%	96.46%	27.99%	55.36%	82.52%	82.51%		⬆️	
Business Rates Collection Rate	%	79.41%	96.38%	25.29%	51.53%	77.00%	80.29%		⬆️	
HB: Speed of processing new claims	# days	17.3	13.7	15.3	13.7	15		20	⬇️	
HB: Speed of processing change of circumstances	# days	7.3	4	7.7	6.7	6		8	⬇️	
HB: Local Authority error rate	%	0.09	0.09	0.04	0.09	0		0.48%	⬇️	
# complaints received*	#	11	17	11	33	18				
Average working days to respond to complaints*	# days	6.6	16.6	18.2	4.7	9	10			
% complaints answered within agreed timescales*	%	72.7	68.8	75	87%	81%	95%		⬆️	
Housing have now provided us with a list of excluded categories from their reporting so some housing services will now be included in corporate reporting. All services achieved 100% response within 10 days with the exception of Community & Housing Services – Homeless & Housing Solutions.										
Staff turnover rates	%	8.50%	9.80%	10.20%	9.20%	10.20%		13.40%	⬇️	
Sickness absence	# days per FTE	5.03	6.4	2.88	3.19	3		7.8	⬇️	

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Permission to Revoke First Homes Policy

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bill Hartnett
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Judith Willis Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services
Report Author	Job Title: Amanda Delahunty Housing Development and Enabling Manager Contact email: a.delahunty@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881269
Wards Affected	No specific ward relevance
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Not Applicable
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	Affordable and Sustainable Homes
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 is asked to RESOLVE that:-

- 1) the Council's First Homes Policy be revoked with immediate effect;**
- 2) and that any development sites that currently include an element of First Homes provision is offered an opportunity to revert to shared ownership and other forms of affordable home ownership.**

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Government introduced a new affordable housing product known as First Homes to be provided by all local housing authorities from 28th March 2022 as 25% of affordable housing on Section 106 sites. First Homes are discounted market sale units with the criteria set by legislation. They:

- a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the open market value;

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- b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria;
- c) on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and,
- d) after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000 (or £420,000 in Greater London).

- 2.2 An update to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) guidance 2024 has offered an opportunity to review this approach:

“The requirement to deliver a minimum of 25% of affordable housing as First Homes, as set out in 'Affordable Homes Update' Written Ministerial Statement dated 24 May 2021, no longer applies. Delivery of First Homes can, however, continue where local planning authorities judge that they meet local need. Except where a Mayoral, combined authority or high-level joint plan is being prepared as a framework for strategic policies at the individual local authority level; in which case it may be most appropriate for the local authority plans to provide the requirement figure.”

- 2.3 The First Homes policy was approved by the Council in September 2022 for Section 106 developer led sites. First Homes are restricted to First Time Buyers and are discounted by 30%. The Council included a local connection criterion to ensure that local households were prioritised. However, the increase in new build house prices has meant that first time buyers are less likely to be able to afford this product. Whereas shared ownership properties sold at say at a 40% or 50% share, are more likely to meet local housing needs.
- 2.4 In addition, conversations with Registered Providers have indicated that the reduction in shared ownership properties in favour of First Homes compromises the viability of section 106 sites, as the proportion of shared ownership to social/affordable rent is key to viability. This means that where the developer is also required to provide and sell First Home, Registered Providers are less able to afford to purchase the remaining affordable housing provided on site under Section 106 agreements.
- 2.5 None of the four sites with First Homes requirements in the Section 106 have been built out yet, and therefore, there has been no opportunity for First Homes properties to be marketed and sold. Subject to the

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policy being revoked, any section 106's required on future sites will require shared ownership or low cost discounted sale instead of First Homes.

- 2.6 The Council's in house Development Team will always look to bring forward 100% social rent for all in-house sites built on Redditch Council land as a preference to affordable rent. The council has no plans to develop housing for sale under a shared ownership model or low cost discounted sale.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The processing of First Homes places a greater burden on local authorities in terms of processing and agreeing applications from prospective purchasers. By removing the requirement for First Homes, this administrative burden will be removed.
- 3.2 For a short period there may be an extra burden on planning and legal services to deal with Deed of Variations to allow for Section 106's with First Homes requirements to be amended.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council's charge for administering a variation to the section 106 at £508.00 will be offset by the developer not having the First Homes properties valued by a RICS valuer. The developer will be able to continue to provide them should they so wish but future Section 106's will not include a requirement for First Homes to be provided.
- 4.2 The revocation of the policy will support those on lower incomes to access affordable home ownership and will support the viability of section 106 sites for Registered Providers.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The NPFF has made the inclusion of First Homes optional for local authorities.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

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Local Government Re-organisation

- 6.1 There are no specific implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 Community and Housing – the revocation of this policy will provide a more affordable home ownership option for those on lower incomes and help to reduce the pressure on the housing register.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 Revoking the First Homes Policy is expected to have a neutral to slightly positive climate impact. Greater reliance on Registered Providers may result in more consistent delivery of new homes built to modern energy-efficient standards, supporting overall low-carbon housing objectives.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 The revocation of the First Homes policy will help more lower cost affordable home ownership models to be made available which is more likely to impact on households from diverse backgrounds.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 If we continue to provide First Homes we are less likely to meet local housing needs due to the high cost of new build houses and the discount being only 30%.
- 7.2 By continuing to provide First Homes there is a risk that the viability of Section 106 sites is compromised and Registered Providers will be unable to purchase the remaining affordable housing element.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background Papers

Redditch First Homes Policy

[First Homes Policy](#)

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Bill Hartnett Portfolio Holder for Housing	24.2.26
Lead Director / Head of Service	Judith Willis Assistant Director Community and Housing Services	24.2.26
Financial Services	Julie Lorraine, Interim Director of Finance	24.2.26
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor – Governance and Jess Bayley-Hill, Principal Democratic Services Officer	23.2.26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green Policy Manager	n/a
Climate Change (if climate change implications apply)	Matthew Eccles Climate Change Manager	13.2.26

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**Executive
2026**17th March**Shared Homelessness Strategy 2026-2031**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bill Hartnett
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Judith Willis Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services
Report Author	Job Title: Amanda Delahunty Housing Development and Enabling Manager Contact email: a.delahunty@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881269
Wards Affected	No specific ward relevance
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Not Applicable
Relevant Priorities	Communities and Housing
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive Committee is requested to RECOMMEND to Council that: -

1) the draft Shared Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2031 and action plan be approved for public consultation for six weeks starting 13th April 2026.

2) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to agree any changes that may be required due to the outcomes of the consultation process.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 requires all housing authorities to have a homelessness strategy in place which is based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their local authority area.
- 2.2 It is intended that this Strategy will sit under the existing Worcestershire Strategic Housing Board Plan.

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- 2.3 In developing this strategy a comprehensive assessment of the nature and extent of homelessness across the local authority areas was carried out by analysing homelessness data and taking account of the views of customers and partner organisations. A consultation event was held on the 30th September 2025 with partners and stakeholders, to consider housing from both a strategic and client-based perspective. This event included partners from a variety of statutory and voluntary organisations.
- 2.4 Service users were also consulted and supported to complete a questionnaire. This provided them with an opportunity to feedback on their experiences including those in temporary accommodation, young people, rough sleepers and victims/survivors of domestic abuse.
- 2.5 The National Plan to End Homelessness, published by the Government October 2025, is a long-term strategy with the overarching vision that: Homelessness should be rare, brief and non-recurring and that people who do become homeless should receive support quickly and effectively. Local authorities are expected to move from crisis to prevention. A key requirement will involve greater collaboration across government departments. There are five pillars of the strategy –
1. Universal Prevention
 2. Targeted Prevention
 3. Preventing Crisis
 4. Emergency Response
 5. Recovery and Stability
- 2.6 This new Shared Homelessness Strategy, in partnership with Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Wychavon and Wyre Forest, builds on the success of our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-25, which emphasised prevention, intervention, recovery and joined-up systems, which are core themes echoed in the new National Plan.
- 2.7 The strategy sets out how the Council will invest in early intervention and support systems to stop homelessness before it happens. The Council will strengthen cross-service collaboration (health, jobcentres, criminal justice, social care) to identify risks early. A ‘duty to collaborate’ for key public services (planned through future legislation) will support this approach.
- 2.8 The local authorities will aim to eliminate unlawful use of B&Bs for families (beyond statutory short stays) and improve the quality of temporary accommodation and aim to halve long-term rough sleeping.

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- 2.9 Local authorities are also expected to tackle the structural causes of homelessness by building more affordable and social homes and support the reform of the private rented sector working with landlords and tenants to help them to sustain their accommodation where at all possible. The new Crisis and Resilience Fund will be key to providing welfare support to those who have experienced an income shock or unexpected bill, such as boiler replacement.
- 2.10 The Government is providing nearly £3.5bn funding for homelessness prevention and rough sleeping services from 2026/27–2028/29.
- 2.11 Funding streams have been amalgamated into a new Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant.
- 2.12 Worcestershire has aligned its strategic approach to homelessness with these national priorities with a plan to shift from Crisis to Prevention. The strategy focuses resources upstream, supporting people earlier (before accommodation loss). The shared action plan has measurable targets based on the national outcomes framework.
- 2.13 Progress reporting is tied to funding conditions. This means expanding preventative services such as advice services, financial resilience support and co-ordinated multi-agency pathways that intervene before homelessness occurs.
- 2.14 The national plan emphasises coordination across services. At the local level, this reinforces: Multi-agency structures like housing partnerships, health and wellbeing boards, prison and probation and specialist support teams which already exist in Worcestershire.
- 2.15 The National Plan highlights that the Government expects closer collaboration between housing, health, social care, children's services, prison and probation and voluntary sector partners. Better case-sharing, data exchanges and joint pathways, particularly for people with complex needs.
- 2.16 The shared strategy aspires towards this more integrated model to prevent gaps and reduce repeat homelessness.
- 2.17 The consolidation of funding into a single grant over a three-year period gives the local authority's partners greater stability and flexibility to prioritise local needs (e.g., rough sleeping services, domestic abuse related housing support). There is a requirement to spend a minimum proportion on prevention and staffing. This allows improved local commissioning of support services, such as tailored housing support and landlord engagement schemes.

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- 2.18 The outcomes framework metrics (e.g., rough sleeping rates, B&B usage, prevention success) will provide a basis for performance review. The local authorities will collect and monitor relevant homelessness data, publish regular progress reporting, and adjust strategies based on outcomes. Creating a more outcome-focused, transparent approach to homelessness planning at the local level.
- 2.19 The local authorities will work closely together and with regional NHS and public health partners.
- 2.20 Each of the local authorities will develop their own action plan which will sit under the overarching, shared action plan, by October 2026.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The delivery of the Shared Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy actions will be overseen by the Housing Strategy Team.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The new Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant will provide funding to develop services to support the strategy and a report has already been taken to members to provide the detail on spending priorities for the next three years.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has a duty under the Homelessness Act 2002 to conduct a review of the nature and extent of homelessness in its local authority district every 5 years and to develop a strategy setting out how services will be delivered in the future to tackle homelessness and the available resources to prevent and relieve homelessness.
- 5.2 The Homelessness Reduction Act came into force in April 2018, and places new legal duties on local housing authorities so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to early meaningful help, irrespective of their priority need status, so long as they are eligible for assistance.

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- 5.3 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requires local authorities to collaborate with Tier One authorities to provide safe and supported accommodation for victims/survivors of domestic abuse.
- 5.4. The Renters Rights Act 2025 shifts the local authority role from discretionary enforcement to a mandatory duty to enforce landlord legislation. The abolition of Section 21 no fault evictions is likely to result in more tenancies being ending by Section 8 Notices for rent arrears and provides an opportunity for local authorities to work with landlords to, wherever possible, sustain tenancies. The Council has utilised Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse grant to provide a new service with Citizens Advice to support this work.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**Local Government Re-organisation**

- 6.1 LGR does not alter the statutory homelessness duties set out under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and Housing Act 1996, including prevention (s.195), relief (s.189B), interim accommodation (s.188) and the duty to provide free advice and information (s.179).
- 6.2 The Government's National Plan to End Homelessness sets out a cross-government expectation that homelessness cannot be reduced without multi-agency integration
- 6.3 Both the National Plan to End Homelessness and the Homelessness Code of Guidance stress the need for coordinated arrangements across the below areas,
- health
 - social care
 - children's services
 - criminal justice
 - and domestic abuse services

and it is considered that the most appropriate method is to have a shared strategy approach across as much of Worcestershire to ensure there is a coherent approach to our homelessness duties until the results of LGR are provided.

- 6.4 A single Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy must be produced for any new authority, and this strategy and action plan has been

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produced so that it is able to be incorporated into either one or two unitary authorities until a new single strategy for the new area, based on a fresh homelessness review is completed as required by the Homelessness Code of Guidance

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 Community and Housing – The strategy provides a framework for a range of services which support this Council priority.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 There are no direct climate change implications from the strategy itself but individual actions/services may have an impact.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 The strategy seeks to deliver a range of services for homeless households and draws on ways to improve the work of the Council in developing services and preparing links, pathways and referrals between services to prevent homelessness in the first place or minimise its impact when it happens.
- 6.5 The design of services which tackle the root causes of homelessness such as poverty, health inequalities and adversity in childhood will include ensuring that providers have appropriate policies and training in place to make sure that there is no adverse impact on equalities groups

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 If the strategy is not approved the Council will not be legally compliant. Furthermore, it is likely that more households who are threatened with homelessness, or who are in housing need, will have limited options for support to sustain their accommodation or find alternative suitable accommodation that meets their needs. If they have to make a homeless approach this could lead to the following negative outcomes:
- Increased B&B costs
 - Increased rough sleeping in the Borough.
 - Impacts on physical and mental health, educational achievement, ability to work and similar through increased homelessness

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive
2026**17th March

Appendix 1 – Shared Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Bill Hartnett Portfolio Holder for Housing	24.2.26
Lead Director / Head of Service	Judith Willis Assistant Director Community and Housing Services	24.2.26
Financial Services	Julie Lorraine, Director of Finance	24.2.26
Legal and Democratic Services	Nicola Cummings – Principal Solicitor – Governance and Jess Bayley-Hill, Principal Democratic Services Officer	25.02.26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green Policy Manager	N/A
Climate Change (if climate change implications apply)	Matthew Bough Strategic Housing & Business Support Manager	24.2.26

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Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026 - 2031

Our Vision - to end homelessness and rough sleeping and where it has not been possible to prevent it from occurring, ensure that it is rare, brief and non-recurring

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Foreword

Chair of Worcestershire Housing Board

I am proud to introduce this shared Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-31 for Bromsgrove District Council, Malvern Hills District Council, Redditch Borough Council, Wychavon District Council and Wyre Forest District Council.

Homelessness and rough sleeping remain among the most visible and urgent challenges facing our communities today. They are stark reminders of inequality, vulnerability, and the need for collective action. It is not simply the absence of a home, but the absence of security, dignity, and opportunity. Every child should grow up with the security of a home, and every adult deserves a safe place to live that provides stability and where they have a chance to thrive.

Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping continues to be of utmost importance for each of the councils involved in developing and delivering on this strategy.

Our vision, aligned with the Government's national strategy, will focus on 5 pillars to end homelessness:

Universal prevention: tackling the root causes of homelessness across the whole population.

Targeted prevention: providing tailored support to people who are more likely to face homelessness.

Preventing crisis: early identification of people who need help and putting in place personalised interventions that meet their needs.

Improving emergency responses: to ensure that if people do become homeless, they receive high quality support and that homelessness is brief.

Recovery and preventing repeat homelessness: helping people rebuild their lives with the right support.

This strategy will also take a renewed approach to the support and intervention for families with children in temporary accommodation to minimise the associated risk and long-term impact this has on them.

We recognise that homelessness is not simply a housing issue, but a complex social challenge shaped by health, employment, family breakdown, and wider economic pressures. Tackling homelessness requires collaboration across government, local authorities, health and social care, the voluntary sector, and communities themselves. That is why we have developed this strategy in collaboration with a range of stakeholders, which is essential to the successful implementation of our vision, as well as with the voice of those with lived experience of homelessness.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the organisations and individuals who have contributed towards the development of this strategy.

Governance will sit with the Worcestershire Housing Board- recognising that tackling homelessness not only benefits the individual but also benefits the economy, the health of our population, reduces crime and disorder and reduces costs for the taxpayer.

This strategy will govern our approach for five years and will see us beyond Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). However, given our experiences over recent years in tackling homelessness and the ever-changing landscape, it is vital that it remains responsive and will be kept under constant review.



Vic Allison, Chief Executive of Malvern Hills and Wychavon District Councils and Chair of the Worcestershire Housing Board

1. Introduction

Our vision is to **end homelessness and rough sleeping and where it isn't possible to prevent it from occurring, ensure it is rare, brief and non-recurring.**

We will tackle homelessness and rough sleeping through our work on the 5 pillars to end homelessness in line with the Government's National Plan to End Homelessness: universal prevention, targeted prevention, preventing crisis, improving emergency responses and recovery.

The district councils collaborating on the development and implementation of this strategy have a proven track record of working closely together to prevent and tackle homelessness across our districts. This is the third shared homelessness strategy to be developed, and the achievements of our last strategy are highlighted below.

1.1 Achievements of the last strategy

The previous Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022 - 2025 was developed by all six Local Housing Authorities (LHAs) in Worcestershire and focused on the then three main tenets of the national strategy: *prevention, intervention and recovery* as well as increasing the supply of temporary and permanent accommodation.

- Established a **countywide Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Group**.
- Developed a **Prison Leavers Protocol** and the pre-release homeless panel.
- Developed **stakeholder involvement and People With Lived Experience (PWLE) in reviewing services** through regular countywide meetings, bespoke focus groups, and questionnaires.
- Quarterly **reviews of data collection and deep dives into client groups** to inform decision making and share learning.

- **Joint training** in homelessness, Mental Capacity Act, psychologically informed environments, Care Act 2014, Complex Adults Risk Management framework, self-neglect etc.
- Support for those with mental health illnesses through development of **Mental Health Link Worker posts** and non-medical interventions
- **Delivery of the Rough Sleeper initiative** (target 563 p.a):
 - 2024/25 - **637 people supported**
 - 2023/24 - **837 people supported**
 - 2022/23 - **713 people supported**
- **Housing and support plans developed for the Target Priority Group (TPG)** (the most complex rough sleepers)
- **Cost of living plans, welfare assistance and bespoke support** to reduce homelessness developed across the county
- **Safe accommodation units set up for survivors of domestic abuse**
- **Supported provision of domestic abuse support services** including through the Domestic Abuse Support Service (West Mercia Women's Aid), Sanctuary Scheme and Domestic Abuse Coordinator and specialist Housing Officers (all councils)

There are also some actions from the previous strategy that are still underway at the time of writing this strategy including:

- Undertaking a **review of peer support models** in place in some areas of the county to share learning and best practice and explore whether the models could be expanded.
- **Explore opportunities for a greater range of supported and stop-down accommodation** available following the supported housing needs assessment and strategy. The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 has yet to be implemented so this action was deferred.

1.2 The current situation: homelessness review

To inform and provide the evidence base for the strategic objectives and actions within this strategy, a homelessness review was undertaken.

The review includes a compilation of homelessness data and trends, mapping of services and analysis of gaps in provision, service provider feedback and the feedback of People With Lived Experience (PWLE). We also held a stakeholder engagement event in September 2025 to gather the views of statutory and voluntary sector organisations and co design the strategy.



1.3 The plan to prevent and tackle homelessness in our districts: long-term vision and short-term priorities

In line with the Government’s national strategy, our long-term vision is to end homelessness and rough sleeping and where it isn’t possible to prevent it from occurring, that it is rare, brief and non-recurring.

Our strategy and action plan are centred around the 5 pillars to end homelessness as set out in the national strategy:

1. Universal prevention: tackling the root causes of homelessness across the whole population.
2. Targeted prevention: providing tailored support to people who are more likely to face homelessness.
3. Preventing crisis: early identification of people who need help and putting in place personalised interventions that meet their needs.

4. Improving emergency responses: to ensure that if people do become homeless, they receive high quality support and that homelessness is brief.
5. Recovery and preventing repeat homelessness: helping people rebuild their lives with the right support.

The action plan defines our priorities over the next 5 years to achieve our vision, and contains short-, medium- and long-term priorities.

1.4 Strategy structure

The strategy firstly explores the local issues that need to be addressed against each of the five pillars in the national strategy, based on the Homelessness Review undertaken in 2025.

Secondly it defines how we will take action to address local issues through the Strategy Action Plan, the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Group and local homelessness partnerships, and comprehensive governance arrangements under the Worcestershire Housing Board.

Finally, it outlines the funding and resource available to implement the strategy and deliver services.

1.5 Partnership working to codesign the strategy

The LHAs recognise the role our statutory and voluntary sector partners play in supporting the work we do, and how they go beyond the delivery of our statutory services through providing complimentary statutory and non-statutory services. However, this strategy is focused primarily on the role of LHAs and in meeting their legal responsibilities. It is a legal obligation of the LHAs to have a strategy in place and for it to be compliant with the Homelessness Act 2002. In developing the strategy, we have followed the legislative and good practice guidance and reviewed homelessness strategies from across the country.

2. Pillar 1: Universal prevention – tackling the root causes of homelessness

2.1 Increasing the supply of social and affordable housing

The Worcestershire Housing Strategy 2023-40, developed by the six Worcestershire LHAs and partners provides a long-term housing strategy for Worcestershire centred around four priority areas:

- Economic growth and jobs
- Quality and standards
- Health and wellbeing
- Net zero carbon and climate change

Specifically in relation to housing growth, the focus is on developing a 5+ year public sector pipeline of development sites, and the development of housing delivery capacity e.g. the exploration of direct delivery housing models for those LHAs who do not currently have this capacity.

There are two established delivery groups working to implement Housing Strategy actions and these are overseen by the Worcestershire Housing Board, which also oversees the implementation of this Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. This arrangement will ensure synergy between the two strategies.

In terms of permanent housing all the councils collaborate with developers and registered providers to deliver market and affordable housing across the county. This work is underpinned by the councils Local Plans which identify a wide range of tenures and types of housing including low-cost home ownership and social/ affordable rent properties.

There is a shortage in the supply of housing, particularly in the provision of affordable housing with an annual requirement of all housing tenures of approximately 1,911 per annum across the districts that share this strategy.

Local Plan numbers are informed by a combination of the standard methodology requirement, Housing Market Assessments and Housing Needs Surveys to determine the required mix of housing.

2.2 Making the best use of existing housing and that it is allocated to those who need it most

All LHAs sharing this strategy have their own allocations policies to ensure that much needed affordable housing is allocated to those who need it most. In each LHA area, the demand for affordable housing far outstrips supply. At the time of writing, Local Government Reorganisation could see the abolition of all six district councils in Worcestershire and the introduction of one or two unitary authorities and with it the requirement to develop new allocations policies for the new organisation(s).

Feedback from the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Stakeholder Event indicated that partners felt that the “managed move” process whereby Registered Providers (RPs) move households within their own stock and therefore negating the need for a homelessness approach could be an area to try to seek consistency on. This would mean less upheaval for households and reduced service demand on local authority housing teams.

The councils also collaborate with registered providers to ensure best use is made of existing stock including tackling under occupation and low demand schemes.

Whilst evictions from social housing are relatively low locally as they are nationally, there are more opportunities to prevent homelessness from social housing tenancies at an earlier stage through the establishment of pre-eviction panels and improved collaborative working. The government references a new toolkit in the National Plan to End Homelessness to provide advice for providers and councils on strengthening tenant engagement to reduce homelessness risks.

2.3 Supported housing

As with general needs affordable housing, the demand for supported housing is far higher than the supply locally and nationally. People need supported accommodation for a range of reasons e.g. young people needing support with life skills, people with mental health needs, people with substance misuse needs, survivors of domestic abuse. Some cohorts of homeless households will need more than just a housing solution to lift them out of homelessness and will require a sustainable, supported, and appropriate environment.

The Government's new Social and Affordable Homes Programme includes new flexibility for accommodation where the level of design and adaptation results in higher costs and calls on providers to produce ambitious bids for new supported housing.

The Worcestershire Housing Strategy delivery groups are exploring opportunities with RPs to deliver supported housing.

To improve standards across existing supported accommodation and tackle rogue landlords the government is introducing a new licensing regime following the consultation on the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023. As part of the implementation of this Act, the councils will be required to develop a Supported Housing Strategy by 31st March 2027.

2.4 Private rented sector accommodation

The Renters Rights Act seeks to give more security to tenants by abolishing section 21 'no fault' evictions which has been a significant cause of homelessness across the districts. The Act also brings with it a range of other measures to strengthen tenants' rights e.g. empowering tenants to challenge unreasonable rent increases, bringing an end to rental bidding and reducing barriers to accessing private rented accommodation such as outlawing discrimination against prospective tenants with children or who receive benefits, and preventing landlords from charging high rent in advance payments.

Making sure both tenants and landlords understand their rights under the Act will play an important part in reducing the risk of homelessness.

For the first time, the Act also includes the provision for councils to issue civil penalties against landlords who evict their tenants illegally.

Whilst the local authorities sharing this strategy welcome the intention of this legislation, there remains concern that the Act will lead to private landlords exiting the market prior the major implementation milestones e.g. no-fault evictions being removed in May 2026, which may lead to a spike in homelessness. Measures to mitigate this situation are considered within the strategy action plan.

As there is not enough social housing to meet demand, helping people to access private rented accommodation remains a priority across the districts - through rent deposits, bonds and private sector leasing schemes.

The councils will also be considering as part of this strategy how they can build relationships with private landlords to both improve access to private rented accommodation and prevent homelessness from private rented accommodation e.g. by encouraging landlords to work with the councils if they have a tenant who is at risk of homelessness.

Work with private sector landlords and letting agents also enables councils to meet some housing needs in parts of the county, although local housing allowance rates do make this challenging. The councils have been innovative in attracting landlords to provide accommodation through landlord forums, the use of rent bonds and deposits, social letting agencies and private sector leasing schemes, and this will continue during the lifetime of the strategy.

It should be noted that in some areas of the county, there are particular pressures on private sector accommodation with both Home Office and criminal justice providers looking to purchase/lease private rented sector accommodation for asylum seekers and prison leavers. In some cases, this has led to homelessness situations as existing tenants are served with notice and has led to reducing private sector accommodation available to homeless households.

2.5 Maximising income, financial inclusion and welfare assistance

Supporting low-income households to be able to pay their rent and other essential living costs to sustain their accommodation is critical to preventing homelessness. Recent years funding from the Household Support Fund, and Discretionary Housing Payments have led to some positive outcomes locally in the face of the cost-of-living crisis. It is expected that the new Crisis Resilience Fund will build on this bespoke approach.

Some councils involved in this strategy also have specialist Financial Inclusion Officers who work directly with people making homeless approaches due to rent arrears who are struggling with the cost of living. Their role is to ensure that their income is maximised

through ensuring they are receiving correct benefit entitlements, assistance to apply for benefit back payments and working with local services to increase their income through quality employment. Help is also provided by tenancy sustainment or support workers on issues like budgeting and maximising benefit entitlement,

Continuing to provide discretionary welfare support to ensure low-income households do not become homeless is a key priority for this strategy and action plan.

3. Pillar 2: Targeted prevention – targeted support for people at risk of homelessness

3.1 Collaboration to prevent homelessness

The LHAs and partner agencies have a proven record of working collaboratively to prevent homelessness. The Worcestershire Housing Board comprises of senior officers from across sectors who oversee the implementation of housing and homelessness strategies. A countywide Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy Group has been in existence for many years comprising of LHAs, MHCLG, statutory and voluntary sector partners.

Feeding into the countywide group, each LHA has a local homelessness partnership. This arrangement will continue to provide assurance that the strategy action plan is implemented, outcomes are achieved against the strategy targets - and that people that are at risk of homelessness are identified early and linked into the right housing and support services.

The government intends to introduce a new ‘duty to collaborate’ requiring public services to work together to prevent homelessness and support those at crisis point. Locally we developed a ‘commitment to refer’ which goes beyond the existing ‘duty to refer’ which requires certain public bodies to notify the LHA should they identify a household who may become homeless within 56 days. This is in recognition that there are many partners who will identify a potential homelessness situation and not just those included in the legislation.

It is the intention of this strategy to scrutinise adherence to the duty to refer locally and prepare for the new ‘duty to collaborate’.

3.2 Addressing barriers to accessing services

Some groups of people face barriers to accessing services because they may not be delivered in a way that meets their needs. For example, an action in the previous homelessness strategy was to understand the barriers for women rough sleepers in accessing services that are often communal provisions for both male and female rough sleepers. This work is ongoing at the time of writing this strategy. We also know that young people, care leavers, people from ethnic minority backgrounds, disabled people and LGBT+ people also face barriers.

For young people and care leavers the LHAs and Children’s Services work closely together and have developed a longstanding Care Leavers Protocol and a 16/17-year-old Protocol to clarify joint working arrangements. Each district has supported accommodation for young people, which in recent years has been at risk due to a change in funding structures and has meant LHAs have needed to meet the shortfall in County Council funding. It is a priority for supported accommodation to be in place for homeless young people in order for them to have a safe and supported environment for them to develop the necessary life skills needed to live a successful future life. In 2021 Wychavon District Council bought and refurbished a 10-room property to provide supported accommodation for young people and have also committed to purchasing a further property in its latest council plan.

Locally we also know that people with a physical disability can find it hard to access adapted temporary accommodation due to the lack of availability. This can then lead to extended stays in hospital and a delay in discharge. Wyre Forest District Council opened a new temporary accommodation facility in 2025 which includes a small number of fully adapted rooms. Our intention is to explore opportunities to work with colleagues across the health system to increase the availability of adapted temporary accommodation.

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We also know locally that people with multiple and complex needs face barriers to accessing accommodation, for example those that are using drugs and alcohol and with mental health support needs. Worcestershire Public Health have developed a Memorandum of Understanding between services to address this issue.

Working with People With Lived Experience (PWLE) of homelessness and accessing services is also a priority for this strategy as it is critical that we design accessible, inclusive and culturally sensitive, trauma informed services.

We already regularly undertake lived experience engagement with certain groups, for example survivors of domestic abuse and rough sleepers. However, we are seeking to go further with this strategy and ensure PWLE are contributing to, and overseeing, the strategy actions and performance via the Countywide Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Group.

3.3 Interventions to prevent homelessness for higher risk groups

There are many challenges that affect the higher risk groups and these include a severe housing shortage, silting up or undersupply of supported accommodation especially for those with complex needs and some poor-quality supported accommodation.

3.3.1 Single people

Single homeless households make up 57% of all housing register applicants across the districts, with the largest group being single adults aged 35-65 (26%).

Between 2022-2025, 54% of applicants owed a homeless duty were single adults:

65% were already homeless (relief duty)
37% were threatened with homelessness (prevention duty)

Single homeless people often face multiple needs: mental ill health, substance misuse, social isolation, and barriers to employment. Many do not qualify as having a priority need under legislation, limiting access to settled housing and statutory support. They are overrepresented among rough sleepers and those in insecure arrangements (e.g. sofa surfing), leading to poor health, social exclusion, and instability. Even those without vulnerabilities struggle due to unaffordable rents and precarious finances.

This homelessness strategy aims for early intervention, clear routes to housing, and multi-agency collaboration (local authorities, housing providers, health, probation, voluntary sector).

The LHAs use national homelessness funding to provide both accommodation-based and floating support, rent deposits and rent in advance to help access accommodation and No First Night Out/No Second Night Out provision and access to furniture.

3.3.2 Prison leavers

A small but significant number of homeless applications are from those leaving prison. We hold fortnightly prison meetings to ensure that where a Duty to Refer has been made, individuals are provided with a homelessness assessment prior to release wherever possible.

However, housing options are often limited due to the individual not meeting the priority need threshold under homelessness legislation. With limited supported accommodation available, Community Accommodation Service (CAS3) accommodation has provided a much-needed lifeline for those who otherwise might be released without an accommodation offer which may result in rough sleeping.

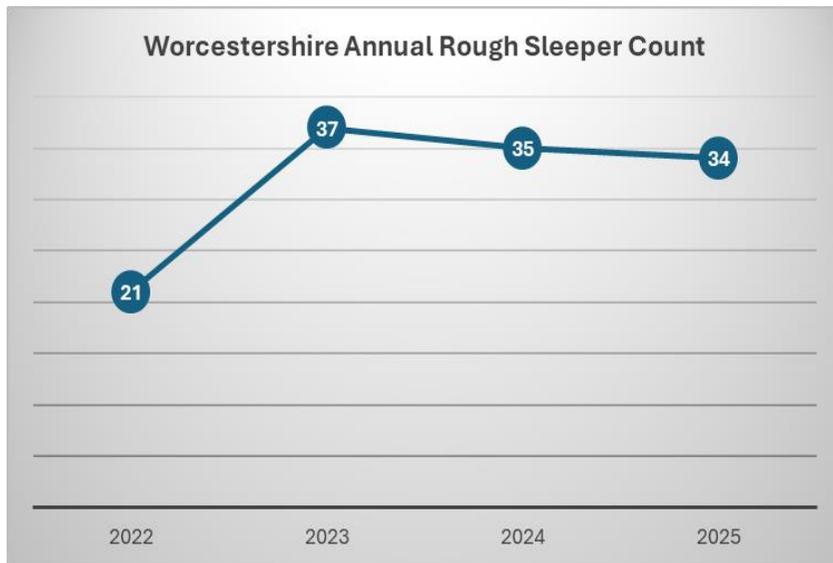
Recalls from this accommodation remain a concern (circa 50%) and a

positive housing pathway from CAS 3 accommodation needs to be explored.

3.3.3 Rough sleepers/those at risk of rough sleeping

Rough sleeping can be a dangerous and isolating experience. People who sleep rough are more likely to be victims of crime and violence. The longer a person remains on the streets, or actively engages in street life culture, the more likely it will have significant implications on their physical and mental health. Female rough sleepers are particularly at risk and may require specialist or women only services to address their needs. Safeguarding is therefore particularly relevant to these groups.

The Worcestershire official street count held each year shows fluctuating levels of rough sleeping across the county, with numbers in recent years remaining fairly static.



Rough sleeper data is collated each week improving our local intelligence of the flow, return, and stock of individuals and the reason behind their homelessness. Regular rough sleeper/prevention meetings and multi-agency meetings are held at a local level enables

the co-ordination of services and information sharing to develop partnerships with all organisations and individuals committed to ending rough sleeping and homelessness. This includes a consideration of any safeguarding issues that need to be flagged with partners or referred to the Adult Safeguarding Team. All five councils have rough sleeper outreach teams providing intensive support and routes into accommodation such as No First / No Second Night Out, Housing First/Led and other services.

Progress has been made in tackling health inequalities with increased access to health services and countywide drug and alcohol support, including harm reduction teams. Outreach teams have strengthened their practice by signing up to Homeless Link's outreach principles and undertaking learning and development.

Although Supported Housing providers in Worcestershire work within a trauma informed, person centred approach, those clients with substance misuse, serious mental health conditions and/or a history of arson may find themselves waiting for a suitable placement due to stringent accessibility criteria. There is also limited availability of rapid access supported accommodation resulting in an individual's only accommodation option being outside of the county.

We will also expand the multi-agency work on Target Priority Group rough sleepers and expand the Mental health and Homelessness Group so that multi-agency working is consistent across all districts and there is effective cross boundary working.

Therefore, the strategy will continue to promote collaborative working with health partners, housing providers and other organisations to improve access to services for rough sleepers including early intervention for those at risk and accommodation for those with complex needs.

3.3.4 Young people and care leavers

Homelessness for young people remains significant issue. This includes from people aged 16-17, Care Leavers and young parents. Many young people will have support as well as accommodation needs as they leave home for the first time.

Changes to the benefits system together with the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, and the number of young people in low paid work, has seen a rise in the number of those at risk of homelessness.

For young people the data indicates that the most common causes of homelessness in Worcestershire are family or friends being no longer willing to accommodate, the loss of private rented accommodation and relationship breakdown with partner (non- violent breakdown).

Whilst services do work closely together, there is still more to be done to prevent young people from becoming homeless. It is a focus of this strategy to enable more upstream homelessness prevention through family mediation and identifying potential homelessness situations at the earliest stage e.g. via schools and other relevant sectors/organisations.

3.3.5 Families with children

Worcestershire continues to be an attractive place to live and work, inevitably leading to high rents and house prices. This means some families are unable to afford to own or privately rent a home. Changes to the benefits system together with the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and the number of people in low paid work has seen a rise in the number of families at risk of homelessness.

We want to prevent homelessness by identifying the key risk factors/triggers in families lives that can lead to a family being at risk of homelessness at the earliest possible stage.

Families in Worcestershire access social housing registers for a variety of reasons, often reflecting both long-term housing challenges and immediate triggers that place them at risk of homelessness. The key reasons include:

- **Relationship Breakdown**
Non-violent relationship breakdowns, particularly involving partners, remain a significant factor. Families in this situation often require alternative accommodation to prevent homelessness or unsafe living conditions.
- **Domestic Abuse**
Domestic abuse is a major reason families seek housing support. Increased awareness of available services and support pathways has led to earlier reporting and engagement with housing services.
- **Loss of Private Rented Accommodation**
The end of an assured shorthold tenancy in the private rented sector, whether due to eviction, rent increases, or landlord decisions, continues to trigger housing register applications.
- **Financial Hardship and Housing Affordability**
Rising rents, high house prices, low wages, and changes to the benefits system contribute to families' inability to secure or sustain accommodation.
- **Other Factors**
Other, less frequent reasons include overcrowding, unsuitability of current accommodation (e.g., health/accessibility needs), and the need to move closer to education, employment or support networks.

As of June 2025, there were 4,955 families on the housing registers across the councils' areas which equates to 43% of all applications.

Analysis of trends shows that relationship breakdown, domestic abuse and the loss of private rented tenancies remain the leading immediate triggers for applications, emphasising the importance of early intervention and targeted prevention support.

3.3.6 Survivors of domestic abuse

Domestic Abuse continues to be one of the primary drivers of homelessness across Worcestershire, with a profound and lasting impact on victim/survivors, families, and communities. Since the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, LHAs and Worcestershire County Council have worked collaboratively to strengthen housing pathways, deliver on new statutory duties, and create a coordinated, trauma-informed response using a whole family approach for those fleeing abuse.

The establishment of the Worcestershire Domestic Abuse Partnership Board, a domestic abuse and housing coordinator, specialised domestic abuse housing officers and the provision of safe accommodation has led to more consistent standards of support across the county. Housing teams, alongside commissioned domestic abuse providers, now play a critical role in early identification, prevention, and sustaining safe accommodation for survivors.

Data and Trends

Data highlights that domestic abuse remains a significant cause of homelessness presentations across Worcestershire over the last three years. Of those owed a homelessness duty in 2024/25, 30.8% of households presented due to domestic abuse.

	Prevention (%)	Relief (%)	Total (%)
2022/23	8.3%	18.4%	26.7%
2023/24	9.7%	18.8%	28.5%
2024/25	7.1%	23.7%	30.8%

In 2024/25 over 10,000 domestic abuse-related incidents and crimes were recorded by police in Worcestershire. This total includes both crimes and non-crime incidents. According to Worcestershire County Council's Operation Encompass page, which summarises West Mercia Police's Q4 2024/25 Performance Monitoring Report, around 25% of all recorded crimes in the county were classified as domestic abuse related.

While West Mercia Police data for the same period indicates a statistical decrease in domestic abuse incidents across the force area, the figures for Worcestershire demonstrate that domestic abuse remains a significant issue locally.

Despite improved reporting, local insight suggests that many survivors still do not disclose abuse, indicating ongoing unmet need. Across the county, domestic abuse-related approaches accounted for a significant proportion of homelessness applications. The majority were women with dependent children, though a growing number of single survivors, male victims, and individuals with complex needs have been identified.

Sanctuary Schemes and Safe Accommodation

LHAs across Worcestershire, work in partnership to deliver safe accommodation, including, refuge spaces, dispersed units, and sanctuary schemes to enable survivors to remain safely in their homes where appropriate.

Sanctuary Scheme Referrals (September 2024 - August 2025):

District	2024/25
Bromsgrove	3
Malvern Hills	15
Redditch	8
Wychavon	32
Wyre Forest	47

Between 2024-2025 a total of 105 referrals were made to sanctuary schemes across all 5 local authorities. Overall referrals have decreased

across most districts, with some localised increases, highlighting variation in demand and referral pathways.

There has been much progress across the LHAs since the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 statutory duty across LHAs including the expansion of the Domestic Abuse Community Champions network through Worcester Community Trust and West Mercia Women's Aid, delivery of trauma-informed housing training to frontline staff, specialist Domestic Abuse Housing in each council (who have received positive feedback from service users) and strengthened partnership working between housing, police, and support providers through regular MARAC coordination and attendance at DRIVE meetings.

All the housing teams work in partnership with Sanctuary Schemes to help victim-survivors of domestic abuse stay safely in their homes by providing tailored security measures, reducing the need to move.

The introduction of the Domestic Abuse Housing Coordinator role to work closely with Domestic Abuse Housing Officers has ensured training and knowledge remain up to date.

3.3.7 Veterans

Instances of homelessness amongst veterans are low locally, however there is action to be taken to further tackle this. LHAs are currently working with the Worcestershire Armed Forces Covenant team to ensure that there is a good understanding of the Armed Forces Covenant in housing services and ensure that organisational policies reflect the needs of the Covenant e.g. that local connection rights (for the purposes of social housing allocation) are embedded in policy.

3.3.8 Refugees and migrant homelessness

Worcestershire has provided a sanctuary to refugees from Ukraine, Syria and Afghanistan through the government's resettlement schemes, including Homes for Ukraine, the [Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme](#) (ACRS) and [Afghan Relocations and Assistance](#)

[Policy](#) (ARAP), as well as a small number of arrivals through the Community Sponsorship Scheme. Accommodation has been provided by a combination of private hosts, the private rented sector and, where appropriate, social housing.

The Home Office is responsible for providing accommodation for asylum seekers, whilst their asylum claims are being processed. Home Office accommodation is provided in Worcestershire in both contingency hotels and dispersal accommodation (usually self-contained family accommodation or houses of multiple occupation). However, asylum seeker numbers in Worcestershire are currently relatively low in comparison to other areas of the UK.

Once asylum has been granted, a refugee is required to leave their Home Office accommodation, with notice to quit currently at 56 days. A process is in place for information to be shared with the local housing authority of notice to quit local Home Office accommodation, to ensure housing advice can be provided.

Homelessness amongst this cohort is relatively low locally due to fewer asylum seeker numbers than other areas of the country and the fact that those placed in Worcestershire often look to relocate to areas where cultural or religious needs are better met or nearer to family members once asylum has been granted. However, it still remains a challenge to be able to respond to the needs of refugees and migrants. In particular, we are seeing an increase in approaches for those with No Recourse To Public Funds, where options for support are extremely limited, and LHAs need to work closely with our partner VCSE organisations to respond to this.

3.3.9 Hospital discharge, substance use and Adult Social Care support

“Discharge from hospital into poor quality, insecure housing or, in the worst cases, onto the streets is a deeply harmful outcome. When combined with unmet mental health needs and substance use needs, it can severely undermine people's recovery and increase the risk that

their health deteriorates further and makes them even more vulnerable.” [A National Plan to End Homelessness, MHCLG, 2025.](#)

The government is committed to a target that no one eligible for assistance is discharged to the street after a hospital stay and will be working with the NHS and councils to implement the [Discharging people at risk of or experiencing homelessness guidance published in 2024.](#)

In preparation for this, our strategy will commit to exploring local opportunities with colleagues across the health system to promote early identification of housing issues and planning from admission both for accommodation needs but also any ongoing health and care needs.

The LHAs do not provide any supported temporary accommodation and therefore it is essential that if people do need to access temporary accommodation that the necessary support and care package is provided to reduce the risk of a harmful outcome.

Sadly, district councils have seen a rise in the number of homeless people harming themselves, and others, in temporary accommodation and an increase in the number of deaths in temporary accommodation through people dying by suicide or overdose. Although the numbers are small, they are increasing and this desperately needs to be addressed to safeguard people and prevent this from happening.

At the time of writing this strategy a roundtable event was being organised to bring together senior officers from housing, health, social care, registered housing providers, and safeguarding to focus on the issue of supporting people with complex needs in unsupported accommodation. It is expected that the recommendations from that event will feed into this strategy and the action plan.

3.3.10 Neurodivergence and homelessness

People with a range of neurodivergent needs, including autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, learning disabilities and other cognitive differences, may face additional barriers and challenges when navigating housing services or experiencing homelessness. These barriers often relate to communication differences, difficulties with unfamiliar and changing environments, sensory needs, and the cumulative impact of unmet support needs.

To better support local residents with neurodiverse needs, Local Housing Authorities have introduced training for housing officers to improve understanding of neurodivergence and to help staff recognise when individuals may require tailored approaches, including those who do not have a formal diagnosis. This training aims to ensure that interactions are accessible, supportive, and responsive to individual needs rather than relying on assumptions or labels.

LHAs are also reporting increasing numbers of households requesting additional bedrooms where, for example, children with neurodivergent needs are unable to share bedrooms with siblings. This often reflects genuine challenges relating to sleep, safety, behaviour regulation, or sensory differences. These pressures contribute to growing demand for larger family homes within an already limited social housing stock.

4 Pillar 3: Preventing crisis – helping people stay in their homes

Identifying and preventing homelessness at the earliest possible stage is the best outcome for households, LHAs and the public purse. However, where it has not been possible to prevent homelessness, services need to work together quickly and effectively to ensure that it is as brief as possible.

4.1 Preventing homelessness at the earliest stage

‘Too often, households are known to one service, such as a voluntary or community organisation, without that information being shared with the council or other relevant partners. To deliver truly coordinated and preventative support, everyone must work together, with clear referral pathways and shared responsibility for identifying and responding to risk early.’

[A National Plan to End Homelessness, MHCLG, 2025](#)

Locally as well as nationally, we want to increase the proportion of households who are supported to stay in their own homes or helped to find alternative accommodation - to prevent homelessness and the need for temporary accommodation.

Details of the Government’s new Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant were announced in December 2025 as part of a provisional multi-year settlement. The intent of this grant is to simplify homelessness funding and allow for greater flexibility in spend according to local need.

The provisional 3-year allocations will allow for longer term strategic planning to commission or directly provide homelessness services/initiatives on a longer-term basis, rather than annual allocations in recent years.

To inform this strategy, a mapping exercise was carried out as part of the homelessness review which identified what services are available across Worcestershire and what gaps in provision there might be. A summary of this is contained within the homelessness review and an action within the plan is to explore what services are required to be commissioned or directly provided by LHAs based on the findings of the review.

The LHAs already provide a number of services to help prevent homelessness or to ensure suitable alternative accommodation is available at the prevention stage. This includes access to funding for rent deposits/bonds and rent in advance, welfare assistance, working with landlords and families to resolve issues and mediation for young people and their families.

4.2 Accessing the right support at the right time

It is vital that people get the support that they need, when they need it, to prevent homelessness. Housing and homelessness systems can be complex by the very nature of legislation, geographical location, differences in funding and associated criteria, whether they are provided by statutory or voluntary services and as such it can be challenging for people to navigate them or understand what support is available.

The need to raise awareness of what services are already available was a key theme arising from partners who attended the strategy stakeholder event held in September 2025. The mapping exercise outlined in the previous section will be useful in raising awareness but the LHAs are keen to work with partners to build further on this through improved communication and joint training across organisations and sectors. Joint work with the Adult Front Door and the Community Directory are actions within the strategy action plan.

To proactively identify and predict where households may be at risk of homelessness, we want to improve our use of data to enable us to target high-risk households 3-6 months before they potentially reach crisis point. To address this, we want to explore using a predictive analytics model utilising a range of different data to target our homelessness prevention work.

4.3 Person-centred support to prevent rough sleeping

The councils have worked closely together for many years to tackle rough sleeping and have developed a range of initiatives such as No First Night Out (emergency bed spaces for those that are new to the street), Housing First/Led models (intensive support linked to accommodation), outreach support, bespoke funding and person-centred packages of support. A Rough Sleeper Coordinator has also been in post for several years to oversee the councils' strategic approach to tackling rough sleeping and unblock barriers to accommodation for those with a poor tenancy or offending history.

We will aim continue providing bespoke funding for outreach teams and the Rough Sleeper Coordinator to find a housing solution for those at risk of rough sleeping and rough sleepers.

5. Pillar 4: Improving emergency responses – improving temporary accommodation and making people’s experiences better if they do become homeless

Whilst the aim is to prevent homelessness at the earliest possible stage and negate the need for temporary accommodation, it will always be needed as a safety net for households at crisis point.

LHAs have a duty to provide temporary accommodation in certain circumstances to homeless households. They can also utilise a discretionary duty to accommodate others, where no duty is owed but they are accommodated under wider policy initiatives such as No First Night Out/No Second Night Out to prevent rough sleeping or to support rough sleepers coming off the streets.

If temporary accommodation is required then it must be safe, affordable, of a decent standard and stable. B&B accommodation is not suitable for families with children, but we recognise that it may be the only option at crisis point.

Over the previous three years the number of placements ending has steadily declined from 1121 to 734 and the same for placements with children 339 to 235. Which means that households are spending longer in temporary accommodation. This is due to increasing pressure on housing availability impacting on the ability to house people into permanent accommodation. Correspondingly in the five districts the length of stay in temporary accommodation over 12 weeks has risen from 18% in 2022/23 to 26% in 2024/25 and a corresponding increase of length of placements for the longer timescales (or static numbers over the last three years).

For all the councils the most used type of temporary accommodation is Bed and Breakfast but the amount this is used varies from 46% of all

placements in Redditch to 59% in Wyre Forest in 2024/25. There has been a decrease in use of Bed and Breakfast between 2023/24 and 2024/25 in all of the councils except Bromsgrove where the percentage of placements in B&B have increased from 42% to 48%.

This shows positive work undertaken by many councils to bring other forms of temporary accommodation into use including from Registered Providers and councils’ own stock. When considering the use of temporary accommodation for households with dependent children, WFDC and MHDC still mainly use Bed and Breakfast (53% and 72% respectively). However, both WDC and BDC use more temporary accommodation provided by Registered Providers than B&B (39% and 56% respectively) and RBC mainly use their own housing stock (61%).

The availability of different types and numbers of temporary accommodation differs across the county and can range from ad hoc used of emergency accommodation such as Bed and Breakfast to accommodation owned and managed by the Councils directly. See the table below for more information on temporary accommodation across the districts.

Placements into:	22/23	23/24	24/25
TA within RP Stock	89	89	72
TA within your own stock	113	115	98
Any other type of TA	27	28	76
Made own arrangements for TA	36	13	3
Other nightly paid, privately managed accommodation	165	92	69
Private sector TA leased council / Registered Provider	29	43	12
Bed & Breakfast	633	578	395
Temporarily remains in property	5	3	3
Other: e.g refuge	24	13	6

The new government strategy has a strong focus on households in temporary accommodation and particularly those with dependent children. There is now a body of research around the health impacts of temporary accommodation on people’s health including infant mortality and councils are expected to reduce the use of Bed and Breakfast style accommodation for families over the lifetime of this parliament.

All the LHAs have support workers who can provide additional support to households in need, but the resource is limited and it is critical that the councils utilise other support and care providers where relevant.

LHAs want to increase the amount of good quality self-contained accommodation, which will provide a better experience for homeless households but is also better value for money and less expensive than nightly paid accommodation.

We will work with education providers and GPs to ensure they are aware and can support those households in Temporary Accommodation where appropriate.

6. Pillar 5: Recovery and preventing repeat homelessness – ensuring people don't experience homelessness more than once and halving long term rough sleeping

With the right support people can rebuild their lives after experiencing the trauma of homelessness and break the cycle of repeat homelessness.

6.1 Ensuring people don't experience homelessness more than once

Preventing repeat homelessness is achieved through a variety of ways depending in part on the client group. Ensuring households are supported through the transition from temporary into permanent accommodation and working with households to make them tenancy ready whilst in temporary and supported accommodation has proved beneficial.

Some repeat homeless can arise through households not being able to access health interventions when needed. Locally some LHAs have funded Mental Health Link workers to work with housing teams and households approaching for homelessness assistance. This has proved a valuable resource to enable homeless households to access mental health support and assisting them to access existing mental health services at the right time.

Through regular meetings, agencies collaborate on policy development, share data and good practice, and coordinate funding opportunities. This joined-up approach strengthens the county's ability to deliver sustainable solutions and improve outcomes for those at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness.

Further work needs to be done to better understand why repeat homelessness for survivors of domestic abuse and larger families with complex needs is high and we will work with those with lived experience to see if we can develop workstreams to tackle this.

6.2 Tackling long term rough sleeping

The Government's funding programmes have enabled LHAs to implement a number of service offers for rough sleepers including Housing First/Led, No First/Second Night Out, outreach workers and access to personalised budgets. This approach has supported the most entrenched rough sleepers, some of whom had previously been on the streets for many years, to maintain social housing/private rented tenancies. Through the use of personalised budgets for meaningful activities and engagement opportunities councils have been able to help rough sleepers and former rough sleepers to sustain their accommodation, make their property a home, build positive routines and strengthen community connections.

By offering bespoke interventions, the personalisation budget helps to break the cycle of homelessness and reduce the likelihood of individuals returning to the streets. It empowers frontline staff to respond quickly and creatively to barriers faced by rough sleepers, ensuring that support is not only practical but also person-centred.

This strategy is committed to maintaining this robust approach to tackling and reducing rough sleeping.

6.3 Access to specialist health services: mental health, physical health & substance use

“What needs to be considered is the traumatic experience of being homeless. And that doesn't stop the moment you come out of homelessness... Even if you didn't have mental health issues going into homelessness, you are guaranteed 100 million percent [to have mental health issues after experiencing homelessness]. I have no doubt in my mind at all that everybody goes through a homelessness journey will experience trauma if being homeless and that needs to be considered because even if you've got no recovery to deal with, no official mental health diagnosis or

any compound need, you are going to have an adjustment and, you know, adjustment from that trauma”

MHCLG (2025) Lived Experience Forum Report, recommendations from people with lived experience for the cross-Government homelessness strategy, Revolving Doors, Groundswell, Justlife Foundation

Project Bright Path supports people who are rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping and experiencing mental health challenges, both diagnosed and undiagnosed. The programme provides rapid, relational and trauma-informed support through short-term, focused interventions and better connection into mainstream services. Its purpose is to help people stabilise at times of crisis and access the right mental health and housing support at the right time. A key development during the year was the appointment of two Band 7 mental health practitioners, one based in Herefordshire and one in Worcestershire. Their specialist clinical input has already made a difference, supporting people with complex needs, helping unlock access to formal mental health assessments and diagnosis, and strengthening the ability of frontline workers to navigate mental health systems.

The project also delivers a training programme which is delivered in partnership with a wide range of organisations, including LHAs, housing providers, rehabilitation centres and voluntary sector partners. Content has continued to evolve, with additions including trauma-informed approaches, neurodiversity awareness and clearer pathways for mental health and homelessness support.

In developing this strategy, housing and health colleagues have been engaging in more detailed discussions around the links between mental health, physical health and homelessness and what could be done locally to address poor health and inequalities via the countywide Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy group, the Worcestershire Housing Board, the Housing and Health Group, the district health collaboratives, and the Health Inequalities Prevention Personalisation Care Board. This strategy is committed to ensuring access to specialist services for homeless

households and specific actions will be defined in conjunction with housing and health.

6.4 Community support and services

The LHAs recognise that peer support can be invaluable in tackling and preventing homelessness. Those that have lived experience will often be able to engage complex homeless households more effectively as they know first hand what it is like to experience homelessness and disadvantage.

Homelessness peer support models are in place in some areas of the county and there remains a commitment from the previous strategy to review peer support models and identify good practice with a view to potentially increasing or upscaling peer support.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy Group continues to learn from those with lived experience of homelessness through ongoing feedback, workshops and questionnaires.

The service mapping exercise carried out as part of the Homelessness Review and the [Community Services Directory](#) are also useful to highlight the community support services available. Ongoing discussions on how to harness community support continue to take place at local homelessness forums.

We will continue to engage with other services that can support households into education, employment and training and those that assist people with managing finances such as the Citizens Advice Bureau.

7. Governance arrangements

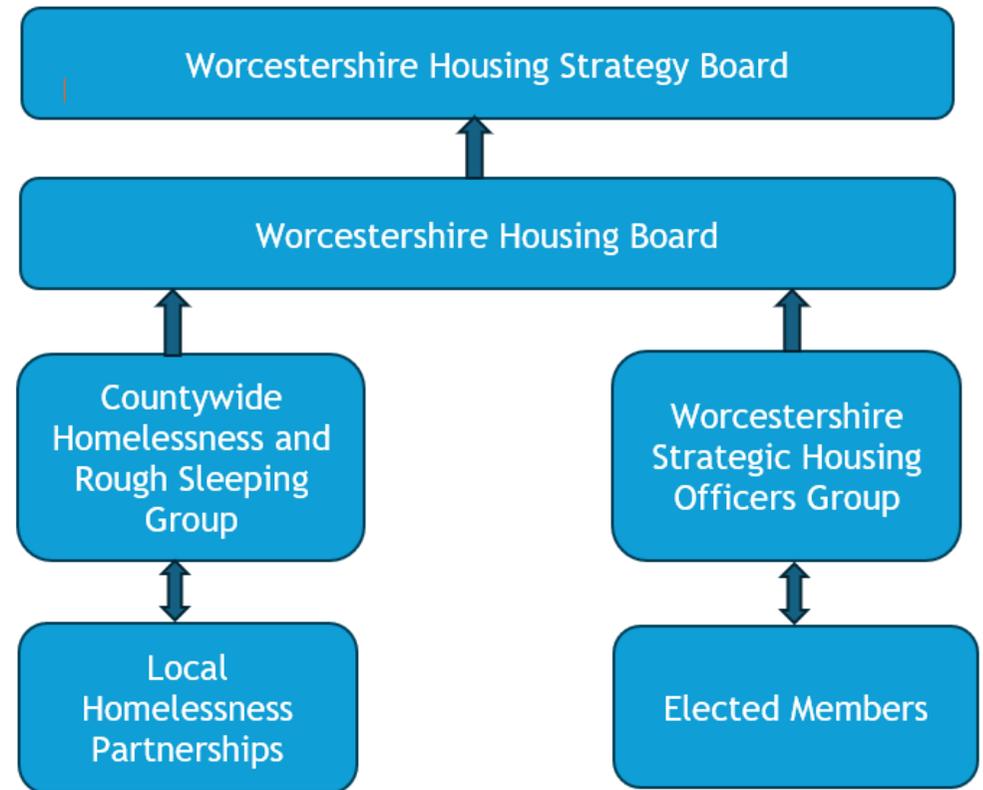
7.1 Oversight, delivery and monitoring

Worcestershire Housing Board is responsible for ensuring that the commitments within the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy are realised. The partnership is a multi-agency and cross-sector partnership, ensuring delivery of the strategy is supported across relevant organisations. The Housing Board reports to the Housing Strategy Board comprised of Chief Executive or senior officers from LHAs, Registered Providers, NHS and Public Health.

The Strategy will be overseen by the Countywide Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Group, a public and voluntary sector partnership that brings together statutory agencies, housing teams, health services, and community partners to ensure a coordinated response to homelessness across the county. The chair of that group will attend the Housing Board regularly to report on outcomes achieved and progress against actions.

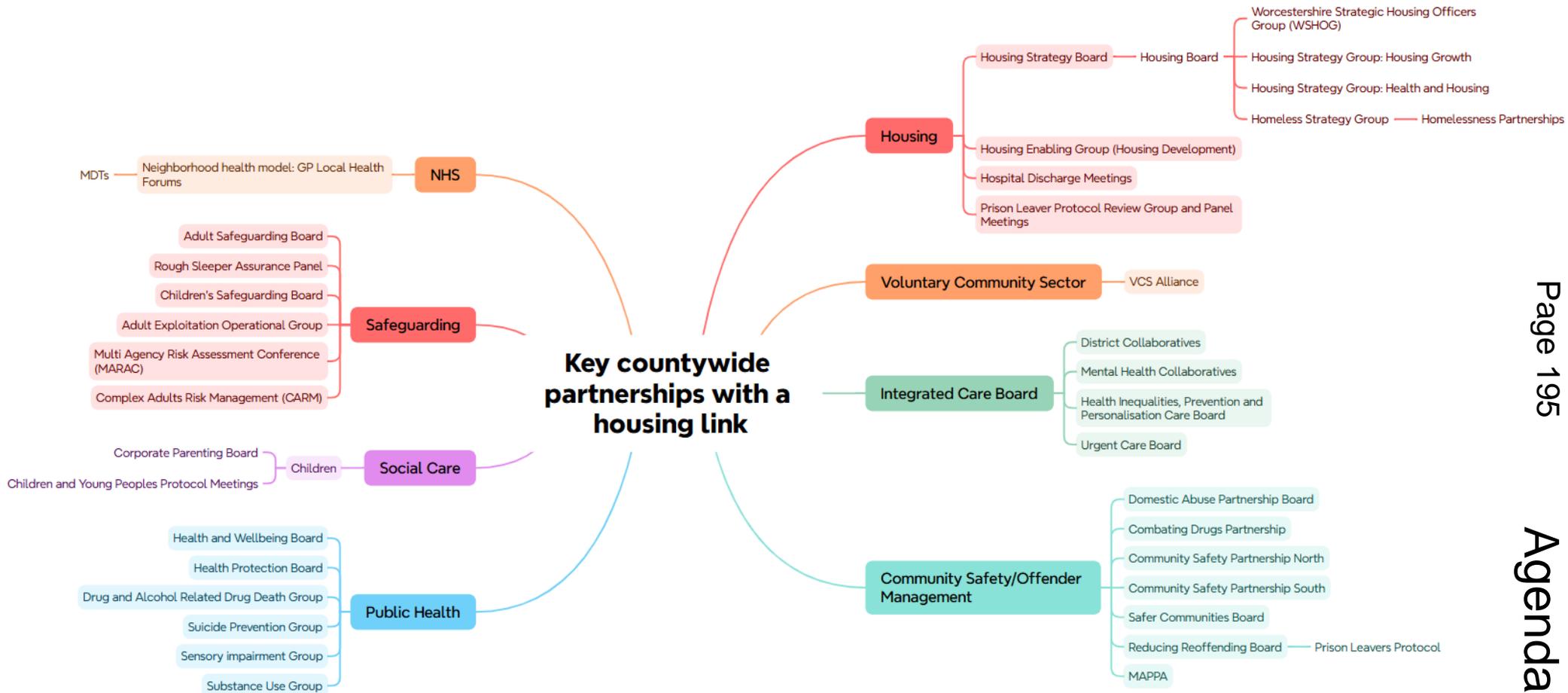
Each LHA has its own local homelessness partnership, consisting of local statutory and voluntary partners which will oversee and deliver on homelessness services and the strategy at a local level and feed into the Countywide Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Group.

The LHAs are responsible for meeting their own statutory duties in relation to preventing homelessness. The Worcestershire Strategic Housing Officers Group (WSHOG) will be responsible for the operational delivery of the LHA elements of the strategy. Each LHA will have their own separate mechanism for reporting back to elected members on outcomes and progress including committees and member briefings to ensure there is political oversight on the delivery of the strategy and services.



8. Partnerships

Partnerships are essential to the delivery of the strategy as many organisations have a role to play in tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in the wider context.



This is not a definitive or exhaustive list of all partnerships but highlights some key groups and inter-relationships. There are also localised partnership and strategic groups within each LHA that are not included in this section.

ICB and health partnerships

The advent of the Integrated Care Boards and review of the role of the Health and Wellbeing Board has led to a new way of working within the health, social care and wider partnerships including greater district level working with Primary Care Networks.

Integrated Care System - Taking collective action to tackle health inequalities.



Reducing Re-offending Group & MAPPAs Strategic Management Board

The Reducing Re-offending Board oversees the development and delivery of the criminal justice pathway and protocol across the county, following on from work commissioned by Public Health and the LHAs. Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPAs) were introduced in 2001 under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 and subsequently strengthened by the Criminal Justice Act 2003 as the statutory arrangement for managing sexual and violent offenders. It provides a mechanism whereby the agencies involved can better discharge their responsibilities and protect the public in a coordinated way. The responsible authority for MAPPAs in each criminal justice area consists of the police, probation, and prisons. LHAs have a duty to cooperate with MAPPAs arrangements in assessing and managing the risks posed by MAPPAs-eligible offenders and the Board oversees the process.

Adult Safeguarding Board and the Assurance Panel

The main purpose of Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) is to promote wellbeing and reduce the risk of harm for people with care and support needs. Rough sleepers specifically are overseen by an Assurance Panel. The LHAs are represented on the Board and Panel at Senior Officer level.

Corporate Parenting Board (CPB)

The CPB provides leadership and a governance structure for corporate parenting to drive forward the outcomes for looked after children and care leavers. It oversees the Board's strategy and promotes the voice of

children and young people. It also provides challenge and scrutiny to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for children in care and care leavers. LHAs are represented at CPB by officers from WSHOG.

Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (DAPB)

The DAPB consists of key partners with an interest in tackling domestic abuse and supporting victims, including their children. The DAPB has been created to support Worcestershire County Council in meeting its duty under Part IV of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and to expand upon the wider community-focused work of the Worcestershire Forum against Domestic Abuse.

Appendix 1 – Action Plan

Pillar 1: Universal Prevention - tackling the root causes of homelessness

Action	Measure	Lead	Timescale
1.1 Prevent homelessness from private rented sector tenancies by building relations with landlords to identify those at risk of homelessness at an earlier stage, utilising funding where appropriate and available and take action to sustain tenancies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Countywide landlord forum established. - “Help to Stay” scheme established. - Tenancy Sustainment Officers in place (funding dependent). - Decrease in households becoming homeless due to end of a private sector tenancy for a negative reason. - Prevention panel established with landlords - Utilise funding such as the Crisis Resilience Fund and homeless funding to sustain tenancies 	Housing Advice Team Leaders/Housing Strategy Officers/Private Sector Housing Teams	March 2027
1.2 Ensure more legal support is available for tenants facing eviction by expanding partnerships with organisations who already undertake this work so that services have sufficient resource, knowledge, expertise and capacity to robustly defend evictions based on grounds under Renters Rights Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training on Renters’ Rights Act undertaken for LHA staff. - Established referral mechanisms are in place with the Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service - Decrease in households becoming homeless due to end of a private sector tenancy for a negative reason. - Increase in tenancies sustained in the private rented sector following intervention. 	Housing Advice Team Leaders/Housing Strategy Officers/Private Sector Housing Teams Registered Housing Providers	December 2026
1.3 Develop an integrated tenancy sustainment approach, bringing together housing, community organisations/hubs, employment and financial inclusion partners and develop stronger links to online support, to identify tenancies at risk and deliver coordinated support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Tenancy at Risk” protocol with Registered Providers is explored. - Coordinated support packages in place including income maximisation, debt advice, financial literacy training, and flexible crisis prevention/ discretionary welfare funding. - Decrease in households becoming homeless due to end of a tenancy for a negative reason. 	Housing Advice Team Leaders/Housing Strategy Officers and Community Services	March 2028
1.4 Review the Duty to Refer data and prepare for the new Duty to Collaborate to ensure that any potential homeless cases are referred to the local housing teams by partner agencies at the earliest opportunity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Duty to refer data is reviewed. - Increase in the number of Duty to Refer referrals 	Housing Strategy Officers/All statutory agencies	March 2027

	- Increase in the proportion of cases approaching for homelessness assistance at prevention stage, or earlier.	required to refer	
1.5 Use data and lived experience to track and evaluate progress against the strategy (and inform service delivery) using key performance indicators and regular reviews. Consider how we can implement “big picture” reporting to demonstrate and understand homelessness prevention activity across all sectors/organisations.	- Data dashboard and baseline statistics developed and monitored at countywide homelessness strategy meetings. - Summary reporting mechanism developed to show homelessness prevention work across all sectors/organisations. - PWLE attending/providing feedback to the Homelessness Strategy Group.	Research and Intelligence Officer/Housing Strategy Officers	September 2028
1.6 Improve shared understanding of the work of all partner agencies in preventing homelessness through promoting the Community Services Directory, and joint training and awareness sessions.	- Joint training undertaken and increased awareness of roles and responsibilities. - All homelessness prevention services are signed up to the community services directory.	County Council, Housing Advice Team Leaders/Housing Strategy Officers, Homelessness Partnerships	September 2027
1.7 Develop and implement clear referral guidance and processes between agencies (housing, health, education, social care) for early identification of at-risk individuals.	- Referral guidance and process defined and promoted. - Individuals are not released from institutions into homelessness.	Housing Strategy Officers, Health, Education and Social Care Leads	March 2029
1.8 Explore opportunities to develop and deliver homelessness education programmes in schools	- Review service offered by Nightstop in WF and roll out across other district (funding dependent)	Housing Strategy Teams	March 2029
1.9 Make better use of existing social housing by exploring opportunities to better match disabled households with adapted housing and by tackling under occupation of larger properties	-Current demand for adapted housing and best practice in maximising use of existing stock reviewed	Housing Strategy Teams	March 2028

Pillar 2: Targeted Prevention - targeted support for people at risk of homelessness

Action	Measure	Lead	Timescale
2.1 Explore the feasibility of a predictive homelessness risk model that pulls data from a range of sources to identify and target support to people at greatest risk of becoming homeless before they reach crisis point.	- Predictive analytics system developed and implemented. - Data driven services/provision are developed. - Increase in homelessness prevention. - Decrease in TA placements.	Research and Intelligence Officer	March 2029

Rough sleepers and single homeless households:			
<p>2.2 Review and strengthen the rough sleeper support/accommodation options (All services and interventions that tackle rough sleeping) and commission or directly deliver services required utilising the new multi-year homelessness funding arrangements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carry out a needs assessment and develop a Supported Housing Strategy - Number of services newly commissioned or expanded (if required) - Map unmet needs identified through outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSHOG - Housing Advice/strategy Teams, - Outreach Services, - Rough Sleeper Co-Ordinator 	July 2027
<p>2.3 Investigate the ability to provide bespoke funding Outreach teams and the Rough Sleeper Coordinator to develop tailored solutions for individuals who have previously been unable to secure or maintain accommodation, subject to funding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in rough sleeping. - Number of individuals housed through the funding - Tenancy sustainment 6 months + - Number of individuals supported through the funding to address unmet needs - Reduction in repeat presentations to outreach services - Building relationships with Registered Providers to overcome barriers into accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator - Outreach Services - Housing Advice/Strategy Teams 	rch 2029 (pending funds)
<p>2.4 Expand the online multi-agency work on Target Priority Group rough sleepers Implement outreach and support services TPG online group across all districts to improve cross-boundary coordination and case management. Learning from good practice and promoting joined up working.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online multi-agency TPG group working effectively across boundaries+. - Reduction in the number of TPG rough sleepers. - Increase in TPG rough sleepers accessing services and accommodation - Number of districts consistently using the TPG platform - Number of cross-boundary cases successfully resolved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rough Sleeper Co-Ordinator/Housing Advice Teams 	September 2026
<p>2.5 Extend the Mental Health & Homelessness Group to all districts to enable discussion/referrals into mental health services for those at risk of or experiencing rough sleeping</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mental Health and Homelessness group expanded across all districts to ensure consistent access to mental health services. - Increased number of districts participating - Number of rough sleeping cases discussed - Increased access to mental health support for rough sleepers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Rough Sleeper Co-Ordinator 	rch 2027
<p>2.6 Understand factors leading to returns to rough sleeping Using data to identify repeat patterns, implement targeted interventions, and redesign support offers, subject to funding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhanced support offer in place for those who return to rough sleeping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rough Sleeper Co-Ordinator - Outreach Services 	April 2027

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work undertaken with Registered Providers to reduce the no. of people refused housing due to poor tenancy history - Reduction in recurring rough sleeping - Number of individuals enrolled in enhanced support - Tenancy sustainment following re-engagement 	- Housing Advice/Housing Strategy Teams	
<p>2.7 Set up a Lived Experience involvement process to ensure people who have experienced rough sleeping or homelessness are able to put forward ideas or feedback. Use this feedback to make changes to services and improve everyday practice, subject to funding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People with lived experience involved in service development and improvement - Number of people with lived experience taking part in a way that meets their needs - Feedback collected and recorded - Number of service changes or improvements made because of the group's feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rough Sleeper Co-Ordinator - Outreach Services 	October 2026
Children, young people and care leavers:			
<p>2.8 Pilot the “Upstream” model in partnership with schools, specialist youth and family support services e.g. Centrepoin model (should funding be available). This would include a review of family intervention and mediation services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prevention initiatives developed across the Councils leading to a reduction in youth homelessness. - The causes of youth homelessness and what interventions can be made to sustain accommodation and positive relationships with family/friends are better understood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Children's Services - Youth Services - Schools 	December 2027
<p>2.9 Review the Care Leavers Protocol in light of new legislative requirements that state that care leavers will no longer be deemed intentionally homeless in the case of accommodation breakdown.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Care leavers protocol updated to be compliant with the legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Children's Services 	December 2026
<p>2.10 Agree a Memorandum of Understanding with providers of young persons supported accommodation to facilitate movements to alternative supported accommodation where relationships between residents have broken down</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Memorandum of Understanding in place across providers to respond to potential homelessness situations where the relationship between residents has broken down. - Fewer crisis situations in which a suitable move cannot be found 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Supported Housing Providers 	December 2027
<p>2.11 Work with partner organisations (e.g. DWP) to explore services provided to address youth unemployment and ensure they can be connected with prevention/mediation/budgeting/debt advice services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in youth homelessness - More young people managing their money and able to live independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing Advice Team Leaders - DWP 	March 2027

<p>2.12 Work with partners to understand the links between homelessness and neurodiversity in young people and how homelessness prevention services can meet their needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in youth homelessness. - Officers trained to ensure that neurodivergence is recognised and services are adapted to meet needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing Advice Team Leaders -County Council 	<p>March 2027</p>
<p>Families with children:</p>			
<p>2.13 Identify the key risk factors in families that lead to homelessness to ensure targeted intervention at the earliest stage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review best practise around early intervention and prevention for families including risk factor identification. - Increase in homeless prevention for families with children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing Advice Team Leaders and Housing Strategy Officers - Research and Intelligence Officer 	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Homelessness and health:</p>			
<p>2.14 Commission a homelessness and health audit to understand the health needs of homeless households, reduce health inequalities for rough sleepers and improve life expectancy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The health needs of homeless households are understood and services commissioned or adapted to meet need and prevent homelessness. - Health inequalities experienced by rough sleepers are reduce and life expectancy is increased. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSHOG 	<p>September 2026</p>
<p>2.15 Improve joint working across housing, health and social care to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Prevent unnecessary hospital admissions for those who are homeless/at risk of homelessness (ii) remove barriers to hospital discharge for those who cannot return to their home or who are homeless (iii) Develop and implement the Duty to Collaborate for hospital admission, discharge, and step-down care that ensure a housing plan is in place before discharge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved pathway into accommodation to ensure that discharges are planned in partnership with housing options services and that appropriate support is in place. - Reduced unnecessary hospital admissions for homeless households - Reduced delays in hospital discharge for homeless households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -WSHOG -Integrated Care Board -NHS 	<p>September 2027</p>
<p>2.16 Explore opportunities to provide a flexible approach to medical appointments to meet the needs of those with complex needs/chaotic lives and ensure follow up care is provided- example of health care worker in local day centres.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health Bus service locations are near rough sleeper locations wherever possible. - All rough sleepers have access to a GP and substance use services where appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -WSHOG -Integrated Care Board -NHS 	<p>December 2026</p>
<p>2.17 Enhance the collaborative approach with partners to effectively manage the risk to those with complex and multiple needs in temporary accommodation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing support and ongoing care and support processes are reviewed. - Reduction in serious incidents in unsupported TA/housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worcestershire Housing Board - WSHOG 	<p>April 2027</p>
<p>2.18 Integrate mental health services more deeply into homelessness prevention and intervention strategies. E.g. outreach teams should have improved access to mental health professionals to provide immediate support to those in crisis, and ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current mental health services (and their capacity) are mapped, gaps are identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outreach Teams - Mental Health Services 	<p>June 2027</p>

support is provided for those in unsupported temporary accommodation.	- Those in TA can access appropriate mental health support		
2.19 Develop more fully accessible permanent and temporary housing through Disabled Facilities Grant and Homes England Funding (dependent on funding)	- Increase in the number of accessible/healthy homes delivered by Developers and RPs - Increase in the number of accessible temporary accommodation units.	-WSHOG -Worcestershire Housing Adaptations Service	June 2030
2.20 Investigate the ability to provide flexible budgets to prevent homelessness especially for non-priority/intentional cases or individuals facing severe mental health issues. This could be used to help cover emergency needs.	- Funding identified - Data captured on “what works” to prevent homelessness for this cohort to inform future service delivery	-Housing Advice Team Leaders/Housing Strategy Teams	December 2026
Domestic abuse			
2.21 Sustain and expand safe accommodation options (funding dependent) to minimise the use of B&B for DA survivors.	- Increase in the number of safe accommodation options	-DA Coordinator -Public Health -Housing Providers	September 2027
2.22 Review best practice in preventing homelessness due to domestic abuse at an earlier stage through early interventions with households at risk of homelessness due to DA.	- Those are risk of homelessness and experiencing domestic abuse approach for homelessness assistance at an earlier stage e.g. prevention stage, not relief/crisis stage - Decrease in homelessness approaches due to DA - Greater awareness and take up of Sanctuary Scheme options	- DA Coordinator - DA Housing Officers - Research and Intelligence Officer	March 2027
2.23 Develop a protocol for Registered Providers to access relevant survivor information (with consent) to deliver trauma-informed housing offers and minimise re-traumatisation.	- Improved accommodation offers due to greater understanding of needs and risk - Reduced repeat homelessness for DA survivors	- DA Coordinator - Registered Housing Providers - DA Housing Officers	June 2027
2.24 Develop dedicated housing pathways for survivors with multiple needs and those with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)	- Reduced homelessness levels due to DA - Improved partnership working with schools and health and holistic support available to whole family.	- DA Coordinator - DA Housing Officers	June 2027
2.25 Strengthen communication and engagement with schools and health professionals to support early identification and safeguarding and ensure children affected by domestic abuse are linked to appropriate support services to prevent future victimisation or perpetration.	-Processes are defined and embedded	- DA Coordinator - DA Housing Officers	July 2027

Prison leavers:			
2.26 Review supported and transitional accommodation capacity and barriers to accommodation to ensure that there are pathways into accommodation prior to release.	- Reduced homelessness due to leaving prison	- Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Prison and Probation Service	September 2027
2.27 Improve data capture: referrals to Prison Release meetings, homeless assessments before release, and accommodation pathways including CAS3 accommodation.	- Improved understanding of housing needs - Increased accommodation options and improved process for prison leavers	- Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Prison and Probation Service	December 2026
2.28 Increase the number of housing assessments undertaken within prisons to identify a housing solution before release.	- Increased accommodation options and improved process for prison leavers	- Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Prison and Probation Service	June 2027
2.29 Work with partner housing providers to develop a positive pathway from CAS3 accommodation	- More individuals moving on from CAS3 into settled or supported accommodation	- Strategic Housing Senior Officers	March 2027
2.30 Review Worcestershire Criminal Justice Housing and Support Protocol	- Protocol is updated to reflect current legislation and service provision	- Strategic Housing Lead	March 2028
Asylum seekers and refugees:			
2.31 Collaborate with community, voluntary, and faith organisations to develop tailored, culturally appropriate information and guidance for asylum seekers, refugees and those with No Recourse to Public Funds, enabling them to access necessary support.	- Comprehensive and culturally appropriate guidance developed.	-Homelessness Partnerships	September 2027
Veterans:			
2.32 Continue to work with the Worcestershire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership to ensure that there is a good understanding of the Armed Forces Covenant in housing and that organisational policies reflect the needs of the Covenant	- Armed Forces Covenant embedded in housing services (where relevant) - Housing staff received training on the Armed Forces Covenant.	-WSHOG	Ongoing

Pillar 3: Preventing crisis - helping people stay in their homes

Action	Measure	Lead	Timescale
3.1 Use the findings of the Homelessness Review Service Mapping to explore funding services required to be commissioned or directly provided by LHAs to sustain accommodation.	- Gaps are defined, business case developed. - More homelessness cases are prevented	Housing Advice Team Leaders and Housing Strategy Officers	December 2026

<p>3.2 Ensure that homelessness services are well connected to services offering support through the new Crisis and Resilience Fund.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CRF fund outcomes analysed to inform “what works” - Report on outcomes that have prevented homelessness without the need for a homeless approach to housing services. - Homelessness Services are aligned with the local delivery of the Crisis and Resilience Fund and support is available to those in crisis and facing homelessness. 	<p>WSHOG</p>	<p>March 2027</p>
<p>3.3 Utilise funding to ensure services such as accommodation and floating support, and help with housing costs are targeted to reduce homelessness through prevention</p>	<p>-Number of households prevented from becoming homeless increases</p>	<p>Housing Advice Team Leaders and Housing Strategy Officers</p>	<p>December 2026</p>
<p>3.4 Make use of the government toolkits to aid prevention of homelessness (when available)</p>	<p>-Number of households prevented from becoming homeless increases</p>	<p>Housing Advice Team Leaders and Housing Strategy Officers</p>	<p>March 2028</p>

Pillar 4: Improving Emergency Responses - improving temporary accommodation and making people’s experiences better

Action	Measure	Lead	Timescale
<p>4.1 Increase the number of high-quality, self-contained, TA units for families with children through working with Registered Housing Providers and considering options such as leasing or purchasing accommodation (funding dependent). Minimise the use of B&B, and other forms of shared accommodation and out of area placements for families with children.</p> <p>4.2 Improve the transition of households moving out of TA and into settled accommodation by providing an assessment of support needs and referring families into the appropriate support. This would include sharing the needs assessment with housing providers (with consent) so they can provide a trauma informed housing offer.</p> <p>4.3 Create family-centred TA solutions: reevaluate the model for families in TA, ensuring that placements consider the impact on children’s schooling, health, and support networks and help children, families and young people in TA to maintain connections to services and support networks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in the number of suitable TA units - Reduction in the average length of stay in temporary accommodation - Reduction of the number of households with children in temporary accommodation - Reduction in the number of families with children in B&B over 6 weeks - Reduction in temporary accommodation costs - Increase in successful move-ons per quarter - PWLE feedback from families who have experienced TA is gathered and analysis on a regular basis 	<p>Housing Advice Team Leaders and Housing Strategy Officers</p>	<p>March 2028</p>

<p>4.4 Jointly review social housing allocations policies once government’s new guidance is available to try to prevent the need for TA or move people on into settled accommodation more quickly if they do need to access TA.</p> <p>4.5 Develop a resilience plan to address the impacts of rising temporary accommodation use, accommodation costs, and the anticipated loss of grant funding. This will include a review of block booking contracts, introduce dynamic purchasing and reduce the use of spot purchasing</p> <p>4.6 Work with PWLE to analyse the barriers to accessing temporary accommodation and implement solutions e.g. increased security measures, provisions for pets.</p> <p>4.7 Explore opportunities to work with colleagues across the health economy to increase the availability of adapted temporary accommodation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Barriers to TA are understood and action taken to overcome barriers 		
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Pillar 5: Recovery and Preventing Repeat Homelessness - ensuring people don’t experience homelessness more than once and having long term rough sleeping

Action	Measure	Lead	Timescale
<p>5.1 Take action to tackling long term rough sleeping through reviewing: Accommodation-based and floating support/Rough sleeper outreach and intensive support/Rent deposits and rent in advance/No First Night Out Accommodation/Furniture projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All activities to prevent and tackle rough sleeping locally are reviewed and defined, gaps identified and services commissioned. - Reduction in rough sleeping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Rough Sleeper Co-Ordinator 	<p>March 2027</p>
<p>5.2 Review opportunities to develop and implement community and peer support models</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in tenancy sustainment - increase in engagement of service users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Rough Sleeper Co-Ordinator 	<p>March 2028</p>
<p>5.3 Review opportunities to strengthen advocacy services: increase the availability of independent advocates, particularly for vulnerable groups like young people, those with mental health issues, and DA survivors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocacy services are defined and strengthened 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Outreach Services - Housing Advice 	<p>December 2027</p>
<p>5.4 Investigate with PWLE why there is a high level of repeat homelessness in certain homeless cohorts e.g. DA survivors, rough sleepers, families with complex support needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Repeat homelessness is minimised - Drivers of repeat homelessness are understood and minimised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research and Intelligence Officer 	<p>March 2028</p>
<p>5.5 Develop mechanisms for referring temporarily accommodated households (with consent) to medical professionals, schools etc (subject to Government guidance)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Repeat homelessness is minimised and households are safeguarded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WSHOG 	<p>December 2028</p>

Stakeholders identified a number of suggestions that are business as usual and as such do not feature in the action plan but will still be delivered. The strategy action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis, and this will include a review of current actions and identification of any new actions required for future years.

Appendix 2 - Funding the strategy

Homelessness Prevention Grant

Homelessness services across the districts have previously been funded through a combination of district council general fund budgets and targeted grant funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), most notably the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG).

The HPG was a ringfenced funding stream required to be deployed in line with national policy objectives. Its strategic purpose was to strengthen early intervention and prevention activity, ensuring full and consistent implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act, while contributing to the ambition of ending rough sleeping through increased prevention of single homelessness.

The HPG also intended to reduce reliance on temporary accommodation, particularly for families. This included maximising opportunities for family homelessness prevention, reducing the overall number of families placed in temporary accommodation, and eliminating the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families beyond the statutory six-week limit.

Strategic deployment of HPG focussed on targeted prevention, effective use of temporary accommodation alternatives, and system-wide approaches that delivered sustainable housing outcomes while reducing financial and operational pressures on local authorities.

The allocations in 2025/26 were as follows;

Housing Authority	Grant (£)
Bromsgrove District Council	383,917
Malvern Hills District Council	402,595
Redditch Borough Council	776,429
Wychavon District Council	811,670
Wyre Forest District Council	664,560

This funding supported the delivery of a range of coordinated interventions across the county aimed at preventing and reducing rough sleeping. These included No First Night Out and No Second Night Out emergency accommodation, designed to minimise the number of nights individuals spend sleeping rough; housing pathways, intervention and transition worker roles that provided targeted support to secure and sustain accommodation; a countywide Rough Sleeping Coordinator role operating across the districts to ensure strategic oversight of rough sleeping interventions, partnership working and system alignment; and the delivery of Housing-Led and Housing First accommodation to

provide settled housing with appropriate wraparound support for individuals with complex needs.

At the time of writing this strategy the Government had recently announced the new homelessness and rough sleeping funding arrangements for 2026/7-2029/30. This section will be updated in due course.

Domestic Abuse Act Funding for Domestic Abuse Housing Officers 2025/6

Housing Authority	Grant (£)
Bromsgrove District Council	33,666
Malvern Hills District Council	33,666
Redditch Borough Council	33,666
Wychavon District Council	33,666
Wyre Forest District Council	33,666

Funding for domestic abuse services is essential to ensure the provision of dedicated, specialist officers who can effectively respond to victims and survivors. These officers play a critical role in early intervention, risk assessment, safeguarding, and multi-agency coordination. Sustained investment will allow for improved response times, consistent victim support, enhanced offender management, and better outcomes for families affected by domestic abuse. Funding will support recruitment, specialist training, and retention of officers, ensuring victims receive trauma-informed, timely, and effective protection while reducing repeat incidents and long-term harm within communities.

Domestic Abuse Act Funding 2025/6(to implement the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021)

Housing Authority	Grant (£)
Bromsgrove District Council	35,774
Malvern Hills District Council	34,742
Redditch Borough Council	35,697
Wychavon District Council	34,855
Wyre Forest District Council	33,835

Household Support Fund (2025/26)

HSF 7 Allocation April 25 - March 26

District Council 12 month allocation	General allocation	Food/warm space allocation	Total
Bromsgrove	£171,321.39	£18,000.00	£189,321.39
Malvern Hills	£235,312.23	£18,000.00	£253,312.23
Redditch	£329,900.14	£18,000.00	£347,900.14
Wychavon	£230,918.03	£18,000.00	£248,918.03
Wyre Forest	£328,625.52	£18,000.00	£346,625.52
Total	£1,595,072	£108,000.00	£1,703,072

The Household Support Fund (HSF) is intended to provide targeted financial assistance to vulnerable households who are struggling to meet the cost of essential living expenses. The fund aims to prevent crisis, reduce hardship, and support households to maintain stability.

Discretionary Housing Payments (2025/6)

Housing Authority	Grant (£)
Bromsgrove District Council	62,332
Malvern Hills District Council	75,651
Redditch Borough Council	79,296
Wychavon District Council	112,099
Wyre Forest District Council	110,242

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) provide short-term financial assistance to households who require additional help with housing costs and are in receipt of Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit. The fund aims to prevent homelessness, sustain tenancies, and support households during periods of financial difficulty.

Appendix 3 - Glossary of terms

CAS3 : Community Accommodation Service	11
DAPB: Domestic Abuse Partnership Board	24
DRIVE: A domestic abuse partnership that protects victims by disrupting, challenging and changing the behaviour of those who are causing harm.....	14
LGR: Local Government Reorganisation	2
LHAs: Local Housing Authorities	4
MHCLG: Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government.....	9
MARAC: Multi agency risk assessment conference.....	14
PWLE: People with Lived Experiencee	4
RPs: Registered Housing Providers	6
TPG: Target Priority Group (most complex rough sleepers).....	4

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Renters Rights Act 2025

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bill Hartnett
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Assistant Director Community and Housing Services
Report Author: Katie Sharp-Fisher	Job Title: Private Sector Housing Manager Contact email: k.sharp-fisher@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881437
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Community and Housing
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 RESOLVE that

- 1) The update provided in the report in respect of the Renters Rights Act 2025 be noted.**

The Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that:-

- 2) The Scheme of Delegations be amended to incorporate new powers under the Renters Rights Act 2025 in accordance with the wording set out at Appendix 1**
- 3) The 2026/27 Medium Term Financial Plan is updated to include the new burdens funding of £20,057.95**
- 4) Authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Community & Housing to spend the new burdens funding for Renters Rights Act 2025 preparations.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Renters Rights Act 2025 (RRA25) obtained Royal Assent on the 27th October 2025 with reforms being introduced through a phased approach with new investigatory power being implemented from the 27th December 2025. Phase 1 will commence on the 1st May 2026. The RRA25 represents the most significant reform of the private rented sector in a generation with the aim to improve security, fairness, and

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standards for private tenants while strengthening enforcement powers for local authorities.

- 2.2 The estimated private rented sector (PRS) in Redditch is 5,318 (Office for National Statistics (2021 Census) and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Live Tables on Dwelling Stock.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The Private Sector Housing Team currently investigates and enforces non-compliance under the Housing Act 2004, with a primary focus on the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), which addresses property disrepair and hazards.

- 3.2 The Renters' Rights Act 2025 will be implemented across three phases as set out below:

- 3.3 **Phase 1** will take effect from 1st May 2026 and includes the following elements:

- **Abolish section 21 'no fault' evictions** – landlords in the PRS will no longer be able to use section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 to evict their tenants.
- **Introduces Assured Periodic Tenancies** in the private rented sector – the vast majority of new tenancies and existing tenancies in the PRS will become Assured Periodic Tenancies. This means tenants will be able to stay in their property for as long as they want, or until a landlord serves a valid section 8 notice. Tenants will be able to end their tenancy by giving two months' notice.
- **Reform possession grounds** in the PRS so they are fair for both parties – landlords will only be able to evict tenants when they have a valid reason. Possession grounds will be extended to make it easier for landlords to evict tenants who commit anti-social behaviour, or who are in serious persistent rent arrears. (Appendix 2)
- **Limit rent increases** to once a year in the PRS – landlords will have to follow the revised section 13 procedure and provide the tenant with a notice detailing the proposed rent increase at least two months before it is due to take effect.
- **Ban rental bidding and rent in advance** – landlords and letting agents will not be able to ask for, encourage, or accept an offer that is higher than the advertised rent. Landlords and agents will also not be able to request more than one month's rent in advance.
- **Make it illegal to discriminate against renters** who have children or receive benefits – landlords and letting agents will not be able to do anything to make a tenant less likely to rent a property (or prevent

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them from renting it) because they have children or receive benefits. This includes withholding information about a property (including its availability), stopping someone from viewing it, or refusing to grant a tenancy.

- **Require landlords in the PRS to consider tenant requests to rent with a pet** – landlords will have an initial 28 days to consider their tenant's request, and they will have to provide valid reasons if they refuse it.
- **Strengthen both local council enforcement and rent repayment orders** - civil penalties will be expanded, and there will be a new requirement for local councils to report on enforcement activity. Rent repayment orders will be extended to superior landlords, the maximum penalty will be doubled, and repeat offenders required to pay the maximum amount.

3.3 **Phase 2** will take effect from late 2026 (specific dates to be confirmed) and includes the following elements across two stages:

3.4 Stage 1 involves the regional rollout of the database for Landlords and Local Councils. Signing up to the PRS Database will be mandatory for all PRS landlords and they will be required to pay an annual fee which will be confirmed closer to launch.

3.5 Regulations will mandate landlord registration, payment of a fee and the provision of key information by landlords including -

- The landlord's contact details. This will include capturing relevant information from all joint landlords.
- The property details including the full address, type of property (flat/house), number of bedrooms, number of households/residents and confirming whether the property is occupied and furnished, etc.
- Safety information – Gas, Electric and Energy Performance Certificates – so tenants are assured about the safety and energy efficiency of the property.

3.6 Stage 2 involves the further roll out of the database and introduction of the Ombudsman. Public access and data sharing will be enabled following the launch of landlord registration.

3.7 The Ombudsman will provide a redress service for private rented sector tenants when things go wrong. It will also support landlords with tools, guidance and training on handling complaints from tenants early. The Ombudsman scheme will be mandatory for PRS landlords. Landlords will be required to fund the service through a fair and proportionate charging model which is due to be confirmed closer to launch.

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- 3.8 Implementation of the Ombudsman will happen after the introduction of the database, and the government are exploring ways to share information between the database and the Ombudsman to minimise landlord sign-up burden.
- 3.9 The development of the Ombudsman will happen in stages:
- Stage 1 will happen at least 12-18 months before implementation. The Secretary of State will choose a scheme administrator to run the new service, which will then need time to scale up.
 - Stage 2 will require landlords to be members of the new service, expected to be in 2028, when the Secretary of State is confident the service is ready for delivery. We will make sure landlords are given sufficient notice in advance of requiring them to be members of the scheme.
- 3.10 **Phase 3** involves the introduction of a new Decent Homes Standard (DHS) in the PRS (dates of implementation to be confirmed following consultation but likely between 2035- 2037).
- 3.11 A DHS will be introduced to the PRS for the first time. This will ensure that all PRS properties meet a minimum standard of housing quality and provide local councils with powers to take enforcement action if PRS properties fail to meet it.
- 3.12 While the deadline for implementation may be some years away, the expectation is that landlords should commence works earlier wherever feasible, remaining mindful of the effect of property conditions on tenants.
- 3.13 In addition to these measures, the Government has consulted on plans to require all domestic privately rented properties in England and Wales to meet Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) of EPC C or equivalent by 2030 unless a valid exemption is in place. Further details will be set out surrounding this in due course.
- 3.14 As part of the pathway to applying the DHS to the PRS, the Housing, Health & Safety Hazard Rating System (HHSRS) will be reviewed.
- 3.15 Awaab's Law will also be extended to the PRS, setting clear legally enforceable timeframes within which PRS landlords must make homes safe where they contain serious hazards. This will empower tenants to challenge dangerous conditions in their homes.

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- 3.16 It should be noted that the Decent Homes Standard already applies to social housing and Awaab's law applies to social housing from 27th October 2025.
- 3.17 Under the RRA25, the Private Sector Housing Teams powers will expand to include investigation and enforcement of: -
- Tenancy agreement clauses
 - Illegal eviction and harassment
 - Breaches for grounds of possession e.g. re-letting property before 12 months if using sale as reason for possession
 - Time limits on possession grounds
- 3.18 As a result of new legislation, powers and tenants' rights, there are several new areas that the service has not dealt with before such as anti-discrimination, rent bidding and rent increases and unreasonable refusal of pet requests. This will require training to address knowledge gaps, upskilling staff as well as additional resources to respond to the demand and change of enquiries.
- 3.19 The primary anticipated impacts on the service relate to an increase in demand generated through enquiries from tenants surrounding their rights, the identification and enforcement of offences and an increase in homeless presentations as a result of section 21 notices being issued in the lead up to the implementation of phase 1 and a potential reduction in PRS accommodation post implementation.
- 3.20 Officers have pre-empted the increased workload anticipated under the RRA25 and have therefore expanded the Private Sector Housing team from 3 FTE to 5 FTE. The Private Sector Housing Officers are able to undertake enforcement across all tenures, including private rented, socially rented (excluding RBC accommodation), owner-occupied and empty properties.
- 3.21 Training, development and upskilling the workforce will be undertaken to ensure that key staff in the service have the knowledge and skillset to provide support, respond to and enforce the Act relevant to their role. This will ensure customers receive the best possible service and build trust and confidence with customers as well as key stakeholders.
- 3.21 To support compliance with the RRA25 Redditch Borough Council has secured and allocated funding to implement a regulatory case

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management system. This system will play a crucial role in enabling the council to meet new statutory duties under the Act. Once operational the new system will provide robust data reporting to central government as required by the RRA

3.22 Officers will update the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy 2026 to align it with the new duties that have been implemented by the RAA25 and bring forward to a future committee. It is anticipated that this will be in June 2026.

3.23 In the meantime some updating to the Scheme of Delegations is required to enable officers to start taking on some of the new powers under the RRA25. Accordingly, Members are referred to the revised delegations at Appendix 1, and are asked to recommend to Council that the changes be approved.

3.24 By way of explanation, officers would comment on the proposed changes as follows: -

- Deletion of the first paragraph is to tidy up the wording and set out all the legislation in one list in the second paragraph.
- The references to the RRA 25 in paragraph 2 will enable officers to use the new investigatory powers conferred on Local Housing Authorities and to report on statistics to the government.
- The references to the RRA 25 in paragraph 3 will enable officers to investigate the new offences relating to discriminating against tenants and the requirement to state the rent.

3.25 Members are asked to note that once the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy has been finalised, there will be a further request to add delegations under the RRA25 details of which will be included in the next report coming to committee.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Government has allocated New Burdens Funding to support Local Authorities with the implementation costs. Redditch Borough Council has been allocated £20,057.95 that must be utilised for the following areas: -

- Staff training and capacity building
- IT system upgrades
- Legal support for enforcement and appeals

4.2 Additional cost implications also include awareness campaigns for landlord, tenants and partners. An increase may also be seen in the

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demand for temporary accommodation due to an increase in homelessness cases where landlords pre-empt the legislation and evict tenants. The Government has confirmed that the following amounts have been awarded within The Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse grant for Renters Rights Act 25. Officers are currently considering how this funding can be most effectively utilised.

Funding for Renters' Rights Act 2025 New Burdens	
2026/27	£49,011
2027/28	£23,077
2028/29	£0
Total	£72,088

- 4.3 Once enforcement activity starts to take place under the Act there is potential for income to be received from the imposition of civil penalties. This will be from the issuing of Civil Penalty Notices (CPNs) and new style "financial penalties" for certain offences.

The relevant government guidance states that: -

"Income received from civil penalties must be used by local housing authorities to meet costs and expenses incurred in or associated with their private rented sector enforcement functions. Income that is not used for this purpose must be paid to central government."

Income may also be received following the establishment of the Landlord Database. This is due to be implemented in Phase 2 with guidance to be provided. However, it is expected that a share of the landlord registration fees will be provided to the local authority. This must be used for private sector housing activities.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Currently informal action is used in addition to the use of formal powers, and the provisions of the Act are likely to limit such informal action in the future.
- 5.2 The Council must ensure these duties and powers are exercised in accordance with the criteria outlined within the Act. This requires amendments to the Scheme of Delegation to cover the provisions of the Act (Appendix 1).

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- 5.3 There are significant changes to the Council's enforcement powers where landlords have not complied with their duties, have failed to keep the property in a decent standard and have carried out illegal evictions. The Private Sector Housing Enforcement and Civil Penalty Policy will require updating and will be brought to a future Executive Committee. It is expected that the MHCLG will produce guidance for debt recovery.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**Local Government Reorganisation**

- 6.1 The RRA25 introduces new duties to local housing authorities and the unitary authority will take over these duties.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The implementation of the RRA25 enables Redditch Borough Council to meet one of the Council's priorities of 'Community & Housing'. The legislation directly impacts upon the residents throughout the community by ensuring that houses are safe and warm enabling the residents to be happy and Redditch a safe place to live.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 No direct impact on climate change, although changes to the Decent Homes Standard are likely to require improvements to the energy efficiency of homes which will have a positive impact.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 Equalities and diversity implications have been considered as part of the process to introduce new legislation by the Government.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The following risks and opportunities have been identified to inform planning and mitigation.
- Increased enquiries to both PRS and housing options:
 - Provide clear, consistent information to all internal and external partners through website information, landlord emails and internal scripts for all teams.
 - Short implementation timescales:
 - Develop early workflows and deliver training to all relevant staff ahead of Phase 1.

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- Some landlords may choose to exit the PRS due to perceived regulatory burden, leading to a reduction in available rental stock
- Reduced PRS availability, rising evictions, and higher demand for homelessness support may increase Temporary Accommodation placements and expenditure
- Increased workload for PSH, Housing Options, and Legal Services may require additional budget for staffing, training, legal costs, and system improvements.
- Increased enforcement activity and financial penalties may lead to higher levels of debt to recover, requiring additional administration and legal oversight.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Proposed amendments to Scheme of Delegations

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Bill Hartnett	26/02/2026
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Judith Willis Assistant Director Community and Housing Services	17/02/2026
Financial Services	Deb Goodall Assistant Director Financial Services	17/02/2026
Legal and Democratic Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor – Governance and Jess Bayley-Hill, Principal Democratic Services Officer	25.02.26

2. Private Sector Housing			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Power of entry	To exercise the powers of Authorised Officers in respect of entry, inspection and investigation in relation to housing conditions as specified in any legislation the enforcement of which is delegated to Director of Leisure, Environment and Community Services	Executive Committee	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Housing Strategy Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Team Leader] / [Housing Strategy & Enabling Team Leader] / [Private Sector Housing Officer]
Service of Notices and obtaining warrants Housing legislation – regulatory powers	To exercise <u>all the powers in respect of entry, inspection, investigation, service of notices and other functions of Authorised Officers for the purposes of the legislation listed below, serve notices and obtain warrants of entry from a Justice of the Peace for the purposes of the following at legislation: -</u> <u>Renters Rights Act 2025 sections 114 to 132 (investigatory powers) and section 110 (reporting to government)</u> Housing Acts 1985 (as amended); Housing Act 2004 (as amended)	Executive Committee	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Housing Strategy Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Team Leader] / [Housing Strategy & Enabling Team Leader] / [Private Sector Housing Officer]

2. Private Sector Housing			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
	<p>Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations 2006</p> <p>Licensing & Management of HMO & other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006</p> <p>Environmental Protection Act 1990</p> <p>Building Act 1984</p> <p>Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Acts 1976, 1982</p> <p>Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949</p> <p>Public Health Act 1961</p> <p>Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (additional provisions) (England) Regulations 2007</p> <p>Mobile Homes Act 2013</p> <p>Caravan Sites & Control of Development Act 1960</p>		

2. Private Sector Housing

Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
<u>Renters Rights Act 2025 - Discrimination in rental market/ requirement to state rent</u>	<u>To undertake investigations into potential offences under sections 33, 34, 39 and 56 of the Renters Rights Act 2025</u>	<u>Executive Committee</u>	<u>[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Housing Strategy Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Team Leader] / [Housing Strategy & Enabling Team Leader] / [Private Sector Housing Officer]</u>

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Executive Committee
202617th March**Littering from Vehicles**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sharon Harvey
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes, Director Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Report Author Toni Ainscough	Job Title: Principal Officer Contact email:toni.ainscough@worcsregservices.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01562 738035
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Green, Clean and Safe
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) **Civil enforcement of Littering from Vehicles be introduced.**
- 2) **The Civil Enforcement Team be given delegated authority to issue Litter Penalty Charge Notices.**
- 3) **The parking administration team be authorised to deal with appeals and enforcement matters in respect of Litter Penalty Charge Notices.**
- 4) **The Penalty Notice Charge be set at the level set by Council for Criminal offences where a Fixed Penalty Notice is served for Depositing Litter (section 87/88 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990) which for 2026/27 subject to Council approval are proposed to be set as:**
 - a) **£250; and**
 - b) **£125 for prompt payment (within 14 days).**
- 5) **Authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Regeneration & Property to issue Penalty Notice Charges for Littering from Vehicles under The Littering From Vehicles Outside London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018.**

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2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Currently littering from vehicles is only enforced as a criminal offence and since June 2024 has been enforced by Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS). In line with the existing policy, enforcement has been discharged through informal action, Fixed Penalty Notice or consideration for prosecution. However, when littering occurs from a vehicle, to take formal enforcement action, there is a requirement to prove beyond reasonable doubt who committed the offence. Consequently, it can be difficult to identify the offender with sufficient certainty to take enforcement action.
- 2.2 On 1st April 2018, The Littering From Vehicles Outside London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018 gave powers to litter authorities to issue Penalty Charge Notices to the keeper of a vehicle when the Council has reason to believe that litter was thrown from that vehicle onto land within the Council's control. This includes any highways within the district for which Redditch Borough Council are the litter authority.
- 2.3 It is recommended that the Council introduces Litter Penalty Notices at the earliest opportunity and that the Civil Enforcement Team are given delegated authority to issue Litter Penalty Charge Notices and the parking administration team are authorised to deal with all appeals and enforcement matters in relation to these.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The Littering From Vehicles Outside London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018 is a civil route based on the same model as the issue of a Penalty Charge Notice used for parking enforcement in Redditch. Civil Enforcement Officers are on district undertaking this duty on a day-to-day basis. If they are also able to issue a Penalty Notice Charge to a person depositing litter, this would be an effective use of time and resource whilst they are undertaking their parking enforcement duties.
- 3.2 Civil Enforcement Officers will only issue a Penalty Charge Notice if they witness the incident and will process this in a similar way to a system that is already in place (please see appendix 1 – flow chart).
- 3.3 Civil Enforcement Officers and parking administration team are already undertaking this service on behalf of Wychavon District Council.
- 3.4 These recommendations only concern littering from vehicles witnessed by Civil Enforcement Officers. All other officers of the Council or

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members of the public who witness littering from vehicles should report this to WRS using the report it form on the Council or WRS' websites or call WRS directly for investigation. Such reports will be investigated through the criminal route.

- 3.5 The legislation sets out that the Civil Penalty Notice Charge should be set the same as that level set by Council for Criminal offences where a Fixed Penalty Notice is served for Depositing Litter (section 87/88 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990). Subject to normal Council fees and charges setting processes the level is £250.00 reduced to £125.00 for prompt payment (within 14 days) from 1st April 2026.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The provision of Civil Enforcement Officers in Redditch is through a contract with Wychavon District Council, managed by the Assistant Director of Economic Development, Property and Regeneration. The proposal is to expand the current Service Level Agreement (SLA) to include issuing of Penalty Notices for littering from vehicles The SLA variation itself will not incur any cost.
- 4.2 The Civil Enforcement Officers will be able to utilise their existing handheld devices, DVLA link and systems that they use. There are no additional equipment costs and only a small software set up cost which will be covered by the existing WRS Envirocrime budget.
- 4.3 The cost of each additional Penalty Notice that is served is negligible at 35 pence each. For any Penalty Notices that are unpaid, there is an additional £10 charge for debt recovery in line with the existing SLA arrangements for parking charges and will be covered by the current budget arrangements.
- 4.4 The current SLA arrangements set a contractual limit on Penalty Charges issued without additional costs. It is not anticipated that this limit will be exceeded. Publicity around the introduction of the enforcement will similarly reduce the likelihood of this.
- 4.5 The current team of Civil Enforcement Officers will be used and will be trained to monitor and report incidences of littering from vehicles during their parking duties. The parking administration team will be trained on the recovery of unpaid littering penalties with an added volume of correspondence to manage.
- 4.6 Intelligence collated in the course of the service delivery will be used to inform the targeted approach to the wider enviro-crime enforcement by WRS.

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5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is a requirement to amend delegations to allow Civil Enforcement Officers to issue Penalty Notice Charges for Littering from Vehicles under The Littering From Vehicles Outside London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**Local Government Reorganisation**

- 6.1 None, other than the introduction of the enforcement of this legislation is consistent with neighbouring Wychavon District Council.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The recommendations contained within this report directly compliment Redditch's Council Plan as these recommendations assist in addressing litter promoting key objectives of the priority 'Green, Clean and Safe Redditch'.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 None.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 None.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

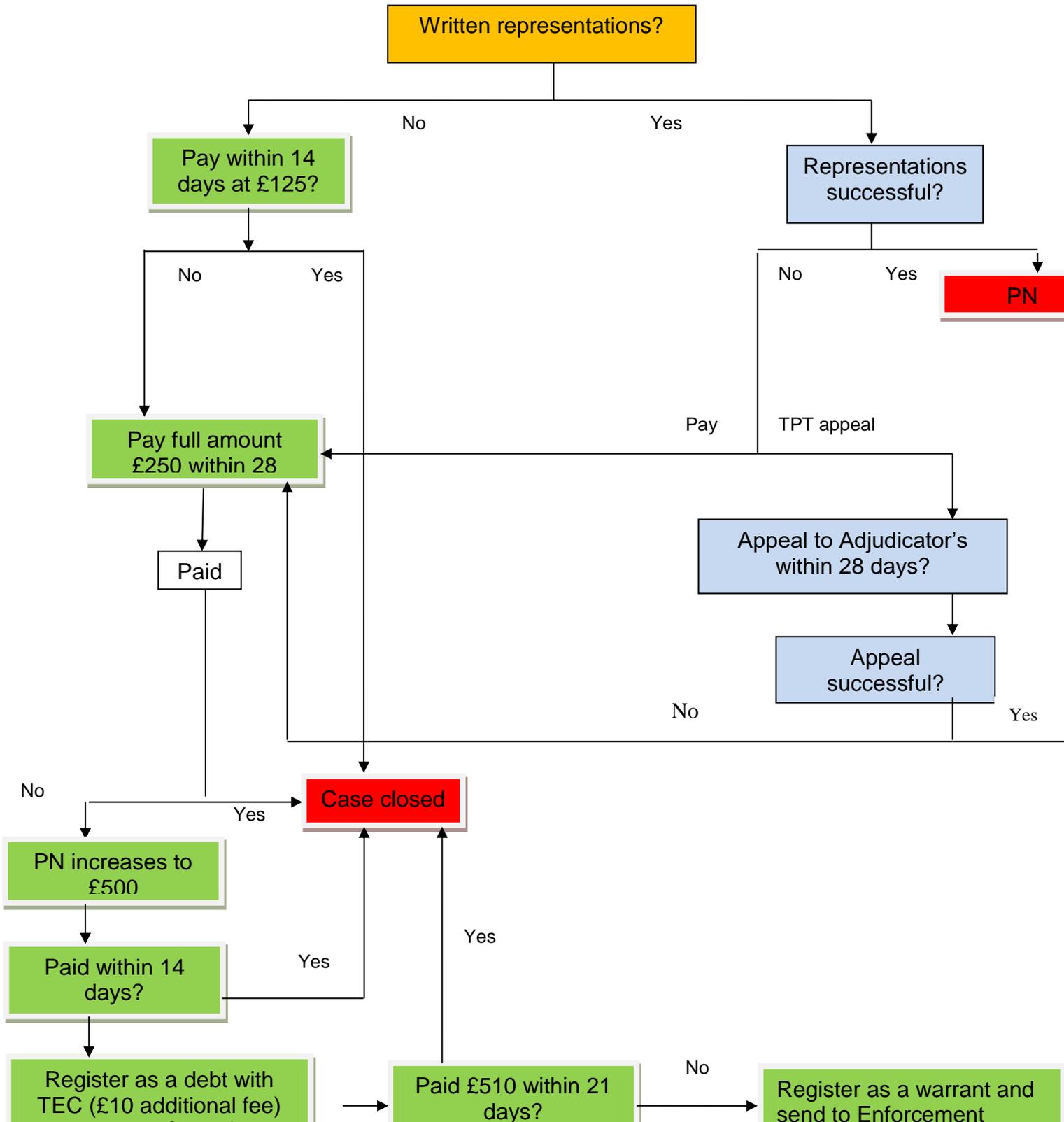
- 7.1 There is a risk of dilution of the CEO's parking duties. Although reporting littering from vehicles can be undertaken during the course of their current duties, it may distract from parking enforcement. The impact of this will be monitored.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Operational Flow Diagram.
Appendix 2 – FAQs

Executive Committee
202617th March**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sharon Harvey	Notified 03.02.2026.
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes, Director WRS Rachel Egan, AD Regeneration, Economic Development and Property Services	24.02.2026 Consulted 13.02.2026.
Financial Services	Debra Goodall, AD Financial Services	Consulted 13.02.2026.
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor	18.02.2026.

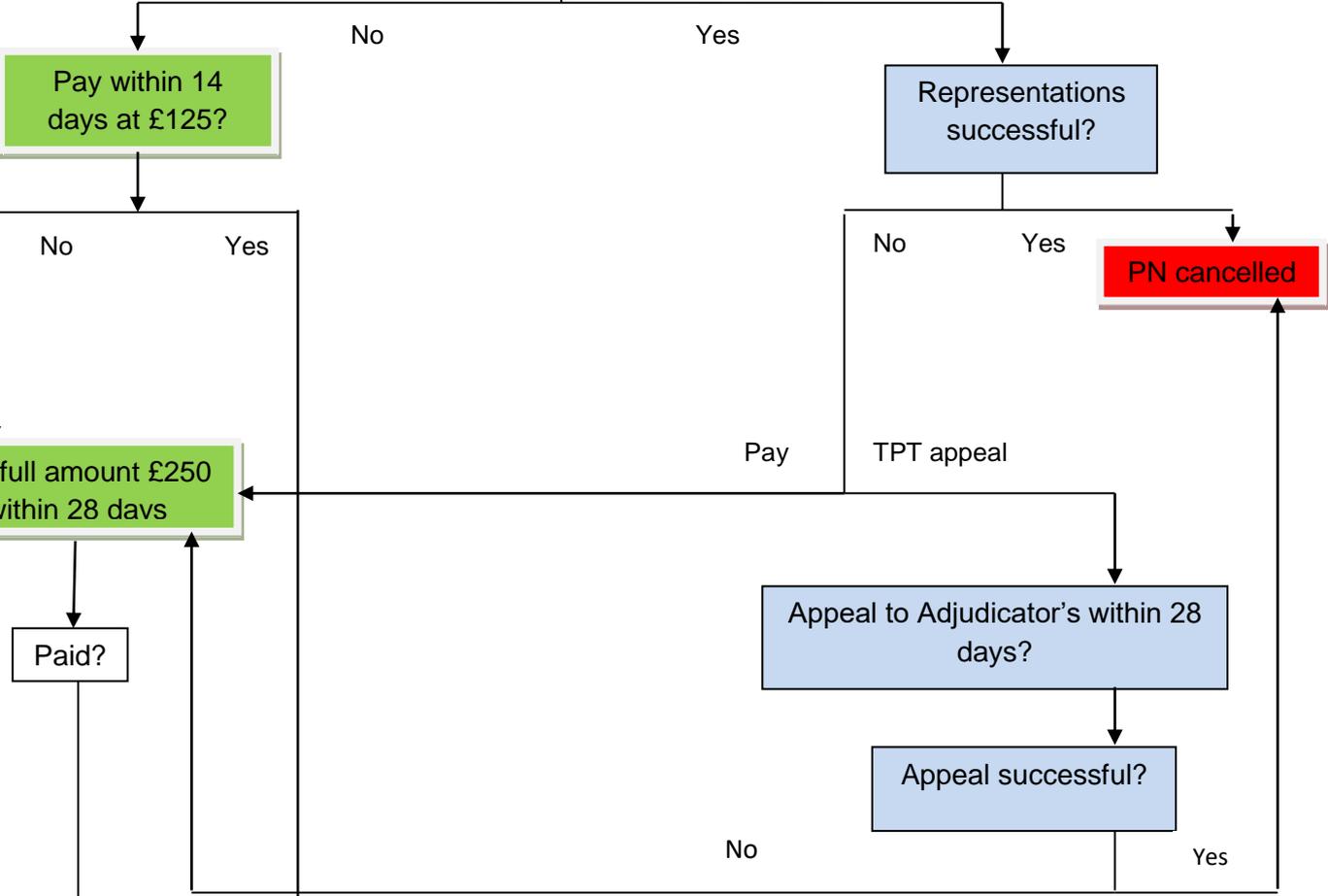


Appendix 1

Littering contravention.

DVLA keeper details obtained and Penalty Notice sent to the registered keeper of the vehicle

Written representations?



Pay within 14 days at £125?

No Yes

Pay full amount £250 within 28 days

Paid?

Representations successful?

No Yes
PN cancelled

Appeal to Adjudicator's within 28 days?

Appeal successful?

Case closed

No
PN increases to £500

Paid within 14 days?

Register as a debt with TEC (£10 additional fee) and send Order for Recovery along with Witness Statement

Paid £510 within 21 days?

Register as a warrant and send to Enforcement Agents

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Appendix 2

Frequently Asked Questions

❖ **Why do you need this route when you have the criminal route for littering?**

The criminal route requires the person who littered. In the criminal route, if the person who littered was the passenger and the registered keeper does not supply the details we are unable to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN). This proposal seeks to empower the civil littering route where this clarification is not required. If a Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO) witnesses a littering from the vehicle, the registered keeper of the vehicle is responsible and would receive a Penalty Notice.

❖ **Will only Civil Enforcement Officers be able to issue Penalty Notices (PN)?**

Yes at this time.

❖ **What is the difference between a PN and FPN?**

Nothing as in effect they are the issuing of a fine.

❖ **Who will pursue the individual if left unpaid?**

The recovery of a PN is a set legislative process which is not dissimilar to that of a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN). There is a dedicated process and debt management system already in operation to process nonpayment of PCNs for parking charges a similar route will be used for the recovery of PNs. No investigation is required as the registered keeper is liable for the PN.

❖ **Are staff (CEOs) willing to issue PNs for littering offences?**

Staff are very willing and are currently frustrated that they are unable to issue Notices for the act of littering from vehicles when they see it on their patrols.

❖ **Will this proposal also cover people seen littering on the street?**

No, this proposal only applies to littering from vehicles. Any other littering witnessed would be reported to WRS to investigate via the criminal route.

❖ **Will there be scope to enable other Council Officers to use this route of compliance?**

Not at this time however if this proposal is approved it is something that could be considered in the future.

❖ **What is the additional cost?**

A small fee of 25p per PN will be due to fund the adjudication service (Traffic Penalty Tribunal) for cases that proceed to the independent tribunal service plus a DVLA enquiry cost per PN issued. If the PN is left unpaid and progresses, it will be

registered as a debt with the County Court at a cost of £10 per case. This amount is then added to the overall debt. It is not anticipated that many of these Notices will be issued (in Wychavon in 2025 only 5 were issued) but by approving the concept it gives Officers the option to issue.

Executive Committee
202617th March**Redditch Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sharon Harvey
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes, Director Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Report Author Toni Ainscough	Job Title: Principal Officer Contact email:toni.ainscough@worcsregservices.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01562 738035
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Green, Clean and Safe
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 RESOLVE that:-**

- 1.1 **The Redditch and Bromsgrove Enforcement Policy be adopted and replace the current Joint Environmental Enforcement .**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Currently WRS's enforcement activities are being undertaken using the Joint Environmental Enforcement Strategy as in appendix 2.
- 2.2 The revised document in appendix 1 will only seek to cover activities that are enforced by Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS).

For the avoidance of doubt this **includes**:

- Fly tipping
- Littering
- Failure to dispose of waste appropriately
- Dog fouling

This revised enforcement policy **will not include**:

- Abandoned and nuisance vehicles and
- the enforcement of graffiti and fly posting

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- 2.2 Officers are seeking to implement an enforcement document that reflects the current working strategies of enforcement practices and tools available to WRS.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 Officers at WRS are required when undertaking enforcement activities to have due regard to the current enforcement strategy. This document (appendix 2) does not include the enforcement options available to them.
- 3.2 An updated and current enforcement policy is required to enable Officers to make use of intelligence and use all suitable tools.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications. The proposed enforcement policy will align with WRS's approach to enforcement which covers the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices as an enforcement tool. This is used in lower-level offending to discharge the liability of the offence. Fines generate an income which is put back into the service

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 As set out at paragraph 1.2 of the new policy (Appendix 2), legislation provides for local authorities to be able to take enforcement action in relation to enviro crime incidents such as littering and fly tipping which are harmful to the environment. Action can be in the form of issuing civil penalty notices, use of community protection notices or bringing formal prosecutions through the courts. The main pieces of legislation under which these powers can be exercised are the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (sections 43-58), the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and the Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989.
- 5.2 Alongside the legislative powers listed above, in order for successful enforcement action to be taken, it is necessary for the Council to have an up to date enforcement policy to set out the framework of rules it will adhere to when it investigates breaches of the legislation.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**Local Government Reorganisation**

- 6.1 The implementation of this enforcement policy will strengthen the enforcement process now and in the future.

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Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The proposal detailed within this report directly compliments the Redditch's Council Plan. The new strategy will assist the Council with addressing litter and dog mess and the impact of fly tipping and antisocial behaviour as part of the key objectives of the priority 'Green, Clean and Safe Redditch'.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 This updated enforcement policy creates no material change to climate change implications but may offer minor environmental co-benefits to the borough.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 The proposed enforcement policy will apply to all scenarios. However, due consideration will be given to public interest tests throughout the investigations that are undertaken.
- 6.5 The proposed policy will have a positive equality implication through the protection of public health and safety, which will support vulnerable members of the community who may be at greater risk from health implications due to dog fouling or improper disposal of waste.
- 6.6 The policy also explicitly recognises the importance of fair, independent and objective decisions that do not treat people differently because of any protected characteristic.
- 6.7 Accessible communication and guidance is a key part of this policy, ensuring that everyone can access information and support.
- 6.8 A wider Equality Impact Assessment is being undertaken with assistance from the Policy Team at Bromsgrove District Council to support how this policy can be implemented.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There is a risk that the Council, if the policy is not adopted, will be failing to make use of the most efficient tools to enable Environmental Enforcement and this could undermine the efficacy of the service.

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8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – New Joint Environmental Enforcement Strategy.
Appendix 2 – Bromsgrove and Redditch Environmental Crime
Enforcement Policy.

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Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sharon Harvey	03.02.2026 Notified.
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes	24.02.2026.
Financial Services	Debra Goodall	Consulted 13.02.2026.
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor - Governance	18/02/26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green, Policy Manager	06.03.2026.
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Eccles – Climate Change Manager	Consulted 23.02.2026

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Joint Environmental Enforcement Strategy
Bromsgrove District Council & Redditch Borough Council

1.0 Introduction – Why do we need a Strategy?

- 1.1 In order to reduce crime and the fear of crime within a neighbourhood, signs of even low level crimes such as environmental crimes, need to be removed or reduced, as litter and dirty streets, graffiti, dumped rubbish and cars all give a feeling of unease whilst at the same time encouraging similar criminal behaviour. Environmental crimes have an adverse impact on the local environment and quality of life.
- 1.2 To mitigate against environmental crime, this Strategy focuses on not only the traditional aspects of environmental management, such as litter picking and sweeping and enforcement but also the softer elements such as advice giving and education (including both perpetrators and observers). However, by ensuring cases which do lead to enforcement are well publicised, a clear message will be sent out to other potential perpetrators of environmental crime.
- 1.3 Under the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990, the Council has a duty to keep streets and public spaces clean and clear of litter and refuse. A range of powers for local authorities came into effect under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (CNEA) 2005. The CNEA has extended local authority powers to deal with issues that are considered environmental crime.
- 1.4 This Strategy supports Bromsgrove District Council's priorities of economic development, town centre and one community and all three Redditch Borough Council priorities – i.e. enterprising, safe and clean and green.

2.0 What is classed as 'environmental crime'?

- 2.1 The following are classed as environmental crimes and powers are given to Local Authorities to tackle these primarily through the EPA 1990, the CNEA 2004 and include:

2.2 Litter

Includes the offence of dropping litter as well as litter emanating from a business or littered private land which is open to the public such as a retail park or train station. Litter can also emanate from a premises which is not containing refuse correctly.

2.3 Fly-tipping

Varies in size from a single mattress or black bin bag to large-scale truck loads of construction, demolition and excavation waste. Some illegal dumps, whilst small in size, can be serious particularly if hazardous waste is involved. Waste is classed as a fly-tip if it is too large to be removed by a normal hand sweeping barrow. In simple terms, a single full bin bag upwards would constitute a fly-tip. Similarly several carrier bags full of rubbish dumped together would also constitute a single fly-tip. The majority of fly-tipping in Redditch is small amounts of domestic waste. In the more rural areas of Bromsgrove there are more instances of commercial loads of fly-tipping such as tyres, business or construction waste.

Appendix A – Joint Environmental Enforcement Strategy

2.3 Dog fouling

Offences whereby owners allow their dogs to foul on public open spaces. Please note that this enforcement activity does not include dog control orders or stray dogs, these are dealt with by Regulatory Services.

2.4 Abandoned vehicles and nuisance vehicles

Councils have a duty to deal with abandoned vehicles and can issue Fixed Penalty Notices for the offence. Please note that this enforcement activity does not carry out enforcement activities in relation to parking offences. In Redditch there is also a local policy which deals with the problem of untaxed nuisance vehicles which are parked on Council land which can be extended across Bromsgrove.

2.5 Graffiti and fly-posting

We are currently working on a cross service/partnership approach to tackling graffiti and fly-posting where the responsibilities of the different agencies and land owners will be clarified. However, environmental enforcement officers and Anti Social Behaviour Officers will take enforcement action in relation to these issues.

2.6 Waste

Covers offences in relation to waste receptacles, such as leaving bins permanently on public land, and non compliance with the Statutory Notice issued to all householders in relation to the household waste service. Covers both household and commercial waste issues, e.g. checking on waste transfer notes or waste carrier's licences

3.0 Levels of Enforcement

3.1 The interface between giving advice and more serious enforcement action is critical. In Bromsgrove and Redditch a staged approach is used as outlined below:

Stage 1	Advice given
Stage 2	Verbal warning
Stage 3	Written warning
Stage 4	Fixed penalty notice
Stage 5	Court proceedings

3.2 Environmental Enforcement Officers are given complete discretion towards the severity of the penalty. It should also be noted it is not necessary to progress through the stages and offences can be taken to stage 5 on a first account if this is considered appropriate.

3.3 The authorities will use the power whereby a discount on a FPN can be offered for early payment – full details of the amounts for the various offences are set out in appendix C. The standard period for payment of fixed penalties is set in the legislation at 14 days. Once a FPN has been issued, an authority cannot prosecute for the alleged offence if the fixed penalty is paid within this period and this must be stated on the notice itself. For this reason, the period during which a discount for early payment is offered, must be less than 14 days and to avoid confusion, guidance recommends that it should not be more than 10 days.

Appendix A – Joint Environmental Enforcement Strategy

4.0 Awareness raising

- 4.1 An important part of the role of enforcement officers is to carry out proactive visible enforcement to tackle problems like littering and dog fouling.
- 4.2 Campaigning and the use of good quality promotional materials – statutory notices, standard letters, stickers, cards etc. plays an important part of this enforcement strategy. Additionally, regular publicity to promote our enforcement activities will take place, and we will ensure that we publicise successful outcomes in relation to a specific event.

5.0 Partnerships across the Council and with other Agencies

- 5.1 Environmental enforcement work supplements and forms part of our street cleaning and waste collection services. It supplements the schedules which are in place to keep the streets and other public open spaces clean and tidy and household waste collection services.
- 5.2 Working together with other service areas and agencies like social landlords is a critical part of the approach to tackling environmental crime. For example, in Redditch there are regular walkabouts in conjunction with tenancy and ASB officers as well as community support officers and police. Support of and attendance at events like PACT meetings is also an important part of our Strategy.

6.0 How do we check that what we are doing is working?

- 6.1 We will provide regular updates to Members on enforcement work and also report activities in relation to fly-tipping through the Flycapture database and any other such reporting systems that are required in the future.

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Bromsgrove and Redditch Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Since June 2024, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) has delivered some environmental crime functions on behalf of Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils. This enforcement policy outlines the approach to be taken to tackle those environmental crimes that the shared service has been asked to address.
- 1.2 The following legislative provisions contain provisions that create criminal offences and provide local authorities and their officers with powers to tackle these. Legislation includes the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Control of Pollution Act 1989, Clean Neighborhoods and Environment Act 2005; Environment Act 1995 and Anti-Social Behavior Crime and Policing Act 2014. The common specific offences included are:
- **Littering** to include the offence of dropping litter as and litter escaping from a business to include offences relating to public and private land.
 - **Fly tipping** from a single bin bag or mattress to large scale lorry-loads of waste. Most of the fly tipping in Redditch is single domestic waste items whereas Bromsgrove, being more rural, is more impacted by fly tipping by commercial enterprises.
 - **Failure to dispose of Waste appropriately** to include householder's and business's duty of care for how they manage and dispose of their waste. This includes any requirement to hold waste carriers licensing or requirements for waste transfer notes. The Duty of Care is a legal requirement for those dealing with certain kinds of waste to take all reasonable steps to keep it safe. It applies to anyone who is a holder of household, industrial and commercial waste, known as controlled waste.
 - **Dog Fouling** in public open spaces.
- 1.3 This policy supersedes the Joint Environmental Enforcement Strategy for Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council except for elements relating to abandoned and nuisance vehicles, and to the enforcement of graffiti and fly posting, which are outside of the scope of shared service activity and therefore also of this revision of the enforcement policy. These elements remain enforced by the Environmental Services team serving the two councils.
- 1.4 This Enforcement Policy explains how the Service will carry out its enforcement duties and, in addition, what business and citizens in the Bromsgrove and Redditch areas can expect. It will be applied by officers in relation to the functions listed in 1.2 above. It is distinct from any general Enforcement Policies of the individual local authority partners, which apply to other regulatory functions provided by them such as planning,



and from the general enforcement policy operated by the shared service covering its activities on behalf of the six district councils.

- 1.5 The primary outcome from service activities in this area is to ensure residents and businesses comply with legislation so that members of the public, businesses and their employees, and the environment are protected. The work should also ensure a level playing field for those involved in the commercial collection and disposal of waste. Fair, proportionate, and effective enforcement is essential to protecting the health, safety, and economic interests of all concerned, and there are a range of tools available to the Service to achieve this. Whilst in the main compliance will be achieved using advice and where needed, lower-level formal sanctions and actions, there will be a need to take people and businesses through the court process in some circumstances. These are outlined further in the policy.
- 1.6 In delivering these activities, the Service must also have regard to the various general duties imposed on the partner authorities e.g., section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act, and the general powers given to local government for the promotion of well-being under the various Local Government Acts. Officers are also obliged to ensure that their actions are in-line with provisions in the Human Rights Act 1998 when taking decisions relating to enforcement action.

2. Policy Scope

- 2.1 The shared service is committed to providing an effective service with officers carrying out their duties in an equitable, practical, and consistent manner. To achieve this, officers and the service will have regard to the principles in a number of documents that provide guidance or act as codes of practice which must be given due regard. These include:
- The Regulators Code (DBaT)
 - Local Government Regulation's Home Authority Principle,
 - Office for Product Safety and Standards' (OPSS) Primary Authority Principle
 - The Crown Prosecution Service Code for Crown Prosecutors (as amended.)
 - Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention on Human Rights.
- 2.2 The Policy applies to actions in relation to all the relevant legislation enforced by the Service. Enforcement action for the purposes of this policy includes any action taken by officers aimed at ensuring that individuals or businesses comply with the law and goes beyond just formal enforcement action such as prosecution.

3 General Principles

- 3.1 Prevention is generally better than cure and the shared service's role therefore can involve actively working with householders and businesses to provide advice on and assist with achieving compliance. In line with its business methodology, where data



and intelligence identify a need for widespread educational or informative action to improve compliance, such actions will be delivered and prioritised as informal preventative measures. Where the service considers that formal action is necessary, each case will be considered on its own merits. However, there are general principles that apply to the way in which each case will be approached. These are set out in this Policy.

- 3.2 Regulatory matters will relate to both businesses and individuals. Both types of case will be treated in the same way and the general principles outlined around proportionality of action will be applied. Informal resolution will be tried before resorting to formal action and potentially the Courts, unless the law mandates that an authority must act in certain circumstances, or the circumstances are so serious that anything other than immediate formal action would be inappropriate. Even then, the service can use the discretion that all local authorities have as to the timeliness of taking formal action.
- 3.3 Enforcement decisions will be fair, independent, and objective and will not be influenced by issues such as ethnicity or national origin, gender, religious beliefs, political views or the sexual orientation of the suspect, victim, witness, or offender. Such decisions will not be affected by improper or undue pressure from any source. We will consider the views of any victim, injured party, or relevant person to establish the nature and extent of any harm or loss, and its significance, in making the decision to take formal action.
- 3.4 This enforcement policy helps to promote efficient and effective approaches to regulatory inspection and enforcement, which improve regulatory outcomes without imposing unnecessary burdens on business. We recognise the positive impact that the service can have on economic progress and growth in the local economy and see it as part of our role to encourage and support the growth of legitimate business activity within the legal framework provided by central government.

4 Intelligence and Risk

- 4.1 We will ensure that our resources are targeted where they will be most effective. We use intelligence, alongside the assessment of risk, to inform all aspects of our regulatory activity including:
- Data collection and other information requirements.
 - Programmes of Inspection, Advice and support.
 - Enforcement activity and various forms of sanction.
- 4.2 Our approach to environmental crime will be intelligence-led and interventions will be driven by the assessment of data and information. Decisions on tactical actions will be influenced by:



- Compliance history (i.e., are there repeat offenders involved)
- Potential future risks (is there a likelihood of reoffending)
- Scale and severity (the size of incident, its wider impact, significance of the offence)

4.3 Intelligence will be used to direct inspection-based projects, targeting commercial sectors or businesses where there are known issues. Obviously, a complaint may also trigger a visit if that is the most appropriate response. We will review our approach to regulatory activities from time to time, to remove any unnecessary burdens from businesses.

5 Advice and Guidance

- 5.1 We will provide general information, advice, and guidance to make it easier for householders and businesses to understand and meet their obligations in clear, concise, and accessible language, using a range of appropriate formats and media. Information will cover all legal requirements relating to our activities, as well as changes to legal requirements. We will continue to ensure householders and businesses are aware of their legal obligations and where changes are of great significance, we will look at the best ways of informing householders and businesses of these changes e.g., through press releases, newsletters, social media, community groups or letter drops.
- 5.2 WRS will promote self service via Bromsgrove and Redditch's website to report environmental crimes, and an acknowledgement will be provided. When offering advice to businesses, the service will clearly distinguish between statutory requirements and advice/ guidance, aimed at improvements above minimum legal standards. WRS recognises its advice should help achieve compliance but impose the minimum burden required on the business concerned. Advice will be confirmed in writing, if requested.
- 5.3 Where a business knows it has a problem and seeks advice to remedy the situation; this will not normally trigger enforcement action unless the impacts on the environment or the public are severe. Where appropriate WRS will seek to support the remedial action to prevent future problems however must reserve the right to take enforcement action in serious cases.

6 Inspection and other surveillance tactics

- 6.1 WRS activity will be driven by intelligence. Inspection and other forms of market surveillance will inform us about problem areas or paint a picture of broader trends to help inform the deployment of resources.



6.2 WRS will focus its efforts where the assessment of intelligence or risk show there are areas where non-compliance is more likely or non-compliance poses a more serious risk to regulatory outcomes.

6.3 Where WRS and another law enforcement agency have a shared interest in an individual or business, we will seek to work together to tackle environmental crime. We will also share intelligence with other law enforcement bodies, where appropriate, to support regulatory outcomes. The service will also take account of the circumstances of smaller businesses, including any difficulties they may have in achieving compliance unless the non-compliance in question creates a serious risk.

7.0 **Enforcement Action**

7.1 In accordance with good practice, we will:

- Publish our Enforcement Policy,
- Report on our enforcement activities year on year to interested parties through an Annual Report,
- Follow-up enforcement actions where appropriate,
- Be transparent in the way in which we enforce requirements and, apply and determine penalties /sanctions/ formal actions (when such powers are made available.)

7.2 When considering what action should be taken, we will look to:

- Be proportionate to the nature of the offence and the harm caused,
- Change the behaviour of the offender,
- Eliminate any financial gain or benefit from non-compliance,
- Address the harm caused by regulatory non-compliance, where appropriate,
- Deter future non-compliance,
- Be responsive and consider what is appropriate for the particular offender and regulatory issue, and
- Avoid perverse incentives that might influence the choice of sanctioning response.

7.3 When considering formal enforcement action, we will, when appropriate, discuss the circumstances with those suspected of a breach and take these comments into account when deciding on the best approach, this will routinely form part of any investigation. Where a prosecution may be an option, the offender is likely to be offered an interview under the provisions of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, which will give an opportunity for the alleged offender to give their side of the story.

7.4 Where the outcome is a decision to send a file to the relevant legal service for them to consider prosecution, this will be reported to the potential defendants. For lesser



disposals, an explanation of the need for the action will be provided as soon as is reasonably practicable after the intervention.

7.5 Deciding what enforcement action is appropriate

In assessing what enforcement action is necessary and proportionate, consideration will be given to:

- The seriousness of compliance failure or offence.
- The individual or business's past compliance i.e. if this is a reoccurring issue.
- The scale and extent of the offence.
- The culpability of those involved i.e., was there guilty knowledge in the actions taken,
- Any official or professional guidance, legal opinions or case law.

7.6 Enforcement Options

There are many potential enforcement options in some legislative areas. The level of action taken will vary from no action/ verbal advice & assistance through to proceedings in Court. Examples of the main types of action that can be considered are shown below:

- No action/ verbal advice & assistance.
- Informal Action and Written Advice.
- Community Protection Warning
- Community Protection Notice
- Statutory Notice to produce information
- Fixed Penalty Notices
- Seizure of goods/equipment
- Simple Caution
- Prosecution
- Other Actions

7.7 No Action/ Verbal Advice or assistance

There will be circumstances where a contravention may not warrant action, or it may be inappropriate. Many minor contraventions can be dealt with via advice and/ or assistance. Where this is not appropriate, due to the behaviour of one party or where the complainant is from a vulnerable group, the service will consider the best option for intervention depending on the circumstances.

7.8 Informal Action and Written Advice

For minor breaches, we will give advice on how to put them right, including a deadline by which this must be done. The time allowed will be reasonable and take into account the seriousness of the contravention and the implications of the non-compliance.



Where the advice required is detailed, or there are potentially serious implications from the failure, the advice will be provided in writing. Failure to comply could result in further enforcement action.

Wherever possible we will advise alleged offenders about 'good practice', but we will clearly distinguish between what they must do to comply with the law and what is recommended best practice.

7.9 Community Protection Warning (CPW)

Issued under Part 4 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, CPW's are intended to address anti-social behaviour which unacceptably affects victims and the community. They act as a warning and must be issued prior to a Community Protection Notice (CPN) advising them to stop doing / do specific things and to take reasonable steps to achieve a specified result. A CPW or CPN can be served on an individual or a body such as a business. Failure to heed the warning contained within a CPW after giving a specified time frame where the effect continues may lead to service of a CPN. The purpose of a CPW is to prevent or reduce the effect of the conduct and the likelihood of it continuing or reoccurring.

7.10 Community Protection Notice (CPN)

Issued under the same legislation above, a CPN may be the next enforcement action should the warning of a CPW not be heeded. A CPN is appropriate where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a person or business's conduct:

- is having a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, and
- is unreasonable, and
- the behaviour is of a persistent or continuing nature.

A CPN outlines what steps must or must be taken in a given time frame. Failure to comply with a CPN without reasonable excuse may result in the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) with the fine being £100 for failing to comply with the requirements of the CPN. Alternatively, a FPN may not be appropriate, and the situation deemed severe enough to proceed straight to Court depending on the impact and in consideration with the principles of this enforcement policy. Items used in the commission of the offence may be seized. There is a right to appeal a CPN to a Magistrates Court within 21 days of issue.

7.11 Statutory notice to produce information

Officers of the Service have the power under various pieces of legislation, or through delegation, to issue notices that require information to assist in their investigations. This could include but is not limited to waste carriers license and waste transfer notes.



Failure to respond and produce the requested documents could result in FPN or prosecution.

All notices issued will contain details of any Appeals process that may be available to the recipient.

7.12 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's)

FPN's can be issued for the following offences:

- Littering - Depositing Litter (section 87/88 - Environmental Protection Act 1990)
- Failure to produce authority (Waste Carrier's Licence) (Section 5/5B Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989)
- Failure to produce documentation (Waste Transfer Notes) (Section 34(5) and regulations made under it 34/ (6)/34A Environmental Protection Act 1990)
- Breach of Waste Duty of Care (section 34 Environmental Protection Act 1990)
- Fly Tipping - Depositing Controlled Waste (Section 34(1)(a) and Section 33(Z)(a) Environmental Protection Act 1990)
- Breach of Community Protection Notice (Section 52 of Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014)

FPN's are recognised as a low-level enforcement tool and avoid the defendant obtaining a criminal record. They will only be used in appropriate circumstances to give a fast and measured response to a situation. Where legislation permits an offence to be dealt with by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN), we may choose to administer a FPN on a first occasion, without issuing a warning. We will only issue a FPN if we are satisfied that there is enough evidence to consider prosecuting an individual for the offence the FPN is offered for as an opportunity to discharge their liability and avoid the risk of a criminal record. There may also be circumstances where it is considered that the offence is so severe and public interest tests (see later in 7.15 Institution of legal proceedings) require a case to be considered without the issue of an FPN.

7.13 Seizure of goods/equipment

We can seize a vehicle, trailer or mobile plant and their contents if it's believed it is being, has been or will be used to commit a waste crime such as fly-tipping. Vehicles and their contents can be seized under the Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989 or the Environmental Protection Act 1990. A vehicle can be seized:

- If it is used in fly-tipping;
- If it is driven by somebody who is not registered as a waste carrier;
- If it is used to transfer waste to somebody who is not registered as the waste carrier;
- If it is being used at a site that is breaking the rules of an environmental permit;



There are also provisions in Section 51 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 to seize items used in the commission of offence. This legislation applies to the breaching of a CPN and can be undertaken prior to prosecution.

In both incidences such action is considered a last resort option where compliance has repeatedly not been achieved by other means and there are strict process measures that must be followed when carrying out this action.

7.14 The use of Simple Cautions

Where the public interest justifies it, the senior officer reviewing a case will consider offering a Simple Caution (or Reprimand/ Final Written Warning if the offender is below the age of 18.) In offering a Simple Caution, we will take account of the Home Office Guidelines in relation to the cautioning of offenders, and the Code for Crown Prosecutors. Where the offender is under 18 and a formal approach is being considered, appropriate bodies such as the Youth Offending Team will be consulted.

A Simple Caution requires an admission of guilt on behalf of the offender, however there is no sentence and there is no recorded conviction. A caution will remain on record for a period of 2 years and may be cited in Court should a further offence be committed and prosecuted during that time.

7.15 Institution of Legal Proceedings

Once an officer has completed their enquiries, a case report will be submitted to a senior officer, independent of the investigation, who will decide the most appropriate course of action using amongst other things, the criteria identified below.

Where the law has been broken, there is a range of enforcement options available and, under normal circumstances, a process of escalation will be used until either compliance is reached or there is no option other than to instigate proceedings. This approach would not be appropriate where there is a serious risk to public safety or the health of the environment, or the offences have been committed deliberately or negligently or involve deception, or where there is significant economic detriment or potential detriment caused by the activity. Each case is unique and will be considered on its own facts and merits.

The senior officer will take into consideration the requirements of the Code for Crown Prosecutors and other relevant codes before deciding whether to pass the file to the relevant legal officer for their review and the formal consideration of whether to authorise the institution of legal proceedings.

Before doing this, the senior officer will have to be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction against each defendant for each offence



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identified. They must have concluded that a jury or bench of Magistrates, properly directed in accordance with the law, is more likely than not to convict the defendant of the charge alleged based on the evidence before them. To this end, the senior officer will look at all the available evidence, reliability of witnesses, supporting documentation and any other matters relating to the investigation. Only when this evidential test has been satisfied will the public interest to proceed with the prosecution be considered.

In deciding whether a prosecution will serve the public interest, the senior officer will balance factors for and against the prosecution carefully, fairly, and impartially. Some factors may increase the justification to prosecute whereas others may militate against. Below are some of the matters to be taken into consideration for and against criminal proceedings. This is not an exhaustive list and, as such, each case is taken strictly on its own individual merits:

Factors in Favour of Prosecution

- The offender was in a position of control within a business;
- The offence was premeditated and/or planned;
- The offender acted dishonestly, wilfully, or negligently.
- The offender targeted a vulnerable group or person.
- The seriousness of the offence is significant;
- The offender has benefited from the criminal conduct;
- The offender has received advice or a warning concerning the circumstances of the offence or similar matters.
- The offender has previous convictions that are relevant.
- The offence, though not serious in itself, is widespread in the area where it was committed.
- There are grounds to believe that the offence is likely to be continued or repeated, for example by a history of recurring conduct.
- The outcome of a prosecution might serve an important, informative purpose or establish a legal precedent.

Factors which would mitigate against the need for a prosecution

- The offence was minor in nature and because of a genuine mistake or misunderstanding, which did not involve significant negligence.
- The offender is vulnerable, for example through age-related issues, or was at the time of the offence suffering from significant mental or physical ill health, which contributed to the commission of the offence, and the offence was neither serious nor likely to be repeated.
- The offender put right the loss or harm caused prior to the intervention of the Service.
- The defendant was a youth at the time of the offence.
- There has been a long delay between the offence and any potential court action, unless either:



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- (i) The offence is serious,
- (ii) The delay has been caused by the defendant or his/ her legal representatives,
- (iii) The offence has only recently come to light, or
- (iv) The complexity of the offence meant that there has been a long investigation.

7.16 Other Actions

Injunctive action is a civil law process that may be used to ensure that person or business desists from a particular pattern of behaviour or action. Whilst these are not the norm in dealing with regulatory matters, seeking an injunction may be the most appropriate method of disposal for an issue. A decision to seek an injunction would be taken by the legal officer for the relevant partner council and is most likely to be relevant where the normal legal processes such as the issuing of notices and prosecution have not led to resolution of a problem. WRS officers will work with the relevant partner legal team to develop such cases and support them being taken through the Court process.

If a CPN is breached, we can apply for a Remedial Order which may require the defendant to carry out specific works in line with the CPN or allow the work to be carried out on our behalf to remedy the breach. Refusing consent amounts to a breach of the Order which could possibly lead to further proceedings for contempt of court.

Some cases taken by the service can lead to applications being made under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) for confiscation of assets, or a POCA investigation may run

alongside an investigation into breaches. These are likely to be the most serious cases, where there is persistence of offending over a long period of time or where the offences are deemed to be "lifestyle crime" under POCA. Their purpose is to recover the financial benefit that the offender has obtained from his criminal conduct. WRS will look to use these provisions in an appropriate manner.

8.0 Additional Information

The Senior Managers involved in making the more serious decisions will also have regard to legal advice from the relevant partner Head of Legal Services and will not instigate any legal proceedings without their authority.

8.1 Standards and Accountability

Where relevant WRS will create effective consultation and feedback opportunities to ensure we have continuing cooperative relationships with businesses and other interested parties. We will ensure our officers provide courteous and efficient services to residents and businesses. We will enable them to interpret and apply relevant legal requirements and ensure that they enforce requirements fairly and consistently in



similar situations. We will take account of comments from businesses and other interested parties regarding the behaviour and activity of our staff.

8.2 Liaison with other regulatory bodies and enforcement agencies

Where appropriate, enforcement activities within WRS will be coordinated with other regulatory bodies and enforcement agencies to maximise the effectiveness of any enforcement.

Where an enforcement matter affects a wide geographical area beyond the boundaries of Bromsgrove and Redditch Council areas involves enforcement by one or more other local authorities or organisations; where appropriate all relevant authorities and organisations will be informed of the matter as soon as possible and all enforcement activity coordinated with them.

WRS will share intelligence relating to wider regulatory matters with colleagues within the partner authorities, other regulatory bodies and enforcement agencies, and examples include:

- Government Departments and Agencies
- Police Forces and Fire Authorities
- Other Statutory Bodies
- Other Local Authorities

8.3 Obstruction of Officers

The areas of legislation covered by this policy make it a clear, that it is an offence to obstruct authorised officers in carrying out their roles. This includes offering the officer reasonable assistance in the conduct of their duties and investigations / inspections.

Section 6 and 7 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and section 88 (8A) and (8B) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 make it an offence to fail to provide name and address or provide false or inaccurate name and address if an authorised officer proposes to give that person a fixed penalty notice in respect of nuisance parking an littering, respectively. These will be enforced, with Police assistance as required, to ensure that offences are dealt with at the lowest level possible.

The council regards the obstruction of, or assaults (physical and/or verbal) on, staff whilst lawfully carrying out their duties as a serious matter. Any instances will be referred to senior managers to determine the next steps, which may lead to legal proceedings against the perpetrator. Any threat or assault will not be tolerated.

8.4 Storage and Disclosure of Information

Information collected or recorded as part of the council's enforcement activities will be securely retained in a paper and/or electronic format for a period defined by legislation or



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required for future reference by the service. This information will include decisions taken about the choice of enforcement options.

The identity of a person providing the council with information about other people committing crime, will remain confidential unless prior agreement by the person is obtained, or its disclosure is authorised by law or by a court of law.

Personal data held manually or as computer records will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA). This information will be used in accordance with the council's

DPA registration. Exemptions to this include where information is disclosed to other agencies or used for another reason for the purposes of detecting or preventing crime. This will include the sharing of information between Council services and with the police and other enforcement agencies. Sharing of information relating to the Crime and Disorder Act will be undertaken in accordance with the appropriate information sharing protocol.

Right of access to information held by the council will be given on request, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information regulations 2004 unless the information is already publicly available (as described in the council's Publication Scheme). Exemptions can be found in the Act, Regulations and the council's publication scheme.

8.5 Appeals/Cancellation

There is no appeal process against the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice. Any dispute relating to the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice may mean the appellant will be invited to attend an interview under caution in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act. In the event of refusal to pay, then the matter will be considered for prosecution.

The Team Manager not previously involved in the case shall have the authority to cancel fixed penalty notices, but only if the notice is shown to have been wrongly served.

8.6 Further Information

Anyone requiring further information on this policy should contact Worcestershire Regulatory Services by writing to:

Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way,
Kidderminster,
Worcestershire
DY11 7WF
Or by e-mail to:
enquiries@worcsregservices.gov.uk

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Executive

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Pride in Place Programme – Governance Model

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sharon Harvey Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Environmental Services
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Rachel Egan Assistant Director Regeneration & Property
Report Author	Georgina Harris Job Title: UK Shared Prosperity Fund Manager Contact email: Georgina.harris@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 534082
Wards Affected	Greenlands & Lakeside Matchborough & Woodrow
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Yes
Relevant Council Priority	All Council priorities apply
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 RESOLVE that:-

- 1) Authority to recruit and appoint an independent chair of the Greenlands and Woodrow Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board be delegated to the Assistant Director Regeneration & Property following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Environmental Services and in agreement with the MP for Redditch and the Villages;**
- 2) Authority to approve the final membership of the Greenlands and Woodrow Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board be delegated to the Assistant Director Regeneration & Property following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Environmental Services and in agreement with the MP for Redditch and the Villages; and**
- 3) The Council agrees to act as Accountable Body for the Pride in Place Programme and adopt programme governance arrangements.**

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2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Pride in Place is the Government's flagship communities programme designed to empower local people to shape the future of their neighbourhoods.
- 2.2 The programme provides up to £20 million over 10 years per area for local communities to drive change and reshape their neighbourhoods for the better.
- 2.3 In September 2025 the Government announced a second phase of the programme that would benefit a further 169 areas. An area that covers parts of Greenlands and parts of Woodrow has been selected to receive Pride in Place funding. Appendix 1 is a map showing the qualifying area.
- 2.4 In December 2025, a prospectus was published providing guidance on how the funding could be used and the governance structures that should support delivery of the programme.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The Pride in Place programme is designed to be community led. Decisions as to how the money will be spent will be made by a neighbourhood board following extensive consultation with the community.
- 3.2 To secure the funding, the Neighbourhood Board must define a vision for the area and prepare a neighbourhood plan identifying the communities' priorities and activities to deliver these priorities. The Board must demonstrate that the neighbourhood plan has been developed in response to meaningful and inclusive engagement with the community. The Neighbourhood Plan must be submitted to MHCLG, for approval, by 30 November 2026.
- 3.3 The Local Authority's main role is to act as accountable body for the funding for the duration of the programme. However, it also has a key role in establishing the Neighbourhood Board.
- 3.4 The establishment of a neighbourhood board begins with the recruitment of an independent chair. The guidance advises that this is the joint responsibility of the Local Authority and MP.

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- 3.5 The Chair must be someone who has a deep connection to the area; they may be from Greenlands or Woodrow, or live or work in the area. They cannot be an elected representative. MHCLG has provided a template job description which officers have adapted to greater reflect the nature of the role required in Greenlands and Woodrow. Appendix 2 is the job description for the role of Chair.
- 3.6 The recruitment process must be expansive and open to all. It should attract established community leaders as well as people who may not have engaged with local services or groups previously.
- 3.7 The opportunity will be advertised widely using a number of methods which could include online, posters in shop windows, bookbag flyers, social media, through partners and word of mouth.
- 3.8 All promotion will direct interested parties to a landing page on the Council's website which will include an online application form. Applicants will be asked to provide an up-to-date CV detailing their suitability for the role and 2 references, one of which must be from a resident.
- 3.9 Shortlisting and interviews will be carried out by a panel comprising a senior officer, the MP, a Member for Greenlands and Lakeside ward and a Member for Matchborough and Woodrow ward. It is intended that all ward Members will have an opportunity to meet the shortlisted candidates.
- 3.10 Appropriate due diligence will be carried out by the local authority before any appointment is confirmed.
- 3.8 Once a Chair has been appointed, it is their responsibility to lead on the recruitment of the board. The board must have a minimum of 8 members and, whilst there is no defined membership, must include the local MP and at least one Member. It is proposed that the board will include 2 Members – one from Greenlands and Lakeside ward and one from Matchborough and Woodrow ward. Other board members could include community leaders; local businesses or social enterprises; cultural, arts, heritage and sporting organisations; and public agencies and anchor institutions. The majority of board members (at least 51%) should live or work within the boundaries of the neighbourhood.
- 3.9 The final membership of the board must be approved by the MP and local authority.

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- 3.10 Details of the final membership of the board must be submitted to MHCLG for approval by 17 July 2026.
- 3.11 As accountable body for the funding, the Council is responsible for ensuring that public funds are distributed fairly and effectively and that funds are managed in line with the Nolan Principles of Public Life. It is also responsible for compliance with legal responsibilities in relation to subsidy control and procurement.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 All board roles are voluntary; however, reasonable expenses will be covered. These will be funded from the Pride in Place allocation.
- 4.2 The Council has received £150,000 Pride in Place capacity funding. Any costs associated with the recruitment will be funded through this money.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council will act as accountable body for the Pride in Place Programme with responsibility for establishing the Neighbourhood Board and maintaining appropriate governance, assurance and oversight arrangements.
- 5.2. Acting as accountable body establishes a legal duty for the Council to ensure that grant funds are administered, spent and recorded in accordance with government conditions and applicable legislation. The Council will be responsible for ensuring that the funds are distributed fairly and effectively and that the funds have been managed in line with the Nolan Principles, Equality Act 2010, Public Sector Equality Duty and Managing Public Money principles.
- 5.3 The Interim Director of Finance is required to submit an annual statement to MHCLG confirming that they have actively applied all the necessary checks to ensure proper administration of funding particularly in respect to financial administration and transparency of governance.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**Local Government Reorganisation**

- 6.1 Local Government Reorganisation may result in changes to the local authority's representation on the Neighbourhood Board.

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Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 Whilst the development of the Neighbourhood Plan for Greenlands and Woodrow is the responsibility of the Neighbourhood board, the funding can be used for a wide range of interventions. These include regeneration of areas; activities to ensure neighbourhoods are clean, green and safe; and improvements to housing. It is likely that all Council priorities will be supported by this programme.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 None directly arising from this report

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 The recruitment of the Chair and Neighbourhood Board will be an open and transparent process designed to attract representation from all sections of the community.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Failure to appoint a Chair and Board will impact the delivery of the programme.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1: Map of Greenlands and Woodrow Pride in Place Area
Appendix 2: Role of Chair of Neighbourhood Board Job Description

[Pride in Place Programme: prospectus - GOV.UK](#)

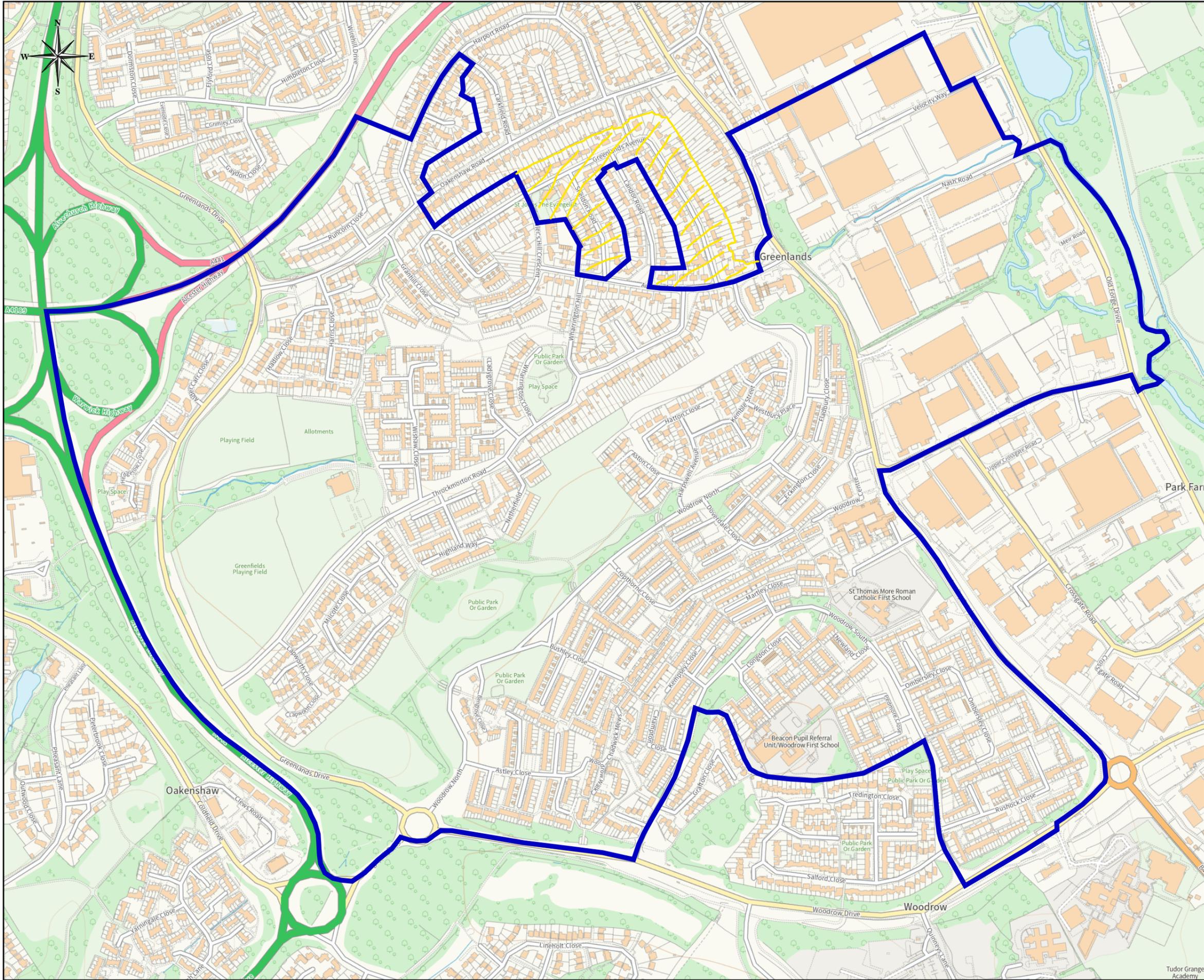
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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Sharon Harvey Portfolio Holder for Regeneration & Environmental Services	4/3/26
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Rachel Egan Asst Director Regeneration and Property	6/3/26
Financial Services	Debra Goodall Assistant Director – Finance & Customer Services	6/3/26
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings Principle Solicitor – Governance	6/3/26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green Policy Manager	6/3/26
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matthew Eccles Climate Change Manager	6/3/26



Notes:

Date	Rev	Details

Project:
Pride in Place, Redditch

Drawing:
Boundary Details

Drawn: PTL Scale: 1/6,000 @ A3
 Surveyed: OS Date: Mar 2026

Drawing No: **P2030/437**

Engineering and Design Services
 Town Hall
 Walter Stranz Square
 Redditch
 Worcs B98 8AH



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 Bromsgrove District Council: AC0000813099
 Redditch Borough Council: AC0000811270

Tudor Grange Academy

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Role Title: Chair of Neighbourhood Board
Project: Pride in Place – Greenlands & Woodrow
Type: Voluntary Position – reasonable expenses covered
Location: Greenlands and Woodrow, Redditch
Time Commitment: Approx. 8 - 10 hours per month

Pride in Place is a 10-year, government funded programme that will support parts of Greenlands and Woodrow with up to £20 million to regenerate the local area. The community will be leading the delivery of the programme, making decisions as to how the funding is spent.

About the Role

We are looking for a passionate, community-minded individual to become the Chair of the Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board. This is a fantastic opportunity for someone who cares deeply about the neighbourhood and wants to help guide investment that will make a real and lasting difference to local people.

The Chair will support a locally led board that brings residents together, gathers ideas, agrees shared priorities, and oversees fair and transparent decisions about how funding is used.

This role is perfect for someone who is deeply connected to the area, believes in community empowerment, enjoys bringing people together, and wants to help make Greenlands and Woodrow a better place to live.

Key Responsibilities

- **Establish the Neighbourhood Board:** Working with the MP and Council, lead on identifying and recruiting a board that represents all parts of the community.
- **Lead on Community Engagement:** Ensure that there are high levels of awareness of the Pride in Place programme within the community and that everyone has an opportunity to express their wants, needs and opportunities for the area. To ensure that the community voice continues to be heard throughout the programme's lifetime.
- **Develop a Vision and Neighbourhood Plan:** Working with the Board, develop a vision for the area that reflects the ambitions of the community. Lead on the development of a neighbourhood plan, based on what matters most to local people.
- **Lead Board Meetings:** Chair regular meetings that are inclusive, well-structured, and create space for everyone's voice.
- **Work with Partners:** Collaborate with residents, community groups, and local organisations to develop projects and activities to deliver the Neighbourhood Plan.
- **Support Fair and Transparent Decision-Making:** Guide Board discussions about proposed projects and ensure funding is allocated openly and fairly in line with agreed priorities.
- **Champion the Community:** Make sure decisions reflect the needs, voices, and experiences of local residents.

- **Encourage Local Involvement:** Help promote the programme and create opportunities for residents to take part.
- **Ensure Good Governance:** Oversee meeting agendas, minutes, and decision-making processes. Ensure that the activities of the Board are open and transparent, and compliant with its Terms of Reference.
- **Act as a visible leader:** champion the Board's work and represent its decisions and achievements to partners, residents, and the wider public.

Essential qualities:

- A strong connection to the Greenlands or Woodrow area.
- Respect within the local area and the potential to be seen as a trusted and capable leader, even if this is your first leadership role. An ability to bring together different voices from across the community.
- Good communication and listening skills.
- Fair-minded and able to remain neutral when needed.
- Comfortable leading discussions.
- Passionate about local people having a say in decisions that affect their area and empowering local people to influence change.
- Calm under pressure and able to manage conflict.
- Reliable and able to commit to regular meetings.
- Confidence working with a range of people and organisations.
- Understanding of local needs and local services.

Desirable qualities:

- Experience with community groups, volunteering, or committee work.

What You Will Gain

- A chance to shape the biggest investment in the area in a generation and influence how £20 million delivers lasting, transformational change.
- The opportunity to develop leadership experience and learn new skills in a role that truly matters.
- Opportunities to work alongside residents, partners, and local organisations to bring ideas to life and help strengthen the community.

How to Apply

To submit an application please complete the form available at www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Closing Date: tbc

We're committed to ensuring that the Pride in Place programme reflects the voices of our local community. Everyone is welcome to apply.

Executive Committee
202617th March**Redditch Council Plan update**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jane Spilsbury
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Hannah Corredor, Assistant Director for Corporate Services & Transformation
Report Author Rebecca Green	Job Title: Policy Manager Contact email: r.green@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881616
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	
Relevant Council Priority	All
Key Decision	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS**Executive Committee RECOMMEND that:-**

- 1. The Council Plan report and update table attached at Appendix 1 be noted**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The development of the new Council Plan began with sessions supported by the LGA in 2024. The priority areas identified in these sessions were built upon in two workshops, which brought together the Cabinet and Corporate Management Team to consolidate the learning and direction identified with the LGA, in combination with relevant data, into a new vision for the borough, distinct priorities and key objectives for the next four years. These have been articulated in the plan as the overarching vision, which focuses on the quality of life of local communities, and three new priorities:
 - Economy & Regeneration
 - Green, Clean & Safe
 - Community & Housing
- 2.2 The Council Plan 2025-2028 went to Executive in March 2025. This report summarises progress from April 2025 up to January 2026, highlighting areas of work that have contributed to delivering the priority objectives, projects and vision of the Council Plan.

Executive Committee
202617th March**2.3 ECONOMY & REGENERATION****UKSPF**

During the 4-year UKSPF programme, grants have funded business start-up, growth grants, innovation grants (for both new and existing businesses), energy efficiency business grants and employee training grants. Businesses have been able to apply for up to £10,000 for start-up and growth grants. Larger grants – up to £30,000 – have been available for innovation projects (product or process development) and the adoption of energy efficiency measures including clean energy generation, e.g. biomass, wind turbine, etc. Employee training grants have been available for up to £1,500 per employee. All grants are match-funded by the business at various levels from 50 – 60%. We also secured some match-funding from Worcestershire County Council. UKSPF funding has strengthened local skills, employment pathways and community capacity, including support for VCS organisations, targeted help for young people and NEET residents through the Redditch Youth Hub, and employability support for those with caring responsibilities via Family Hubs. Funding has also enabled local people in work to access employer-matched training to boost their skills.

To date in 2025/26, the following has been delivered:

Deliverable	Achieved to Date
Amount of green or blue space created or improved	168
Number of enterprises receiving grants	3
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	48
Number of potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready	11
Number of local events or activities supported	105
Number of economically inactive people engaging with support services	70
Number of people reached	630
Number of people receiving support to gain employment	144
Number of people receiving support to sustain employment	30
Number of people supported to participate in education	52
Number of households receiving cost of living support	314
Number of households supported to take up energy efficiency measures	20
Number of organisations receiving grants	6

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Number of volunteering opportunities supported	68
Increased visitor numbers	199556
Jobs created	13
Number of new enterprises	0
Number of enterprises engaged in innovation	4
Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support	44
Number of people in education following support	9
People gaining a qualification or completing a course	44
Estimated carbon dioxide equivalent reductions as a result of support	213 tonnes
Number of volunteering opportunities created	43

Businesses at all stages of development benefit from specialist advice and access to match-funded grants. The Innovation Lighthouse programme, delivered in partnership with the Warwick Manufacturing Group, is supporting the local manufacturing sector by helping firms develop new products and processes, enhancing innovation, productivity and long-term resilience. The programme has supported 4 local businesses; with 1 grant application approved and another 3 anticipated. The project will continue through to 2027/28, supporting a further 12 businesses.

Town Hall Redevelopment

The Town Hall redevelopment has continued to make strong progress over the past year delivering major modernisation across the building to create a more efficient, accessible and future-ready hub for council services, partners and residents. Following the initial strip-out phase in early 2025, revised designs and procurement lead-in times adjusted the construction schedule,.

Key improvements include:

- **Lower Ground Floor:** new archiving space, upgraded toilet and kitchen facilities, and open-plan office accommodation intended for future commercial lease.
- **Ground Floor:** a new glass atrium entrance, modern Customer Service Desk, meeting pods for services such as Housing and Planning, a new Civic Chamber, and continued NHS service provision.
- **First Floor:** retained NHS space alongside high-quality Grade A office accommodation.

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- **Whole-Building Upgrades:** installation of new mechanical and electrical systems, a modern fire alarm, and improved access control to enhance safety and security.
 - **Phase 2** – refurbishment of floors two and three

Once completed, the redevelopment will deliver a brighter, more accessible and energy-efficient building that brings services together in one place, supports improved customer access, provides enhanced civic facilities, and creates new commercial opportunities for Redditch Borough Council.

Public Realm

RBC have worked in partnership with WCC to deliver further public realm improvements in Redditch Town Centre. Funded by The Town Deal, these Improvements included resurfacing of the footways and highways, including the addition of a cycle lane along this route which also forms part of National cycle route 5. New tree planting, street furniture and lighting has helped to enhance the public realm, providing a pleasant environment for visitors and increasing dwell time.

Improvements have taken place along Church Green East and Unicorn Hill, providing an enhanced entrance to the Town Centre for people arriving via train and improving the conservation area around St. Stephen's Church. This phase of public realm works link into previous improvements in the town centre. Further phases of work can be delivered to ensure the Town Centre is fit for the future and remains a pleasant place to visit.

Innovation Centre

Designs for the Innovation Centre have advanced significantly throughout 2025/26, in line with plans to develop an expanded centre with increased floorspace. RIBA Stages 2 and 3 have been completed. This was followed by a rigorous value engineering exercise to ensure that the project can be delivered on budget. Stage 4 designs are now advancing rapidly with construction profiled to commence Summer 2026. Speller-Metcalf have been appointed as the design and build contractor up to stage 4 design, with an option to extend into delivering the development in full.

Planning permission has been submitted and approved within this time-period and £2.425m LEP funding has also been secured following submission of full business case to Birmingham City Council.

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Outdoor Market

Redditch's outdoor market was successfully brought back by the Council at the end of March 2025 after a four-year absence, reopening on 29 March with new stalls, infrastructure and traders. The market now trades twice weekly and includes steady regulars such as fruit-and-veg sellers alongside a growing mix of stalls that reflect what residents said they wanted. The relaunch was well attended, with strong positive feedback from both shoppers and traders.

Forge Mill Museum

Permitted development has been received for the installation of a new food kiosk installation. The electrical and heating upgrade works are now complete and the refurbishment of the toilets was undertaken in February.

2.4 GREEN, CLEAN & SAFE**Service Leadership and Improvement**

In August 2024, a new manager was appointed to lead Environmental Services Place functions including Grounds Maintenance, Tree Management and Bereavement Services. Since then, the service has undergone a renewed focus, securing key investment to modernise operations and enhance performance. The workforce are highly capable and are dedicated towards making the area green, clean and safe. During the last year investment has been made on vehicles, including 6 replacement vehicles and machinery to modernise and improve efficiency in service delivery. To support this, the Abavus open space management system was fully relaunched and embedded within teams, ensuring clear work instructions, improved data capture, and robust pre- and post-work evidence trails.

Street Cleanliness

Three new mini-road sweepers have been procured, alongside enhanced brush systems designed to more effectively remove ingrained kerb line weeds and moss. Route optimisation has been completed, with hotspots now targeted on a more frequent basis. Redditch town centres now benefit from two full annual jet washes, helping to remove accumulated grime from high-footfall areas. In addition, a walk-behind "green machine" has been introduced to access narrow and restricted spaces.

Voluntary litter picking

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Environmental Services continues to welcome and actively support public involvement in keeping the borough clean. A fully stocked supply of litter-picking equipment—including grabbers, gloves, bags and bag rings—is maintained for community use. In 2025, the Place Teams facilitated 29 individual and group-led litter picks, working in close partnership with colleagues in Parks to plan and support these events.

Hedge Maintenance

In 2025, additional agency seasonal workers were appointed to deliver a deeper hedge-cutting programme. The aim was to significantly reduce both width and height to restore hedge lines across key areas. This work was successfully completed, resulting in a more manageable stock and reducing the need for large agency teams in future seasons.

Major Route Management (WCC Partnership)

Through the Service Level Agreement with Worcestershire County Council, Redditch Borough Council is responsible for grass cutting, hedge and tree management, and litter clearance on major routes. A new approach was introduced, deploying a single, dedicated team selected from across the service. This method proved significantly more effective, particularly given the time-limited nature of road closures.

This year also saw the first substantial programme of coordinated tree works along major roads, reducing tree lines to a level manageable by flail cutting in future years. This work was part-funded by the County Council and will be expanded further in 2026.

Reduce fly-tipping

Increased environmental enforcement has helped to protect the environment of the borough and minimise pollution. In 2025/26, WRS Officers have served 8 Fixed Penalty Notices. The team remain committed to educating businesses and the public on how to dispose of waste properly, reducing fly-tipping and serving more FPNs where necessary.

A refreshed communications strategy, launched in early 2025, has increased public awareness of fly-tipping offences and penalties. Since Q1 2025/26, there has been steady decline in the number of fly tips per quarter, from 503 in Q1 to 370 in Q3. The time taken to remove fly tips has also remained below the target of 5 days; averaging 3.7 days in Q1 2025/26, 3 days in Q2 and 2.5 days in Q3.

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Bulky waste

Promotion of the bulky waste collection service throughout 2025—particularly during peak periods such as the run-up to Christmas—has resulted in a 15% increase in collection volumes compared with the previous year. This provides residents with accessible alternatives to fly-tipping.

Delivering the Environment Act

The Council Plan sets out our dedication to the delivery of the Environment Act and how we can work to reduce waste and increase recycling. We are compliant with dry recycling requirements of Simpler Recycling across Domestic and Commercial Waste Services. The Council remains committed to implementing food waste collections in line with the Environment Act. We had been working with Bromsgrove District Council and Wyre Forest District Council on a joint procurement exercise, which closed in December 2025, and vehicles had already been ordered in preparation for delivery of the service. In February 2026, WFDC formally withdrew from the process due to concerns about central government funding arrangements. Following legal advice, their withdrawal represents a material change to the procurement, meaning the joint tender cannot be completed. We are therefore developing a phased, in-house model for service delivery, making use of the vehicles already purchased and progressing direct procurement of caddies using existing capital funding. A key challenge remains with the limited depot capacity required to operate the service internally. A project team is now developing the revised approach, with the intention of commencing phased food waste collections during 2026/27. In the interim we have written to Defra to provide an update on the issues raised above.

Waste management systems

We remain committed to improving our waste management systems; in 2025, RBC introduced HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) as a renewable diesel alternative across its fleet and machinery; approximately 30% of fuel usage for the fleet has been swapped to HVO, reducing the carbon impact of operating services. This is further enhanced through the refuse fleet replacement programme for new, more environmentally friendly and efficient vehicles, with old trucks being sold for parts and scrap, with proceeds going back to the public purse.

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Bereavement Services

A new Burial Strategy has been developed and approved, setting out clear guidance and trigger points for future cemetery capacity planning. With Abbey Cemetery now projected to have approximately nine years of remaining capacity, the process of securing a new burial site is underway. Phase 1 geological and groundwater assessments have been completed, with the proposed site meeting Environment Agency requirements.

A new project is also progressing to introduce pet cremation services at the Abbey site. This would utilise a separate machine located in a distinct area of the existing building, meeting local demand and creating a new income stream for the council.

Bereavement Services has further launched a bespoke version of the Abavus system to modernise data capture, reporting, and memorial management in preparation for a forthcoming e-commerce platform.

Tree management

In 2025, the council introduced a suite of key policies providing clarity to the public and councillors:

1. **Tree Management Policy**
2. **Tree Planting Policy**
3. **Ash Dieback Strategy**
4. **TPO (Tree Preservation Order) Guidelines**

The Tree Team also developed a bespoke Abavus-based management system, which is now used daily. Alongside this, a detailed mapping project is underway using high-precision GPS technology. To date, 6,500 trees have been recorded, focusing initially on roadside trees, paths, desire lines, schools, and other priority locations.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity has also been a key workstream, with the Biodiversity First Duty report being developed, which sets out continued engagement with the Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy, monitoring and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) through planning, enhancing biodiversity on Council-owned land and promoting citizen science and community engagement.

Climate Change

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Work to develop the new Climate Change Strategy has been undertaken, with a view to be adopted April 2026. The strategy includes the approach to working hand in hand with the community and partners to address climate related issues in Borough. Improving the efficiency and renewable energy generation on council buildings continues to be explored.

Environmental Services has progressed several important climate and biodiversity initiatives:

1. Soil Carbon Sequestration

By altering grassland management and introducing deep-rooted grass species, carbon capture has been increased—by **up to 200%**, depending on soil type. This method provides faster and more effective carbon sequestration than young tree planting.

2. Reduction in Glyphosate Use

Trials of steam-foam applicators are underway as an alternative to chemical weed spraying. The aim is to limit glyphosate use solely to roadside areas by late 2026.

3. Transition to Battery-Powered Equipment

Twenty-five handheld tools have been converted from two-stroke engines to battery power, reducing carbon emissions, hand-arm vibration, and noise pollution.

Warm Homes Programme

The Capital Programmes Team manage the delivery of the Energy Efficiency Measures across the RBC Housing stock including the Warm Homes funded programmes. This funding is offered as a 50% share of the project, with another 50% co-funding from the RBC Capital Energy Efficiency Budget.

From 2023 to 2026, we improved 159 homes across Batchley and the flats at Winslow Close, with all homes now registered as an EPC C. The WAVE 2.1 scheme concludes in February 2026. Works have included Cavity Wall Insulation, loft insulation, high heat retention heaters, new windows and doors, damp and mould resolution and new ventilation.

The latest scheme to be delivered is SHF WAVE 3, this is set to improve to 230 homes primarily in the Woodrow area' which will be concluded at the end of the 2027/28 financial year. This funding is being delivered in collaboration with the Warm Homes Local Grant (Private Homes funding) to allow us to retrofit full terraces of houses in the borough and bring energy efficiencies to both tenants and private home

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owners. The Energy Efficiency measures will include a mixture of External Wall Insulation (our first scheme in approximately 10 years), loft insulation, windows and doors, heating controls, ventilation. This will invest a further £4.27million into the RBC stock and allow almost 300 homes to meet the EPC C rating and above.

We continue to identify new channels of funding to assist RBC in its goal to meet the EPC C minimum Social Housing standard for its entire stock by 1st April 2030. To assist further we have commissioned a programme of EPC surveys on uncertified properties across the estate, this will be a rolling programme to ensure RBC has the necessary Asset Management data to enable future Energy Efficiency programmes.

Local Plan

The Redditch Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation was carried out in Spring – Summer 2025. 10 consultation events were held across the Borough, totally nearly 60 hours of engagement. 89 responses were received; the majority from the public, with further responses from developers and landowners and statutory consultees. In the public responses, there was a general consensus that there was a need for new homes and more employment opportunities, particularly for young people. The results of that consultation are currently being assessed and additional evidence commissioned. The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is shortly to formally introduce its new 30-month plan making system. Whilst work continues on the plan, the timetable for the Local Plan will need to be amended to take into account the new plan making procedures; this new timetable is expected to be announced in the spring.

Community Safety

The Community Safety Team continue to deliver the Respect Programme, a therapeutic mentoring scheme which provides weekly support and guidance sessions to young people at risk of becoming victims and/or perpetrators of crime. A 'Right Path Project' using Serious Violence Duty funding allocated to Worcestershire, and working with South Worcestershire, has been commissioned by NWCSP. This delivers intensive 1:1 mentoring to support and guide young people who are at greater risk of criminalisation through use of violence, including those not accessing education and those at risk of permanent exclusion. The Right Path project was hugely successful in 2024/25 to the point of being oversubscribed.

A number of campaigns/events were supported in 2025, including:

- Freshers Week at HoW College

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- Police and Fire Station Open Day
- Council Staff Well-being Event - All about me
- Operation Sceptre and other Knife Crime awareness events
- International Human Rights Day
- Loan Shark Awareness
- International Women's Day
- Child Exploitation Awareness Week
- Mental Health Awareness Week
- Delivering talks to various community groups about Home Security and Scam Awareness
- White Ribbon Campaign
- Hate Crime Awareness Week

Nominated Neighbour Scheme

The Nominated Neighbour Scheme aims to protect vulnerable residents from doorstep crime and rogue trader offences and continues to be a successful local initiative. The scheme has been well established in Redditch and there are 169 vulnerable residents signed up to the scheme (increase of 14 comparing to last year). Several events were held with vulnerable adult and OAP groups to promote the scheme and provide advice to residents about door-step scams and staying safe:

- Older Persons Forum
- Carers Careline Event
- Various Care Provider Companies
- Ibstock Close OAP Sheltered Housing Scheme
- Bereaved OAP Group @ The Bridge Church, Headless Cross
- Probus OAP Group, Bromsgrove Road

Worcestershire Drug & Alcohol Strategy 22-27

North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) focuses on Priority 1 of the Strategy – Prevention: Breaking Supply Chains. NWCSP is working with local and regional partners to reduce the harm associated with the supply of illicit drugs in Redditch. This is fulfilled via the Multi-agency Targeted Enforcement (MATEs) group which brings operational officers together to take collective action against problem premises and organised crime groups involved in drug supply. The group has also had some success with local shops and establishments who engage in the sale of alcohol and tobacco to those who are underaged. This collective approach means that critical information is shared, joint visits are conducted, and offenders can face punitive measures from a range of agencies all using their respective tactics and powers.

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Community Neighbourhood Wardens

The first Neighbourhood Warden commenced on 23 February 2026 and is undertaking an introductory work programme and meeting with colleagues and partners.

CCTV

CCTV operates 24 hour a day. The team proactively monitor 51 fixed Public Space CCTV cameras. Since April 2025 there have been 400 incidents logged in the Redditch area; 85 resulted in seizure and collection by police. In the full financial year 2024/25 there were 388 incidents logged by operators, with 110 resulting in seizure and collection by the police. The Council have 5 temporary cameras which have been deployed to 10 different locations since April, working with local Partners and communities to tackle hotspot areas. The introduction of cloud-based evidence sharing means the police can access footage more easily; we expect this to lead to an increase in seizures and evidence sharing.

2.5 COMMUNITY & HOUSING

In July 2025, Redditch Borough Council was inspected by the Regulator of Social Housing under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and received a C3 judgement, highlighting serious failings in repairs, fire safety, tenant engagement and data management. While significant backlogs and weaknesses were identified, the Regulator recognised areas of good practice and the commitment of staff and Members. In response, the Council has developed a comprehensive Housing Improvement Plan focused on meeting the new Consumer Standards, strengthening tenant involvement, improving safety and repairs systems, and enhancing governance, supported by additional Housing Revenue Account funding. The Council has committed to transparent monitoring and regular reporting as part of a wider transformation of its housing services to deliver safe, high-quality homes and stronger tenant engagement.

Alongside this, the Council surveys tenants using the Regulator's standard Tenant Perception Measures, which apply consistent questions and scoring across the sector. Using this methodology, there is an upward trend across all questions with overall satisfaction with

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housing services showing a sustained improvement, rising from 47.4% in 2023/24 to 56.7% in 2024/25 and 64.6% in 2025/26.

Tenant survey

Tenant feedback is essential to shaping our housing services. In 2024/25, key concerns included repairs, communication, communal areas, feeling safe, and complaints handling.

Actions included:

- We developed a comprehensive improvement plan addressing these areas. Our focus is on delivering better repairs, clearer communication, stronger tenant engagement, and enhanced safety measures.
- We created a Performance Dashboard to more effectively manage repairs performance and identify any trends, there is ongoing improvement in the timeliness of repairs
- We've identified backlogs across roofing and fencing jobs and have brought in additional contractor support to deliver on these.
- We have publicised our repairs priority timescales (link to website)
- We created and circulated the first Annual Report for 2 years and will create this every year
- We have purchased new systems that will be shortly implemented to improve diagnosis of the repair you require and also better scheduling of our workforce
- We have established a new Caretaking Service to properly clean and maintain our communal areas that have been neglected

The Council Housing Growth Programme

The Council Housing Growth Programme, funded by the Council, to create an additional 230 units by 2030. The current budget until 2030 is £15 million. We have also purchased 14 properties on the open market, to replace sold council housing. Acquiring properties in this way has meant not having to wait for planning permission and build time, increasing the supply of social housing, as well as targeting the purchase of larger homes for families including several with adaptations for people with disabilities.

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We have been granted planning permission to build 6 2-bedroom Council houses in Church Hill, with work started during 2026-27.

In addition, the Council is also developing an Empty Homes Strategy to work with homeowners or landlords of empty properties to bring them back into use.

Damp and mould team

Since taking on the initial damp and mould team operatives in September 2025, we have stepped up to deliver damp and mould inspections and remedial works within the new time constraints set out in Awaab's Law. The team of 5 decorators and 2 builders work tirelessly to inspect and mitigate the risk on 1st visit then complete follow up remedial works within the time constraints set out in the regulation. We have had numerous compliments for the team and feel that the system and processes we have put in place help to provide this important service to our customers is working very well.

Caretakers

Since bringing communal block cleaning in house and extending this to all 278 blocks since November 2025, the caretaking team, 8 in total, have gone from strength to strength, providing an excellent service to all customers. The team are delivering a consistently high standard of clean to our blocks where previously this was delivered by contractors to a poor standard. We now do all of our void cleans in house, which has helped with the void turnaround time and making significant financial savings by not outsourcing this work. In addition, communal block repairs are being picked up on the monthly inspections to ensure these areas are safe and well maintained.

Repairs

We use Omfax (Keyfax - Repairs Diagnostic Tool) because our frontline staff are not technical specialists, which meant we were sometimes missing key information needed to diagnose repairs accurately. This often led to sending the wrong trade, allocating incorrect repair priorities, and setting unsuitable timeframes for jobs. Omfax's intelligent diagnostic scripting (Keyfax) helps standardise the process, reduce errors, and ensure the right repair is identified first time, improving both efficiency and customer experience.

Total Mobile

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We are moving to Total Mobile because our current bespoke scheduling system is outdated, heavily manual, and no longer supports efficient ways of working. The existing system lacks the intelligence to automatically adapt when exceptions occur—such as delays, overrunning jobs, or staff absence—which limits our ability to respond in real time and work smarter. Total Mobile provides a modern, intelligent scheduling platform that updates dynamically, improves operational efficiency, and enables us to deliver a more responsive and effective service.

Homelessness support

The Council has also joined with some of the other districts in Worcestershire to develop a shared Homelessness Strategy for 2026-2031 in line with the Government's National Plan to End Homelessness.

The Council has increased the number of temporary accommodation units in council housing stock, which has led to a reduction in the use of bed and breakfast, positively benefiting our residents and the wider budget.

New rough sleeping outreach service has been engaged through homelessness prevention grant funding, which is based in the town centre, which has led to a proactive and responsive approach which are working to reduce the levels and duration of rough sleeping.

Affordable housing

The Council has been working with developers and registered providers to deliver more affordable housing across the Borough.

The council has worked in partnership with Redditch Cooperative Homes in 2025 on delivering a new housing development over 2 sites, which has enabled us to rehouse an additional 68 households.

Private rented sector

Support for the private rented sector continues to develop, with the Council hosting a Private Sector Landlord Forum, a chance to share best practice, get practical advice, and build stronger links between landlords and the Council. The Council has also been working with Citizens Advice to develop a debt advice service to Private Tenants and homeowners. This new service will ensure that where rent arrears and mortgage arrears are putting a home at risk, that households will be able to access support and advice to prevent this from happening.

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A new computer system has been implemented, which means data is much more robust and enables effective reporting to central government.

The Council are also the Worcestershire lead for the Renters Bill Act 2025, ensuring consistency for renters and landlords across the county and are working with central Government on the national landlord database, one of 13 councils selected nationally to support the legislation.

Lifeline

NEW Lifeline has been accredited to the Technology Enabled Care industry best practice Quality Standards Framework, which was achieved through rigorous external audit and no areas of improvement were identified. They continue to support a six-week free service, enabling residents of Redditch to try the Lifeline service. Over the last 12 months we have had approximately 70 people using the free service at any one time. During 2025 the team installed 183 equipment packages in within Redditch. NEW Lifeline are also delivering continuity of service where a person becomes Care Act eligible and/or their support/care needs become more. The team have supported 104 residents of Redditch through this Social Care funded partnership.

Family Hubs

Family Hubs continue to attend or lead local events aimed at families and are positive examples of partnership working not only with other professionals and community groups but with families – using an asset based approach and co-production to understand the types of support and activities children, young people and families are asking for and what they are able to do themselves. For example, Just for dads – engagement event in Woodrow was coproduced with father's voice and involvement. The feedback gained from dads and male carers has been shared with partners and has helped tweak and shape local provision. The events have enabled us to reach new people, gain voice and highlight volunteers. The Family Hubs have developed a Parent Representative model – it is designed to ensure we provide the right support in the right way for communities, particularly in our priority focus areas. We recognise the importance of a blended approach – using both data and direct feedback from local communities. Our goal is to build a diverse pool of parent reps who can help us to engage with both currently engaged and those we have yet to reach. We are developing our hub and spoke model and offering Family Hub pop ups in local spaces, to enable us to reach families and reduce barriers to

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access our services. In Summer 25 we provided 3 family picnics and Fun sessions: one in Woodrow, Batchley and Church Hill. The aim was to raise awareness of the family hub offer, build relationships, offer free fun and food in the school holidays.

Shopmobility

Redditch Shopmobility relocated to its new premises in George Walk in May 2025 and have leased a fleet of new scooters. Since that time, the Kingfisher have closed Car park 3 and, despite providing additional 8 disabled parking spaces, customers have found parking there a struggle. This has impacted on customer numbers. Staff are delivering equipment to various locations around the Kingfisher Centre to customers and retrieving when customers have finished with their equipment.

Number of users has dropped slightly since last year, although it is becoming busier, with 1917 users from April to end of January 2025/26. We have also just started selling a few disability aids for customers and are actively seeking volunteers to assist at Shopmobility.

Dial-a-ride

Dial a Ride numbers remain consistent, with 15,880 passenger journeys from April to January 2025/26.

A cancellation policy was introduced in November 2025 to try and reduced the number of cancellations received as they were increasing. This requires a nominal fee to be paid should the customer fail to cancel their journey when it's no longer required. £96.68 has been charged in cancellation fees so far.

We have worked with many groups, and these are on the increase. We have recently arranged transport for groups from Millward Place and Parklands Care Home. This is a very efficient use of the service, picking up and dropping off in one place instead of making multiple journeys. Dial-a-ride are also looking to recruit volunteers to work as passenger assistants on the buses with drivers. New vehicle purchase is planned for the next financial year where, in addition to minibuses, we would like to make use of a smaller vehicle that can be driven by all staff for those small groups or individual passengers.

Play provision

A series of capital investments have been made across parks and play areas within the Borough. Following a Play Assessment, an Inclusive Play Policy has been developed, including a design checklist, which

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will help to promote inclusivity, accessibility and equality for children in Redditch.

Arts & events

Arts and events continue to be important to our residents and communities, and the council have supported numerous activities from summer activity programmes to the Halloween Light Trail.

The ReNEW project was successful in obtaining over half a million pounds in Place Partnership funding from Arts Council England, which will support residents across Redditch and Bromsgrove to share their stories to creatively shape the future of both areas. Under the ReNEW Skills and Capacity Development programme, two specialist officers are now in post, increasing professional capacity and directly supporting the objective to develop local creative and cultural sectors. An external evaluator has been appointed, and youth recruitment is well underway. These young people will shortly benefit from structured creative skills development opportunities delivered by performing, visual and digital arts organisations appointed through the contract opportunities that are currently being advertised. In addition, a local cultural sector skills programme is at design stage. This programme will support a wide range of amateur and professional arts, culture and heritage organisations, strengthening sector-wide capacity and creating pathways for high-quality local jobs.

The Council continues to support to Reimagine Redditch, a programme designed to engage local people—many for the first time—in creative activity. Alongside this, the Council played a key role in shaping a successful funding application securing just under £1m, ensuring the programme’s sustainability until 2029 and contributing to the wider objective of attracting public and private investment into the borough.

Physical activity

The Council engaged with the consultation on the Redditch Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), delivered by Worcestershire County Council. The LCWIP was published in 2025, acknowledging Redditch Borough Council as a key stakeholder and contributor towards the plan. The LCWIP will be a key source of information for active travel when RBC is updating their local plans.

The '*A Movement for Change*' project brought together more than 50 local organisations in a unified approach to improving health and

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wellbeing by increasing physical activity levels across Redditch. This strengthened partnership model directly supports the objective to work collaboratively to improve residents' health, creating the conditions for more active, healthier lifestyles throughout the borough.

Redditch District Collaborative (RDC) and Redditch Partnership Groups

The importance of working in partnership is recognised in the Council Plan as we cannot meet the needs of our residents by working in isolation. One way we do this effectively is through the Redditch District Collaborative (RDC) and Redditch Partnership Groups which bring together representatives from the Borough and County Council, NHS, Police, Fire, a range of voluntary and community sector organisations and more.

Despite a reduction of available resources to support the Redditch District Collaborative, there has been a commitment from partners, in particular both Primary Care Networks (PCNs), Public Health and the Borough Council to ensure a more streamlined and sustainable structure, linking even more closely with Redditch Partnership Groups, in particular the Redditch Community Wellbeing Group. Recognising the significant value of our voluntary and community sector (VCS) partners, an increased number of VCS representatives were invited and joined the RDC Steering Group during 2025.

A total of eight Priority Neighbourhood Development (PND) areas were identified in Redditch in 2025. This was following an examination of data by Public Health, analysing the fine detail of small areas (Local Super Output Areas) and using statistical process control analyses to find neighbourhoods with significantly higher rates of emergency hospital admissions, lower healthy life expectancy and greater social challenges compared to the County average. Supported by the Public Health team, the Redditch District Collaborative and other Partnership Groups have since been focussed on tackling these inequalities by targeting resources, partnership working and community engagement in the areas where need is greatest, ensuring it is done in such a way that avoids stigma and concentrates on local strengths rather than on problems.

Taking a place-based partnership approach, the PND within Woodrow has been the initial focus and following a handful of well-attended Woodrow specific partnership meetings during the latter part of 2025, the suggestion of a community hub in Woodrow Centre was put forward to enable local organisations and services to deliver support

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and engagement opportunities directly to local residents. Supported by Public Health, West Mercia Police and the Borough Council, a new multi-agency community hub very recently opened at the start of 2026, managed by a trusted local community partner. Access to the Hub is free of charge and intended for the use of individuals, groups or organisations who can deliver opportunities to support or enrich the Woodrow community offer.

Also with the aim of improving the wellbeing of residents and communities, the joint Redditch and Bromsgrove Cost of Living Partnership Group continues to create a unified approach to alleviating the impact of the cost of living. Following on from the production of cost of living leaflets and dedicated Council webpages, in response to consultation surveys, which showed residents were unsure where to go for support, discreet business cards of useful contacts were produced and partners, along with a number of Ward Councillors, helped to distribute at different events and various places in the community such as GP surgeries, libraries, shops, and Family Hub. In addition, a Redditch-only Financial Support Partnership meets informally to ensure those trusted working relationships and that local provision is co-ordinated so that residents obtain the right support regardless of which agency they may contact initially.

Household Support Fund (HSF7)

Working with the County Council, Redditch Borough Council received an allocation of the Household Support Fund (HSF) since it started, including the current phase 7 which runs up to end of March 2026. We received £347,900.14 from WCC to help with the delivery of HSF 7 for 2025/2026. The Borough Council distributed a proportion to the voluntary sector, in particular the local foodbank. However, the majority of funds have and continue to be paid direct to households by the Borough Council through a cash voucher scheme, delivered in partnership with Citizens Advice Bromsgrove and Redditch, as it would not have been possible to deliver on our own but in partnership we are more likely to reach the most vulnerable households.

The funds were distributed as per below:

Scheme	Total Amount Allocated (£)	Percentage Allocated (%)	Spend up to Q3 (£)	Percentage Spent up to Q3 (%)	Number of households helped up to Q3 (#)
Cash Vouchers	256,500	74	147,253	57	427
Acts of Kindness	72,500	21	60,000	83	245

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Foodbanks	13,500	4	11,510	85	499
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We receive figures quarterly from partners, so the data held is only up to December 2025, the final return is to be submitted to WCC mid-April 2026. AGE UK, also receive a small amount of £1500 to assist in the delivery of their advice service. To note that details of the allocations are provided on our website at the end of each award year:

The Knowledge Bank

The Knowledge Bank, our community services directory covering Redditch and Bromsgrove, was redesigned during 24/25 to make it more inviting and user friendly. It's available publicly for all to use and is a searchable tool to help connect people to relevant support and activities. The Council works closely with partners, in particular BARN (Bromsgrove and Redditch Network – who work with and support our voluntary and community groups) who help us to update and maintain the content of the Knowledge Bank. This is all done through existing resource only, at no additional cost, simply due to the close and trusted working relationships we have with partners.

2.6.1 VISION & ORGANISATIONAL PRIORITIES**Vision**

'A Council which listens to and delivers quality services for our communities, residents and businesses'

Organisational Priorities

- Financial Stability
- Organisation Stability
- Community Focus
- High Quality Services
- Supported Governance
- Principle Driven (4 P's)

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Through working closely with employees across the organisation, we identified the '4P's' as a way of defining organisational culture and the aspirations of everyone who works for Redditch Borough Council:

- Purpose
- People
- Pride
- Performance

Activities and initiatives have been undertaken to engage and support staff, including an internally delivered staff survey, staff wellbeing events and enhanced inductions for new staff which include an opportunity to meet the Chief executive and the Corporate Leadership Team. Employee Assistance and Benefits programmes are also in place to support employees across the Council.

Local Government Reorganisation

Major changes are planned to councils across Worcestershire as part of the biggest shake-up of local government in more than 50 years, with the Government requiring 21 areas of England to restructure their system of local government before 2029, including Redditch Borough Council. Through local government reorganisation, the Government is looking to replace Bromsgrove District, Malvern Hills District, Redditch Borough, Worcester City, Worcestershire County, Wychavon District and Wyre Forest District Councils with fewer councils.

Redditch Borough Council voted to submit an ambitious proposal to transform local government in Worcestershire to the Government: 'Transforming Worcestershire: Local government that works for people, powered by place and built for the future - The North and South Local Government Reorganisation Proposal for Worcestershire'. To reach that point, the council carried out public engagement during summer 2025 for residents to have their say on their preferred option, called 'Shape Worcestershire: Reorganising your local councils together'.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The Council Plan is essential to provide the strategic direction for service delivery. Operationally, the content of the Council Plan has informed and will continue to the service business planning process; this helps to ensure that services deliver against the priorities and objectives identified. From 2026 onwards, updates against the Council Plan will be captured using a PowerBI dashboard, linking information from service business plans, quarterly performance and project

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highlight reports into a single coherent summary of our progress to date.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Finance and performance reporting are already aligned through the quarterly reports and the Council Plan, by setting out the priorities, objectives and projects, will help to structure the service business planning process and will underpin the medium-term financial planning.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**Council Priorities**

- 6.1 The Council Plan articulates the priorities for Redditch Borough Council; this report gives an update of progress against each priority area of work.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.2 The Council Plan has 'Green, Clean & Safe Redditch' as one of the three priorities, and explicitly supports work around climate change through the identification of a key objective on renewable energy and key projects to work with the community on climate change, support the Warm Homes initiative and increasing the number of electric vehicle charging points.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.3 There are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report; however, the Council Plan highlights the importance of listening to communities and will empower officers to meet the needs of those communities, which could include specific issues relating to equality and diversity.
- 6.4 Specific Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) of projects detailed within the Council Plan will be undertaken as required.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Publishing a Council Plan makes the strategic direction of the Council clear to employees and Members and as such supports the

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management of risks identified around robust decision making and the accuracy/effectiveness of performance data.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1- Redditch Council Plan 2025-28 progress update

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Jane Spilsbury, Portfolio Holder	13/02/2026
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Hannah Corredor, Assistant Director of Corporate Services & Transformation	18/02/2026
Financial Services	Debra Goodall, Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services	18/02/2026
Legal Services	Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal Democratic and Procurement Services	18/02/2026
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green, Policy Manager	Report author
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Judith Willis, Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services	18/02/2026

Redditch Council Plan update on progress February 2026

Priority: Economy, Regeneration & Prosperity

Key objective	Update on progress until end of Jan 2026	RAG
More high-quality jobs	<u>Enterprising Worcestershire</u> : In Q3 25/26, a further 2 businesses have accessed advisor support, bringing the total to 7 to date. 7 people attended a business start-up course this quarter, bringing the total to 18 year to date.	GREEN
Greater opportunities to develop new skills	<u>Careers Worcestershire</u> : In Q3 25/26, 56 people have been supported to gain employment (year to date: 175), with 20 getting a job (62 year to date). <u>Employability support in Family Hubs</u> : In Q3 25/26, 15 volunteering opportunities, 13 people gaining a qualification and 10 people have been supported to gain employment. <u>Employability skills programme</u> : Grants have been awarded to 3 organisations to deliver employability support to young people who are NEET. In the first quarter of delivery, 7 people have received support to gain employment and 7 are participating in education. <u>Skills Boost</u> : In Q3 25/26, 3 grants have been paid (year to date: 27). All funding has been allocated with a total of 76 grants approved.	AMBER
Increase footfall in the town centre	First stage has been completing procurement of footfall data provider; this has been done. Two 'geo-fences' have been set for the town centre, one covering the market and one the public realm. This will enable baseline data to be compiled to understand current footfall. Improvements to the public realm and continued development of Redditch Market will both help to encourage greater footfall in the town centre.	GREEN
Engage with our communities to understand the needs of our district centres	Engagement activity to be undertaken in 2026/27	GREEN
Support local independent businesses	<u>Business Grants</u> : 1 grant was paid in Q3 25/26 (3 year to date), with a further 7 approved. <u>Business Innovation & Productivity programme</u> : 3 businesses are participating in the programme with several more in the pipeline to take up the final place on the programme.	GREEN
Support and encourage new start-up businesses	<u>Business Grants</u> : 1 grant was paid in Q3 25/26 (2 year to date) with a further 6 approved.	GREEN
Collaborate with partners to secure public and private investment	Redditch has been included in the Government's Pride in Place Strategy, with £20 million of investment into Greenlands and Woodrow to regenerate the area for the community.	GREEN

Attract businesses to locate in Redditch	This will be developed in the new Economic Development Strategy, which will be developed in 2026.	GREEN
Regeneration of the Town Hall	A revised plan to refurbish the lower ground, ground and part of the first floor is now being delivered with works due to be completed in summer 2026.	AMBER
Redditch outdoor market	Redditch Market continues to develop, running on a Thursday and Saturday, with gazebos and mobile pitches. Thursdays have seen steady traders' numbers week on week whilst Saturdays remain less busy, Christmas and themed markets have proven successful. Themed markets are being planned for throughout the year alongside trader and promotional campaigns.	GREEN
Forge Mill Museum enhancements	Permitted development received for the new food kiosk installation. The contract was re-tendered due to issues with the original submissions, and the contract is being awarded w/c 23.02.26. Toilet refurbishment will be complete w/e 27.02.26, minor snagging items only outstanding. Electrical and heating upgrade works now complete.	AMBER
Innovation Centre	Speller-Metcalf have been appointed as Design & Build contractor and are currently working on Stage 4 Designs. Planning permission was approved on December 11 th . The full business case for Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership funds was approved by the Enterprise Zone Partnership Board and ratified by Birmingham City Council's Cabinet on January 20 th 2026. Construction is scheduled to commence Summer 2026 with an estimated 15-month programme, and due to become operational by the end of 2027.	GREEN
Utilise land and assets for the benefit of residents	A new asset management strategy will be developed in 2026/27	GREEN
Develop an approach to Community Wealth Building	The new Economic Development Strategy, which will be developed in 2026, will have an aim of embedding a community wealth building model.	GREEN
New Economic Development Strategy for Redditch	Work on the new Economic Development Strategy will commence in the new calendar year as scheduled.	GREEN

Priority: Green, Clean & Safe

Key objective	Update on progress until end of Jan 2026	RAG
Improve street cleanliness of our neighbourhoods and local environment	A new system of gauging condition, APSE LAMS, a mobile application, has been introduced, which enables benchmarking against similar councils to give us an idea of how we are performing. This has allowed us to further raise standards on a consistent basis.	GREEN
Support voluntary groups litter picking in their communities	We provide litter pickers, gloves, bags and rings to support anyone helping keep Redditch clean and tidy. We work with the Parks team to plan these events and in 2025, the Redditch Place teams supported 29 individual and group litter picks.	GREEN
Improve recycling rates	The waste education and engagement job description is being reviewed to attract suitable candidates for the new financial year to improve recycling as well as play an important role in promoting the new food waste service and the implications of the use of the various bins that will be available.	GREEN
Protect and enhance open spaces	Continuing the delivery of the Parks and Open Spaces Action Plan, in relation to recommendations as part of the Leisure and Culture Strategy, including working towards Green Flags. Projects have commenced, with some completed and we are now looking to action the delivery of capital investments, once the budget has been secured through the MTFP.	AMBER
Enhancing biodiversity	We have undertaken a review of biodiversity in Redditch and current actions being delivered in the Borough. The Biodiversity Duty Report has been taken through Executive Committee and includes working across the council to develop and implement action plans to continue to improve biodiversity across the Borough.	GREEN
Work with partners to tackle ASB, serious violence, burglary and drugs misuse as part of the statutory Community Safety Partnership	<p>NWCSP meets quarterly and the multi-agency Safer Redditch Tasking group meets approx. every 6 weeks to discuss crime, disorder and ASB issues across the Borough and in accordance with the NWCSP priorities.</p> <p>The Police continue with proactive enforcement of ASB within the PSPO area in Redditch and one Neighbourhood Warden commenced on 23 February 2026, with the second post being advertised as initial recruitment was unsuccessful. The Right Path project (funded by the Home Office SV fund) continue to receive referrals for young people at risk of being involved in serious violence. They receive intensive therapeutic mentoring to prevent and deter violence and implement behavioural change.</p> <p>The Community Safety Team continue to deliver the Respect Programme, a therapeutic mentoring scheme which provides weekly support and guidance sessions to young people at risk of becoming victims and/or perpetrators of crime. A 'Right Path Project' using Serious Violence Duty funding allocated to Worcestershire, and working with South Worcestershire, has been commissioned by NWCSP. This delivers intensive 1:1 mentoring to support and guide young people who are at greater risk of criminalisation through use of violence.</p>	GREEN

	The Nominated Neighbour Scheme continues with its aim to protect vulnerable residents from doorstep crime and rogue trader offences and continues to be a successful local initiative.	
Increase the amount of renewable energy generated by the Council	Solar energy is already being generated by the Council; data on this is being used to help calculate the carbon saving. Information on the amount of renewable energy generated will also feature on the Climate Change Dashboard which is currently under development. We are exploring additional opportunities and alternative funding streams as the central government decarbonisation funding has paused.	AMBER
Utilise brown field and industrial sites for development	The Council is currently awaiting the regulation for the new 30-month plan making system, once those are known a new timetable for the Local Plan will be published.	AMBER
Ensure large developments provide better green space and invest in existing open spaces	The Council is currently awaiting the regulation for the new 30-month plan making system, once those are known a new timetable for the Local Plan will be published.	AMBER
Develop a programme to reduce fly-tipping	Working in partnership with WRS and a fly tipping strategy is currently being finalised. A new enforcement strategy has been developed by WRS and performance data concerning the number of fly tips, the time taken to remove them and the number of enforcement actions taken are now embedded in the reported performance information.	GREEN
Review options for disposal of bulky waste	Based on suggestions from the Fly Tipping and Bulky Waste Task Group, a promotional campaign was introduced to raise awareness about bulky waste collections. This initiative resulted in a 15% rise in service usage compared to last year. We have also strengthened our messaging to make sure residents understand which items can be collected.	GREEN
Develop a campaign to reduce littering and dog fouling in the Borough	Initial ideas and action plan being produced to set out campaigns, objectives, target audiences and a communications plan including the development of posters, social media posts and campaign slogans.	GREEN
Implement a Neighbourhood Warden Scheme	One Neighbourhood Warden commenced employment on 23 February 2026 as is working to an introductory work programme. The second post is being readvertised following unsuccessful recruitment to this post at the end of 2025.	AMBER
Implement locally the Worcestershire Drug & Alcohol Strategy 22-27	North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) focuses on Priority 1 of the Strategy – Prevention: Breaking Supply Chains. NWCSP is working with local and regional partners to reduce the harm associated with the supply of illicit drugs in Redditch. This is fulfilled via the Multi-agency Targeted Enforcement (MATEs) group which brings operational officers together to take collective action against problem premises and organised crime groups involved in drug supply. The group has also had some success with local shops and establishments who engage in the sale of alcohol and tobacco to those who are	GREEN

	underaged. This collective approach means that critical information is shared, joint visits are conducted, and offenders can face punitive measures from a range of agencies all using their respective tactics and powers.	
Implement food waste collection and improve quality of recycling	Compliant with Dry Recycling requirements of Simpler Recycling across Domestic & Commercial Waste services. The tender for the Domestic Food Waste Service was cancelled after Wyre Forest District Council withdrew. A new project for in-house service delivery is being finalised, with phased implementation planned through 2026/7, beyond the original April 2026 target date. Defra has been informed of these updates.	RED
Review future cemetery provision	We have identified 10+ years burial capacity at Abbey Cemetery and are currently assessing Edgioake for additional capacity. A project plan for the potential development of an additional site is being finalised.	GREEN
Work with the community on climate change	The new climate change strategy sets out a number of actions and milestones for collaborating and engaging with climate change. The strategy is due to be presented at Executive Committee in March 2026	GREEN
Warm Homes programme	The Council has received funding for both private and public sector housing energy efficiency improvements. This will initially be targeted within the Woodrow area.	GREEN
Electric vehicle charging points	Work is ongoing with our provider to install EV charging points across our car parks, with a number of sites to go live early 2026.	GREEN
Undertake an audit of biodiversity requirements and actions	The Biodiversity Audit was undertaken and completed late summer 2025. This was followed by the Biodiversity Duty Report which includes working across the council to develop and implement action plans to continue to improve biodiversity across the borough.	GREEN
Ensure the protection and provision of open spaces through the Local Plan	The Council is currently awaiting the regulation for the new 30-month plan making system, once those are known a new timetable for the Local Plan will be published.	AMBER
Identify land for development through the Local Plan	The Council is currently awaiting the regulation for the new 30-month plan making system, once those are known a new timetable for the Local Plan will be published.	AMBER

Priority: Community & Housing

Key objective	Update on progress until end of Jan 2026	RAG
Build more Council houses	The Housing Growth Programme has been approved by Executive to deliver 56 new homes. A further programme will be developed to deliver a further 67 homes to achieve the overall target of 230 additional homes by 2030. We have been granted planning permission to build 6 2-bedroom Council houses in Church Hill, with work started during 2026-27.	GREEN
Reduce the housing waiting list	The new homes to be delivered as part of the Housing Growth Programme will contribute to a reduction of numbers on the housing waiting list.	GREEN
Reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation	Number of individuals and families in b & b continuously to remain relatively low with a number of stock allocated for temporary accommodation.	GREEN
Ensure our housing stock is clean & safe to live in	The new Caretakers Service, to clean and maintain communal areas, went live in November 2025 and is making a positive impact for residents with communal areas. Positive feedback has been received from residents, and the proactive removal of ad hoc flammable materials has significantly increased safety within these areas.	GREEN
Improve the time taken for repairs to be completed	The implementation of Power BI reporting has enabled the repairs service to evaluate its performance and identify areas requiring improvement. A new repairs policy has been approved, introducing an additional priority code for tasks—such as windows and doors—that generally take longer due to measurement and manufacturing requirements. Ongoing analysis is being conducted to further enhance performance.	GREEN
Work with partners to improve health & wellbeing	Redditch Partnership’s Community Wellbeing Group continues to meet bi-monthly to allow partners to come together. This connects into the Redditch District Collaborative, chaired by the Director of the Kingfisher Primary Care Network (PCN). RDC involves both PCNs, RBC, Public Health, Rubicon and a range of VCS. A main focus is the PND (Priority Neighbourhood Development) areas. RBC and RDC engaged with the NHS ‘Neighbourhood Health Workshop’ in July set up by the ICB. Accelerator Sites (delivered by the PCNs, including Kingfisher PCN in Redditch), trialling integrated neighbourhood teams, were highlighted to consider lessons learnt that could help build a health model that works for communities in Worcestershire.	GREEN
Provide high quality play provision	A Play Audit and Investment Plan is now being put into implementation. A series of improvements have already been undertaken. An Inclusive Play Strategy has been developed and costed and subject to the funding being made available through the MTFP this work will progress early in the municipal year.	AMBER
Promote the establishment of community fitness and mental health groups	The ‘A Movement for Change’ project brought together more than 50 local organisations in a unified approach to improving health and wellbeing by increasing physical activity levels across Redditch. This	GREEN

	strengthened partnership model directly supports the objective to work collaboratively to improve residents' health, creating the conditions for more active, healthier lifestyles throughout the borough. Further works are currently taking place to develop leadership training initiatives for the local sector and pilot projects to test out the most effective ways to encourage people to be active in the areas of highest need. The RBC website continues to help raise awareness of what opportunities are available locally, including the promotion of Healthy Worcestershire –commissioned by WCC Public Health.	
Provide more walking & cycling routes	The Council is currently awaiting the regulation for the new 30-month plan making system, once those are known a new timetable for the Local Plan will be published. The LCWIP was published in November 25.	AMBER
Maximise funding available to the sector	<u>UKSPF</u> : Grants have been awarded to 7 voluntary organisations. A training provider has been identified to deliver a VCS leadership course which will commence October 2025. <u>Partnership working</u> : RBC and BARN have a partnership agreement where we provide a contribution to BARN to help them continue to support our local VCS groups. BARN provides a funding portal on their website, free for all to use and search. In addition, they are providing further funding information via a regular funding e-newsletter to their members. Our monthly Partnership Bulletin includes funding information we become aware of, to help spread the word to our VCS groups. This includes a range of Public Health funding streams as well as tools such as the Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Insights website that provides a wealth of data the VCS can use to help complete funding bids.	GREEN
Engagement with the voluntary sector	We continue to engage and work in partnership with our VCS in delivering the district element of the Household Support Scheme (currently HSF phase 7). Working with Citizens Advice B&R to deliver our local Redditch HSF scheme, as well as working with other VCS offering support, such the Redditch Trussell Trust Foodbank (Acts of Kindness). This is in addition to the countywide schemes involving our VCS, such as Act on Energy who is delivering the Worcestershire HSF Energy related support scheme, alongside the free Redditch Energy advice line Act on Energy provide to our residents for RBC. The Redditch Partnership Community Wellbeing Group is a way we engage directly with the sector. It includes a range of VCS and it meets regularly. It enables an ongoing opportunity to engage and maintain strong partnership working with our VCS, and it can be where partnership opportunities first come to light. As part of our agreement with BARN, they facilitate Networking meetings for our VCS groups to come together in Redditch. In addition, they also help facilitate the local Community Frontline Workers. As part of the Best Start in Life contract with WCC and delivery of Family Hubs, there is a Redditch Network meeting specifically engaging partners, including VCS who support families too. This links to the Redditch Community Wellbeing Group and RDC. The Redditch Youth Provider Meeting, including relevant VCS, is looked after by our Leisure Team.	GREEN

Support the development of the local creative and cultural sectors	We are currently recruiting skills and capacity development expertise to support our local cultural sector develop appropriately between now and the onset of local government reorganisation in 2028. £60,000 is allocated from Arts Council England to support this work. Initial work will happen during 2026 and further development opportunities will come through in 2027	GREEN
Improve the Shopmobility scheme	The Shopmobility scheme has relocated to a new and improved unit within the Kingfisher Centre. The service has also started selling a few disability aids for customers and are actively seeking volunteers to assist at Shopmobility.	GREEN
Specific damp and mould resource	The damp and mould team was newly recruited on October 25. Processes have been updated to comply with Awaab's Law, and performance is now monitored quarterly through a Power BI report.	GREEN
Implementation of Total Mobile project	Final configuration and testing of the system are underway. A new project team is handling the last stages of testing and system integration. Delivery issues with the provider have been escalated within their organisation.	AMBER
Use stock condition data to create improvement programmes	Stock condition surveys are currently underway to ensure accurate and up-to-date information regarding the state of our housing. The findings will inform investment programmes. As part of the budget setting process, a review of the Capital Programme for 2026/27 and subsequent years has been incorporated to support home improvement initiatives and address non-decency issues.	GREEN
Buy back scheme	We have purchased 14 properties on the open market to increase the number of houses available for tenants.	GREEN
Bringing empty houses back into use	Ongoing process through our void management process we measure performance to ensure properties are brought back into use at the earliest possible time. Where properties are beyond economical repair, approvals are sought for disposal. An Empty Homes Strategy to work with homeowners or landlords of empty properties will be developed in 2026.	GREEN
Support community allotments by implementing the Leisure Strategy	As part of the Action Plan, discussing with allotment holders the possibility of implementing a self-management pilot scheme, which is to be delivered in 26/27. The Tenancy Agreements were amended in December 2025 to support tenants and prevent legacy issues, improving site conditions. Works have been undertaken at several sites to get them to a suitable standard.	AMBER
Improvements to play area provision via clarifying prioritisation	A Play Audit and Investment Plan is now being put into implementation. A series of improvements have already been undertaken. An Inclusive Play Strategy has been developed and costed and subject to the funding being made available through the MTFP this work will progress early in the municipal year.	AMBER
Address the provision of walking and cycling routes through the Local Plan	The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) was published in November 25 https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/travel-and-highways/walking-wheeling-and-cycling/redditch-local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan-lcwip	AMBER

Support the work of the Redditch District Collaborative	The Partnership Manager and Community Services Manager attend the RDC Steering Group to support its work. The Partnership Manager has supported with increasing VCS engagement and linked in the Redditch Partnership's Community Wellbeing Group to RDC. The Partnership Manager supports the Chair of RDC Steering Group (Director of Kingfisher PCN) where possible and on a regular basis. In addition, RBC Chief Exec met with RDC Chair a few months ago and is due to meet again, along with PCN Clinical Leads.	GREEN
Implement a Town Hall Community Hub	A revised plan to refurbish the lower ground, ground and part of the first floor is now being delivered with works due to be completed in summer 2026.	AMBER
Restore the elected member grant panel	Completed. The Grants Panel was restored during 2025 and met in December to consider and make recommendations to Executive Committee on the annual grants to voluntary bodies for 2026/27.	GREEN
Develop an internal Bid Writer role	A bid for funding is being considered by Executive Committee for the 2026/27 financial year.	AMBER
Review how we support the 3 rd sector	This will be considered in conjunction with the ongoing bid writer provision in 2026.	AMBER
Review Dial-a-Ride charges	Completed. Charges for 2026/27 reviewed as part of the Fees and Charges report to Executive Committee	GREEN
Support Reimagine Redditch	Council continues to support to Reimagine Redditch, a programme designed to engage local people—many for the first time—in creative activity. Alongside this, the Council played a key role in shaping a successful funding application securing just under £1m, ensuring the programme's sustainability until 2029 and contributing to the wider objective of attracting public and private investment into the borough.	GREEN
Deliver the ReNEW Sharing Stories Shaping Futures campaign	The ReNEW project was successful in obtaining over half a million pounds in Place Partnership funding from Arts Council England, which will support residents across Redditch and Bromsgrove to share their stories to creatively shape the future of both areas. Under the ReNEW Skills and Capacity Development programme, two specialist officers are now in post, increasing professional capacity and directly supporting the objective to develop local creative and cultural sectors. An external evaluator has been appointed, and youth recruitment is well underway. These young people will shortly benefit from structured creative skills development opportunities delivered by performing, visual and digital arts organisations appointed through the contract opportunities that are currently being advertised. In addition, a local cultural sector skills programme is at design stage. This programme will support a wide range of amateur and professional arts, culture and heritage organisations, strengthening sector-wide capacity and creating pathways for high-quality local jobs.	GREEN
Work with the community to develop an engagement forum	Work to develop the community forum will be undertaken in line with the reopening of the Redditch Town Hall in 2026, with a community launch event at the newly refurbished Town Hall being the starting point for bringing residents and community representatives together.	GREEN

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026****Quarter 3 2025/26 Finance Monitoring Report**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Ian Woodall – Portfolio Holder for Finance
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Debra Goodall
Report Authors	Debra Goodall Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services Debra.goodall@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	All
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

SUMMARY

Regular budget monitoring and reporting forms the basis of good governance and best practice in budget management. Councillors and committees should be able to rely on the information provided to assist in sound decision making around budgets and spending plans for the Council.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to RESOLVE that the following are noted:

- 1) There is a forecast revenue overspend position of **£399k** at Q3.
- 2) The current Capital spending of **£6.776 million** against an original budget of **£8.082 million** revised with carry forwards to **£19.921 million** as outlined in Appendix A
- 3) The current savings delivery is **£1.751 million** against an annual target of £2.342 million for 2025/26.
- 4) Forecast Earmarked Reserves at 31 March 2026 are **£17.294 million** as outlined in Appendix B.
- 5) The Ward Budget allocation position to date is 21 approved allocations at £32,100, leaving a balance of £21,900 to be allocated before year end as included in Appendix C.
- 6) There is an updated procurements position set out in Appendix D, with any new items over £200,000 to be included on the forward plan.
- 7) The position on Council Tax and Business Rates is noted
- 8) The position on benefits processing is noted.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026**

The Executive is asked to **RECOMMEND** that:

- 9) That the Balance Sheet Monitoring Position for Q3 is noted – which is the Treasury Monitoring Report and required to be reported to Council (Appendix E)
- 10) The Medium-Term Financial Plan is amended to include the Pride in Place Fund Allocation as set out in paragraph 4.60.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 This Quarter 3 Financial Monitoring Report for Redditch Borough Council (April–December 2025) provides a comprehensive overview of the Council's financial performance, budget delivery, and strategic project progress. The report supports informed decision-making and ensures transparency in financial governance.

2.2 Key highlights include:

- **Revenue Position:** An overspend of £399k is forecasted for the year, driven largely by a prudent adjustment to bereavement income levels, large movements on the Housing Subsidy budget, pressures on Dial-a-ride and Shop Mobility and costs relating to the installation of a new fire alarm system. These have been offset by additional income in Development Control.
- **The position has moved adversely by £19k since Q2** - This relates mainly to movement in Housing Subsidy resulting in a £520k overspend due to housing subsidy budgets no longer aligning with received grant offset by £500k in Revenue Grants Received in Advance from 2024/25 now being recognised.
- **Capital Programme:** £6.776 million has been spent against an annual original budget of £8.082 million revised to £19.921 million following carry forwards from 2024/25. Significant projects include the Innovation Centre and Public Realm improvements funded through the Town Deal and UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- **Savings Delivery:** £1.751 million of the £2.342 million annual savings target has been achieved, primarily through vacancy management and efficiency measures.
- **Reserves:** The Council holds £17.957m in earmarked reserves. Following a thorough review during the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) process these are expected to decrease to £17.294m by 31 March 2026.
- **Ward Budgets:** £32,100 has been allocated, with £21,900 available for allocation in the final quarter of the financial year.
- **Treasury and Balance Sheet Monitoring:** No new borrowing has occurred during Quarter 3; £5.2 million is held in short-term investments. The Council remained compliant with all prudential indicators and investment limits.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026**

- **Collection Fund Performance:** Council Tax and Business Rates collection are slightly below target, with 82.52% and 77.06% collected respectively in Q3. This is indicative of the ongoing cost of living pressures facing residents and business owners and I line with experiences of other peer councils.
- **Benefits Processing:** Average processing times are 15 days for new claims and 6 days for changes, well within the required thresholds.
- **Procurement Pipeline:** 25 contracts exceeding £200,000 are scheduled for procurement within the next 12 months, ensuring strategic resource planning.

2.3 The report also outlines risks and operational implications, with financial pressures and contract management flagged as key areas.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the Council's draft Revenue and Capital Outturn position for the first nine months of the financial year (April – December 2025). This report presents:

- The Council's forecast yearly outturn revenue monitoring position for 2025/26 based on data to the end of Quarter 3 including delivery of the savings targets as set out in the MTFP.
- The position in respect of balance sheet monitoring as requested by the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee including the Treasury Management report for Quarter 3.
- The spending as of Q3 of Ward Budget Funds.
- The updated procurement pipeline of Council projects to be delivered over the next 12 months in order to properly resource plan for the delivery of these projects.

4. DETAILED PERFORMANCE**Financial Performance**

- 4.1 As part of the monitoring process a detailed review has been undertaken to ensure that issues are considered, and significant savings and cost pressures are addressed. This report sets out, based on the position at the end of Quarter 3, the projected revenue outturn position for the 2025/26 financial year and explains key variances against budget.
- 4.2 The £13.475m full year revenue budget included in the table below is the budget that was approved by Council in February 2025.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive

2nd March 2026

Service Description	2025-26 Approved Budget	2025-26 Revised Budget	2025-26 Revised Q3 Budget	Q3 Adjusted Spend	Full Year Projected Forecast	Full Year Projected Variance Q2	Movement in Projected Variance Q2 to Q3	Full Year Projected Variance Q3
Business Transformation and Organisational Development	2,127,379	1,911,041	1,379,196	1,492,796	1,977,252	128,873	-62,662	66,211
Community and Housing GF Services	2,978,979	2,397,508	1,650,020	1,939,428	2,793,978	81,628	314,842	396,470
Corporate Services	-4,390,100	-2,862,339	-2,146,599	-2,056,081	-2,630,191	183,272	48,876	232,148
Environmental Services	3,327,695	3,175,207	2,343,283	2,880,351	3,790,588	397,948	217,433	615,381
Financial and Customer Services	3,151,803	3,036,655	2,539,274	3,251,908	3,724,830	-398,207	1,086,382	688,175
Legal and Democratic Services	1,213,796	1,084,233	806,536	837,086	1,064,768	-6,742	-12,723	-19,465
Planning and Leisure Services	1,272,841	1,075,593	725,927	446,144	784,594	-308,888	17,889	-290,999
Regeneration & Property	2,213,443	2,130,943	1,552,581	1,828,518	2,341,194	186,186	24,065	210,251
Regulatory Client	711,638	711,638	533,729	525,717	732,657	20,638	381	21,019
Rubicon Client	867,481	867,481	650,611	733,785	996,872	127,910	1,481	129,391
Grand Total	13,474,955	13,527,960	10,034,558	11,879,652	15,576,542	412,618	1,635,964	2,048,582
Service Description	2025-26 Approved Budget	2025-26 Revised Budget	2025-26 Revised Q3 Budget	Q3 Adjusted Spend	Full Year Projected Forecast	Full Year Projected Variance Q2	Movement in Projected Variance Q2 to Q3	Full Year Projected Variance Q3
Corporate Financing	-13,474,955	-13,527,960	-10,127,220	-9,193,297	-15,176,594	-32,048	-1,616,586	-1,648,634
Grand Total	-13,474,955	-13,527,960	-10,127,220	-9,193,297	-15,176,594	-32,048	-1,616,586	-1,648,634
TOTALS	0	0	-92,662	2,686,355	399,948	380,570	19,378	399,948

* see note on Corporate Financing within the body of the report on Page 8

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026***Budget Variances*

- 4.3 The draft position is set out in the above table.
- 4.4 Overall, the Council is currently forecasting a full year revenue overspend of £399k at Quarter 3. This position will continue to be reviewed particularly given the impact of the increasing costs linked to inflation and further updates will be provided to Councillors throughout 2025/26. This includes service projections as follows:

Business Transformation & Organisational Development £66k overspend

- 4.5 Business Transformation is forecasting a £66k overspend in total.
- 4.6 This is due to the forecasted overspend on telephone charges of £70k due to increases in the contract charge. This has been addressed in the budget for next year. There are also additional IT purchases of £69k. This is offset by additional street naming and numbering income of £13k, HR savings on salaries of £20k and training cost of £40k as BDC is recharged 50% for these reducing pressure on Redditch.

Community and Housing GF Services £396k overspend

- 4.7 Community & Housing Services is forecasting a £396k overspend.
- 4.8 There are additional Lifeline and CCTV costs of £98k due to increased BT charges, Sim charges and new equipment purchase. The increased equipment costs will be offset by increased income for the sale or hiring by customers. A budget pressure bid of £75k has been put forward for 2026/27 and ongoing, and some of the Sim charges will be offset by the increased weekly lifeline charges introduced via fees and charges. Dial-a-Ride income has reduced by £97k this should be offset by the £44k additional allocation approved by Executive Committee part of the council's commitment to reduce fares by 50%, this allocation has been built into the new budget from 26/27. The Bus Service Operators Grant income has reduced as it is based on mileage, and a service redesign has reduced the mileage of the vehicles. 2026/27 will also see a reduction in bus maintenance costs as 3 new vehicles are to be purchased through the fleet capital programme.
- 4.9 Shopmobility moved to a new location and will be spending more on electricity, service charge and advertisement. This is alongside a reduced income with pre covid customer numbers not returning, which is a national trend; only 42% of the income is expected creating an expected overspend of £111k. The allocation of £30k by Executive Committee to offset these identified additional costs has been incorporated in the 26/27 budget. In addition, Officers are looking to increase income through the sale of aids and adaptations and to review the services business hours in 2026/27.
- 4.10 There is an overspend in housing options due to write-offs circa £56k, additional £8k for council tax for dispersed units, leased dwellings insurance of £18k above budget and other various overspends of £8k. Consideration is being given to the use of grant funding to offset costs where relevant.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026****Corporate Services £232k overspend**

- 4.11 Corporate Services is forecasting a £232k overspend.
- 4.12 This comprises a combination of grant funding adjustments of £108k, Lump Sum Pension Deficit payment of £26k, additional HMRC costs of £13k, additional subscriptions of £8k, costs of £37k due to staffing change at Director level and agency costs of new S151 Officer, alongside other net costs of £28k. There are also pressures relating to additional Postage Charges of £25k. This will be addressed as part of the MTFP.
- 4.13 These have been offset by overachieved vacancy management savings of £13k across the whole Council.

Environmental Services £615k overspend

- 4.14 Environmental Services is forecasting a £615k overspend above budget.
- 4.15 The variance is largely due to underachieved bereavement income of £374k due to the income budget being set higher than the service can currently achieve within the period, as such a prudent adjustment to bereavement expected income levels is warranted. There are also increased business rates of £48k and increased servicing and maintenance costs of the cremator of £53k.
- 4.16 Aside from bereavement services, there have also been increased agency costs for seasonal hedge cutting of £96k. This is addressed as part of the MTFP.
- 4.17 There have been one-off legal costs of a tree subsidence legal case of £60k offset by £16k minor savings across the service.

Financial and Customer Services £688k overspend

- 4.18 Finance & Customer Services is forecasting a £688k overspend against budget.
- 4.19 Due to changes in national policy with a greater focus on prevention, Housing Subsidy budgets no longer align with received grant creating a service based overspend of £520k. This is a significant pressure facing all authorities and reflects ongoing risk.
- 4.20 The Council has had work carried out by the external auditor, Ernst and Young for both 2023/24 and 2024/25 accounts and this has resulted in increased audit costs based on actuals to date of £33k. There have also been pressures as a result of the use of agency staff costs to cover vacancies of £153k.
- 4.21 These pressures have been offset by various other savings of £18k.

Legal, Democratic and Elections Services £19k underspend

- 4.22 Legal, Democratic and Elections Services are forecasting a £19k underspend.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026**

As a result of correcting an error with the shared service recharge which has reduced budgeted charges for Democratic Services by £43k, this has been reflected on an ongoing bases in 26/27 budgets. This saving is offset against a projected lower income on Land Charge Searches and increase in Electoral Services due to the licence for the Civica system. A budget pressure has been accommodated in the 26/27 budget setting process.

Planning and Leisure Services £291k underspend

- 4.23 Planning and Leisure Services are forecasting a net underspend of £291k.
- 4.24 This is largely due to additional Development Control income of £249k due to high value planning applications received.
- 4.25 There have also been salary savings in Arts and Development of £19k due to grant receipt. There have been reduced agency costs within Parks and Events due to a planned review on Leisure Services. There are other various savings of £23k.

Regeneration and Property Services £210k overspend

- 4.26 There is a forecast overspend position of £210k on Regeneration and Property Services.
- 4.27 As reported in Quarter 2 a large part of this variance relates to essential works to replace the fire alarm system at the Town Hall costing £146k. There are also above budget costs of £54k relating to parking enforcement and a budget bid has been agreed to address this in 26/27.
- 4.28 The engineering and design service has pressures relating to insurance claims of £64k, as well as fleet maintenance and overtime costs of £15k. A reserve has been set up to meet the insurance claims going forward.
The service has pressures relating to building and maintenance cost for the business centres of £41k, some of which relates to improvements in the safety and security of the buildings. There is a £24k pressure relating to staffing, fleet, materials and income as the new market establishes itself. There are also £12k reflecting a timing delay in efficiency savings that will be met in Quarter 4.
- 4.29 The overspends have been offset by £21k in vacancy management savings, additional roundabout sponsorship income of £8k, insurance claim income of £53k for Greenlands, UKSPF vacancy management savings of £43k, an underspend on the recharge to Wyre Forest of £21k and various other savings of £7k.

Regulatory Client £21k overspend

- 4.30 Regulatory Client is forecasting a £21k overspend due to underachieved efficiency savings of £11k, Pest Control Fees of £2k recharge from WRS above budget and various other costs of £8k.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026****Rubicon Client £129k overspend**

- 4.31 Rubicon Client (the costs incurred by the Council, such as landlord and some salary expenses) is forecasting a £129k overspend. The variance is due to additional Management Fees of £41k, increased Maintenance and Insurance costs of £76k due to Rubicon client not having an insurance budget for buildings and efficiency savings of £15k that has not yet been met. These are offset by other minor savings of £3k.

Corporate Financing

- 4.32 Corporate Financing reflects sums centrally held outside of service budgets and allocated to services for the period. The position is forecasting £1,649k additional income arising from: additional Investment Interest amounting to £404k and Grant Income of £916k together with £500k of Revenue Grants Received in 24/25 recognised in 25/26 offset by lower-than-expected Fees & Charges Income of £171k.

Savings Targets

- 4.33 The Council had £2.342m total savings targets in 2025/26 (including prior year carry forwards). The Council has delivered £1.751m of these savings in Q3. These are shown in the table below:

	2025/26 £m	Adjusted 2025/26 £m	Total 2025/26 £m	Savings YTD	
Service Reviews	(0.405)	0.405	0		Consolidated corporately
Finance Vacancies	(0.100)	0.100	0		Consolidated corporately
Environmental Service Partnerships	(0.050)	0.050	0		Consolidated corporately
Move to all out elections	(0.170)		(0.170)	0	Unlikely to be met
Town Hall	(0.400)		(0.400)	0	Work ongoing
2023/24 Items	(1.125)	0.555	(0.570)	0	
In year corporate target		(1.522)	(1.522)	(1.536)	£1.386m from vacancy management and £0.150m efficiencies
Directorate savings		(0.250)	(0.250)	(0.215)	There is an expected outturn of £215k in savings
2025/26 Items	0	(1.722)	(1.772)	(1.751)	
Total Savings	(1.125)	(1.217)	(2.342)	(1.751)	

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026****Cash Management**

4.34 Borrowing

- As of the 31st December 2025, there were no short-term borrowings. The Council has long-term borrowings of £103.9m.

4.35 Investments

- On 31st December 2025 there were £5.2m short-term investments held.

Capital Monitoring

4.36 A capital programme of £8.082m was approved in the Budget for 2025/26 in February 2025. This has been fully reviewed as part of the MTFP using actual data as at the end of December 2024. The table below and detail in **Appendix A** set out the Capital Programme schemes that are approved for the MTFP time horizon.

4.37 Many of these schemes are already in partial delivery in the 2025/26 financial year. By approving this list, the Council also agreed sums not spent in 2024/25 (and 2023/24 by default if schemes originated earlier than 2024/25 as sums have been carried forward through to the 2024/25 MTFP Report) to be carried forward into 2025/26. The table also splits amounts by funding source, Council or third party.

Year	Total Programme		Council Funded	Grant Funded
2024/5	20,114,366	32,428,717	4,792,886	15,036,480
Carry Fwd	12,314,351			
2025/6	8,082,320		3,176,213	4,906,107
2026/7	3,923,362		3,217,498	705,864
2027/8	2,559,172		1,853,308	705,864
2028/9	2,064,490		1,364,490	700,000
2029/30	2,496,248		1,790,384	705,864

4.38 The Council also have the following Grant Funded Schemes which are being delivered in 2025/26:

- The Town Deal schemes – the Innovation Centre and Public Realm improvements which are funded via £15.6m of Government Funding.
- For the Innovation Centre
 - Speller-Metcalf have been appointed as the design and build contractor up to Stage 4 design with an option to extend into delivering the development in full.
 - The value engineering (VE) exercise has been concluded, with costs based on contractor prices rather than QS estimates. Stage 4 design work is now advancing rapidly. Whilst further VE will take place throughout Stage 4, we have reached a

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026**

point where the project can be delivered on budget. Note that VE savings have been achieved without the need to reduce the building in size, or compromise on overall quality.

- MHCLG have confirmed the deadline to spend Town Deal funding has been extended until end of March 2028, providing additional time if needed.
- Planning permission was granted on December 11th. We are now working through pre-commencement and other conditions as needed.
- The extension of time from MHCLG however allows further market testing to be undertaken with construction sub-contractors. The Town Deal Board have been consulted and support this approach in order to maximise cost certainty with quotes based on final specifications. This will take an additional 2 months (estimated) with construction now profiled to commence June 2026.
- The final business case for GBS LEP funding was signed off by Birmingham City Council on 20th January 2026. The grant funding agreement for £2.425m will now be put in place.

- For the Public Realm Scheme

- All works to Unicorn Hill and Church Green West have been completed. The new traffic regulation order (TRO) came into place on the 14 August. Public comms around the new TROs have been circulated on social media and local papers.
- Additional public realm works have been paused so that remaining Town Deal funding can be utilised as contingency for the Innovation Centre. Public realm works to Church Green East have been costed at and will proceed in the event that sufficient contingency remains unutilised.
- The extended timescales allow public realm works to be delayed until we can be certain that remaining Town Deal (contingency) funds are not required for the Innovation Centre.

4.39 In December 2024, the Government announced that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) would be extended by 6 months. No additional funding has been provided but the 2025/26 allocation of £818,536 (of which £152,000 is capital) now needs to be completely spent by the 30/9/26. These funds are being spent in line with the approved UKSPF Investment Plan with £360,316 defrayed to the end of Q3.

4.40 The outturn spend is £6.776m against an original in year capital budget totalling £8.082m and is detailed in **Appendix A**. It should be noted that carry forwards of £23.673m will be rolled forward from 2024/25 into 2025/26 to take account of slippage from 2024/25.

Housing Revenue Account

4.41 The table below details the financial position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the period April - December 2025. The major variances are due to the following:

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- Dwelling Rents – a higher than anticipated, however the timing of purchase of properties under the Right to Buy scheme has reduced the income received level. This was due a backlog of approvals.
- Repairs and Maintenance – has been an increase in the incidence of repairs required.
- Supervision and Management – the variance is predominantly due to vacant posts as a consequence of a service review within Housing Services. A new structure will be implemented and posts recruited in quarter 3.

	2025/26 Original Budget £'000	2025/26 Working Budget £'000	2025/26 Budget Apr - Dec £'000	2025/26 Actual + comm Apr - Dec £'000	2025/26 Variance Apr - Dec £'000	2025/26 Projected Outturn £'000	2025/26 Projected Variance £'000
INCOME							
Dwelling Rents	-28,169	-28,169	-21,713	-21,151	563	-28,051	118
Non-Dwelling Rents	-534	-534	-412	-476	-64	-534	-0
Tenants' Charges for Services & Facilities	-724	-795	-613	-645	-32	-794	1
Contributions towards Expenditure	-127	-155	-119	-109	11	-146	9
Total Income	-29,553	-29,653	-22,858	-22,380	477	-29,525	128
EXPENDITURE							
Repairs & Maintenance	7,844	8,011	6,009	6,688	680	8,152	141
Supervision & Management	9,249	9,387	7,040	3,182	-3,858	9,260	-127
Rent, Rates, Taxes & Other Charges	576	576	432	770	338	788	211
Provision for Bad Debts	517	519	389	0	-389	400	-119
Depreciation & Impairment of Fixed Assets	7,296	7,296	5,472	0	-5,472	7,296	0
Interest Payable & Debt Management Costs	4,179	4,179	3,134	-134	-3,269	4,179	0
Total Expenditure	29,662	29,968	22,476	10,506	-11,970	30,075	107
Net cost of Services	108	315	-381	-11,874	-11,493	550	235
Net Operating Expenditure	108	315	-381	-11,874	-11,493	550	235
Interest Receivable	0	0					
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay	-211	-211	-159	0	159	-211	0
Planned use of Balances	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to Earmarked Reserves	103	-104	540	0	-540	-339	-235
Transfer to Earmarked Reserves	0		0	0	0	0	0

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive

2nd March 2026

In HRA Capital:

Project	Project Description	2025/26 Full Year Budget £	2025/26 Budget to Date Apr - Dec £	2025/26 Actuals & Comm Apr - Dec £	2025/26 Variance Apr - Dec £	2025/26 Forecast Outturn £	2025/26 Projected Variance £	
Various	Housing 1-4-1 Purchases/Build	3,000,000	2,250,000	1,688,997	-	561,003	3,000,000	0
100053	Asbestos General	125,000	93,750	187,501	-	93,751	140,000	15,000
100054	Structural Repairs	15,000	11,250	212,491	-	201,241	75,000	60,000
100055	Electrical Upgrade	200,000	150,000	293,848	-	143,848	400,000	200,000
100056	Boiler Replacement	720,000	540,000	445,377	-	94,623	735,000	15,000
100058	Window Replacement	500,000	375,000	406,632	-	-	400,000	(100,000)
100059	Disabled Adaptations	500,000	375,000	328,584	-	46,416	350,000	(150,000)
100060	Environmental Enhancement	100,000	75,000	85,447	-	10,447	100,000	0
100062	Stock Condition Survey	150,000	112,500	122,208	-	9,708	150,000	0
100063	Housing Management System	-	-	212,662	-	212,662	220,000	220,000
100066	Capitalised Salaries	750,000	562,500	-	-	562,500	750,000	0
100067	Door Entry/CCTV	350,000	262,500	294,768	-	32,268	350,000	0
100068	HRA Hard Wire S	200,000	150,000	127,941	-	22,059	150,000	(50,000)
100074	Balcony Replacement	300,000	225,000	304,286	-	79,286	300,000	0
100083	HRA Compartmentation	1,500,000	1,125,000	797,164	-	327,836	800,000	(700,000)
100084	Major Voids Works	1,000,000	750,000	2,658,519	-	1,908,519	2,500,000	1,500,000
100098	HRA-Energy Efficiency	1,000,000	750,000	1,849,314	-	1,099,314	1,500,000	500,000
100115	HRA Stock Remodelling	275,000	206,250	245,991	-	39,741	150,000	(125,000)
100116	HRA Estates Garages	300,000	225,000	11,000	-	214,000	20,000	(280,000)
110001	Internal Refurbishment	3,000,000	2,250,000	2,529,199	-	279,199	2,500,000	(500,000)
110003	High Trees Project	800,000	600,000	1,152,037	-	552,037	1,000,000	200,000
110004	Disrepair Cases	100,000	75,000	820,597	-	745,597	650,000	550,000
110005	External Refurbishment	500,000	375,000	168,533	-	206,467	200,000	(300,000)
110042	Lift Replacement	150,000	112,500	156,757	-	44,257	160,000	10,000
110045	Vehicle Replacement	900,000	675,000	900,000	-	-	900,000	0
		16,435,000	12,326,250	15,999,851		3,416,969	17,500,000	1,065,000

- 4.42 Across the HRA Capital Investment Programme issues have arisen that are summarised below in relation to progress in priority areas, or where they require variances to the budget lines for the following reasons.
- 4.43 **Fire Doors and Compartmentation** - The fire door upgrade and compartmentation programme is improving fire safety across council housing with additional works from Fire Risk Assessments also in progress. Meanwhile, caretakers help ensure no combustible materials remain in communal areas.
- 4.44 **Housing 1-4-1 Purchases** – These occur on a reactive basis and as such budget estimating can be difficult, in the current year we have identified £2.4m of Persimmon properties together with buybacks.
- 4.45 **Structural Repairs** – These repairs are essentially reactive, and the value of each occurrence is unknown. To date a pressure of £60k has been identified.
- 4.46 **Housing Management System** – The core functions are complete, with upcoming modules set to enhance ASB case tracking. Key fix, the repairs diagnostic tool, will improve work identification accuracy. Total expenses are £56k.

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- 4.47 **Major Voids Works** – Void repairs are carried out as required. An additional £1,050k in funding will be necessary for completion within the current year. Furthermore, there will be a significant financial impact from extensive Buyback refurbishment costs.
- 4.48 **Disrepair Cases** – We have experienced increased levels of Disrepair Cases over the last two financial years which has now resulted on a pressure to carry out corrective works to affected properties.

Earmarked Reserves

- 4.49 The updated position, taking account of the now submitted draft accounts for 2024/25, are set out in **Appendix B**. As part of the MTFP all reserves were thoroughly reviewed for their requirement and additional reserves set up as per that report. At the 31 December 2025, based on the present MTFP that was approved by Council on the 19th February, the Council holds £17.957m of Earmarked Reserves and is forecasting to hold £17.294m by 31 March 2026.

Ward Budgets

- 4.50 This report is the quarterly report to show what has been spent to date on Ward budgets. Each Ward Member has £2,000 to spend on Ward Initiatives subject to the rules of the Scheme which were approved by Council. As of the 31st December there have been applications from 21 Members approved totalling £32,100, £21,900 is still to be allocated. This year's funding allocations must be spent by the 31st March 2026. Full detail is set out in **Appendix C**.

Balance Sheet Monitoring Position

- 4.51 There has been the request from Audit Committee that the Council include Balance Sheet Monitoring as part of this report.
- 4.52 This initial balance sheet reporting is set out as the Q3 Treasury Report which is attached as **Appendix D**. This report sets out the Councils debt and borrowing position for Q3 2025/26. Included in this is how the Council is using its working capital as well as measurement of the Councils Prudential Indicators, this appendix will need to be noted and approved that Council note the position.

Procurement Pipeline

- 4.53 The Procurement pipeline is shown in **Appendix E**. The Council's Procurement Pipeline includes details of contracts expected to be reprocured and new procurement projects expected to be undertaken in the future. Those happening in the next 12 months and over £200k will need to be put on the Forward Plan. The pipeline is refreshed quarterly.
- There are 25 contracts that are over the key decision threshold of £200k
 - There are 8 contracts procured by Redditch Borough Council on behalf of Bromsgrove District Council.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026****Collection Fund**

- 4.54 The Council acts as collecting authority for itself, other major preceptors and the parishes for Council Tax. The Council also collects business rates on behalf of central government, the County Council and for itself. The Council's own precept accounts for just under 12% of monies collected from Council tax and about 40% of business rates collected after paying government levies, additional tariff to central government and 10% across to Worcestershire County Council.
- 4.55 The Council aims to collect 98.5% of Council Tax receipts (national average is 95.8%) which equates to a total sum of £60.748 million. Performance against this target for this financial year is shown in the table below:

	Target %age (cumulative)	Actual %age (cumulative)	Amount collected (cumulative) £ millions
Quarter 1	28.68	27.99	22.963
Quarter 2	55.61	55.36	34.144
Quarter 3	84.28	82.52	50.838
Quarter 4	98.5		

- 4.56 Due to the use of ten monthly collections the percentage for each quarter is not a simple 25%. Government reforms are proposing enforcing a move to monthly collections (in twelfths).
- 4.57 The Council aims to collect 98.0% of business rate receipts (national average is 95.8%) which equates to a total sum of £39.408 million. Performance against this target for this financial year is shown in the table below:

	Target %age (cumulative)	Actual %age (cumulative)	Amount collected (cumulative) £ millions
Quarter 1	25.78	25.29	10.310
Quarter 2	54.36	51.53	20.723
Quarter 3	80.95	77.06	31.222
Quarter 4	98.0		

Benefits

- 4.58 Benefit claim statistics are summarised in the table below:

New claims	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3		Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026**

Average processing time	18 days	15 days	15 days	Number processed this quarter	105	222	75
Changes to claims							
Average processing time	8 days	7 days	6 days	Number processed this quarter	1380	2647	1211

- 4.59 Recent changes to benefits has meant that many of the simpler claims have been transferred to DWP, leaving the more complex cases with local authorities – this has impacted on average processing time. DWP expect new claims to be processed within a 30-day timeframe.
- 4.60 The Pride in Place funding is confirmed as £19,660,000 (capital £12,470,000 and revenue £7,190,000) over 10 years and includes the current year's capacity fund of £150,000, which has already been received.
- 4.61 The figures for the current year and years 1-4 are below:

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Capital		£120,000	£670,000	£1,460,000	£1,460,000
Revenue	£150,000	£270,000	£690,000	£690,000	£770,000
Total	£150,000	£390,000	£1,360,000	£2,150,000	£2,230,000

- 4.62 The first 4 years of funding are guaranteed, but the latter years are subject to future spending reviews.

5. **Financial Implications**

- 5.1 These are contained in the main body of the report.

6. **Legal Implications**

- 6.1 No Legal implications have been identified.

7. **Strategic Purpose Implications**

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 7.1 The Strategic purposes are included in the Council's corporate plan and guides the Council's approach to budget making ensuring we focus on the issues and what are most important for the borough and our communities. Our Financial monitoring and strategies are integrated within all of our Strategic Purposes.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026****Climate Change Implications**

- 7.2 The green thread runs through the Council plan. The Financial monitoring report has implications on climate change, and these will be addressed and reviewed when relevant by climate change officers to ensure the correct procedures have been followed to ensure any impacts on climate change are fully understood.

8. Other Implications**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 8.1 None as a direct result of this report.

Operational Implications

- 8.2 Managers meet with finance officers to consider the current financial position and to ensure actions are in place to mitigate any overspends.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 Items identified in the Finance monitoring is included in a number of the Corporate Risks. These are listed below. The mitigations to these risks are set out in the Risk Report, of which the Quarter 3 Report is reported to Audit, Governance and Standards Committee in July:

- COR10 - Decisions made to address financial pressures and implement new projects.
- COR16 - Management of Contracts.
- COR17 - Resolution of the Approved Budget Position.
- COR19 - Adequate Workforce Planning.
- COR20 - Financial Position Rectification.
- COR22 - Delivery of Levelling Up and UK SPF Initiatives
- COR23 - Cost of Living Crisis
- COR25 - The new Environment Bill

10. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Capital Outturn
 Appendix B - Reserves Position
 Appendix C - Ward Budget Position
 Appendix D - Treasury Management Position
 Appendix E - Procurement Pipeline

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Debra Goodall – Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services
 (Deputy S151)
 E Mail: Debra.Goodall@bromsgroveandredditchbc.gov.uk

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026****Appendix A - Capital Outturn**

Capital Project	Description	2025/26 Total (Original) £	2025/26 Total (Incl C/Fs) £	2025/26 Spend £
	Large Schemes			
	Towns Fund			
200053	- Innovation Centre	1,000,000	7,091,046	
200053	- Innovation Centre	1,948,000	1,948,000	482,334
100133	- Digital Manufacturing & Innovation Centre Digital Manufacturing & Innovat	0	-159,306	
200054	- Library	0	2,320,634	
200055	- Public Realm	0	3,777,926	
200055	- Public Realm	0	439,000	
100102				
100108	Town Hall Redevelopment	0	5,123,121	1,481,971
100111				
	Schemes Agreed to Continue in Tranche 1			
100004	Car Park Maintenance	150,000	212,672	50,459
110036	Footpaths	75,000	47,264	70,855
100007	Disabled Facilities Grant	1,185,745	1,332,340	201,539
100008	Energy & Efficiency Installs.	0	209,345	
100009	GF Asbestos	0	75,467	63,467
100014	Improved Parking Scheme (includes locality funding)	0	400,000	
100026	Morton Stanley Play, Sport and Open Space Improvements (General)	0	1,500	
100032	Public Building	250,000	139,324	282,090
100035	Fleet Replacement new line	0	1,960,669	994,983
100037	Removal of 5 weirs through Arrow Valley Park	0	414,000	
100040	Sports Contributions to support improvements to Outdoor facilities at Terry	0	3,000	
100043	Wheelie Bin purchase	100,000	210,635	73,163

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026**

Capital Project	Description	2025/26 Total (Original) £	2025/26 Total (Incl C/Fs) £	2025/26 Spend £
100044	New Digital Service	0	-119,732	
100088	Improvement Hollytrees childrens centre	0	6,000	
100089	Greener Homes	0	-8,925	
100010	Grassland Mitigation measures- recreating and monitoring grassland habitats	5,864	11,727	
100011	Hedgerow Mitigation measures by restoration and hedge laying with associated	0	21,500	
100012	HMO Grants	25,000	86,500	
100013	Home Repairs Assistance	40,000	160,000	
100018	Improvement to original Pump Track at AVCP	0	56,364	
100045	Replacing 3 fuel pumps and upgrading tank monitoring equipment	0	25,000	
110018	Cisco Network Update	47,339	53,273	
110019	Server Replacement Est(Exact known Q2 2022)	18,500	196,000	67,038
110020	Laptop Refresh	5,000	37,775	4,909
100140	Cyber Security Updates	25,000	50,000	
100141	Morgan Stanley Footpaths	0	16,500	
110021	New Cemetary Provision-Ipsley road	195,000	635,963	
100127	Provide the Crossgate Depot site with a new and Compliant Deisel Fuel instal	0	56,000	
100097	Widen access road to Arrow Valley Country park	0	-9,074	
100136	Lifeline Improvements	0	120,000	
100144	PRSHousing ICT System	0	30,000	
100119	Play Areas - Surface Replacement	10,000	-79,994	
100147	AVCP - Parking Bays near Visitor Centre	0	12,000	
100121	AVCP - Car Park Extension 25 Spaces	0	-15,745	
100148	Increased Building Mainenance Costs	150,000	300,000	
100134	Arrow Valley Car Park	0	63,840	
100135	Arrow Valley park Visitor Centre Improvements	0	193,251	223,482
100143	Fleet Costs	26,000	611,000	
100137	Final Play Area Changes	191,477	435,576	155,200
100139	Movement of ICT Cyber Capital Works Forward	0	-50,000	
100142	Hedge and Shrub Removal	40,000	80,000	
110007	Forge Mill and Bordelsey Open Space Improvements	0	5,859	
110009	MUGA at Greenlands Sports Pitches. 2018/169/FUL Land off Green Lane	0	43,078	
110012	Play Area improvements at Birchfield Road,/ Headless Cross Rec Ground. 1	0	7,575	
110013	Play area (£34,583.39), Open space (£12,001.36) and Sport (£8,516) impro	0	1,172	
100001	Arrow Valley Country Park - Play, Open Space and Sports Improvements.	0	-4,500	
100146	Play Area Changes - Pre Audit	0	382,000	
100146	Play Audit funding	191,447	454,833	
100020	Improvement to Sports Pitches infrastructure in Morton Stanley Park	0	23,002	
100112	Fire compartmentation works in Corporate buildings	250,000	240,157	205,366
110044	New Food Waste Collection - DEFRA Funding	766,498	785,955	
	Abavus Software Integration	30,000	30,000	
	Abavus Licensing	10,200	10,200	
	Update Town Hall Fire Wall	16,250	16,250	
	Replacement Track - Abbey Stadium	300,000	300,000	
	Energy Performance Certificate Requirements	100,000	100,000	
	Abbey Stadium Roof Replacement	250,000	250,000	
	Abbey Stadium - refurbish indoor Chaging Rooms and Toitets	300,000	300,000	
	Forge Mill - New outdoor Kiosk and Toilet Replacement	90,000	90,000	
	Pitcher Oak, refurbish Male Changing and bebuild 2nd Green	90,000	90,000	
	Salary Capitallisation	200,000	200,000	
		8,082,320	19,920,931	6,775,619

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026****Appendix B - Earmarked Reserves**

	Balance at 31/3/25	Transfers in 2025/26	Transfers out 2025/26	Balance at 31/3/26	Transfers to general fund at 31/03/2026	Transfers from general fund at 31/03/2026	Balance at 31/3/26
General Fund	6,866	(2,662)	338	4,542	10,576	(7,589)	7,529
General Fund Earmarked Reserves:							
Business Rates Retention Scheme	4,560		(260)	4,300	(2,150)		2,150
Community Development	74	73		147			147
Community Safety	211	450		661			661
Corporate Services	2,594			2,594	(1,937)		657
Customer Services	183			183			183
Economic Growth	841			841			841
Electoral Services	63			63			63
Environmental Vehicles	29			29	(29)		0
Equipment replacement	25			25			25
Financial Services	460	260		720			720
Finance Revenues Reserve	0			0			0
General Risk reserve	45			45	(45)		0
Housing Benefit Implementation	270			270			270
Council Tax Benefit	605			605			605
Essential Living Fund	135			135			135
Homelessness	12			12			12
Homelessness Prevention	519			519			519
Universal Credit	56		(18)	38	(38)		0
Gypsy and Traveller Assessment	67			67	(67)		0
Mortgage Rescue Scheme	24			24	(24)		0
Land Charges	9			9			9
Land Drainage	129			129			129
Parks & Open spaces	8			8	(8)		0
Planning Services	465			465	(465)		0
Business Improvement District	209			209			209
Town Centre	7			7	(7)		0
Warmer Homes	16			16			16
Transformational Growth	123			123	(123)		0
Pensions	201			201	(201)		0
Regeneration Income	603	18		621	(68)		553
Restarts Grant	2,924			2,924	(2,924)		0
Covid-19 (General)	2,435			2,435	(2,435)		0
Financial Resilience Reserve				0			0
EPR Funding Allocation		814		814			814
EPR Comms Funding				0			0
Ward Budgets		180	(60)	120			120
Covid-19 (Collection Fund)	55			55	(55)		0
Starting Well		178		178			178
Ukrainian Support		232		232			232
Local Plan Professional Fees Underspend		457		457			457
New Reserves - MTFP 2026							
Health and Safety Capital Works						603	603
Town Hall Works Reserve						1,000	1,000
Library Work - Town Hall Write Off						667	667
Planning Reserve for planning applications						100	100
Insurance costs for non-adopted roads						100	100
Risk and Resilience Reserve						2,500	2,500
LGR Reserve						1,000	1,000
Community Investment Fund						1,600	1,600
Legal Costs for Skerry, Boultons Lane						19	19
Total General Fund Earmarked Reserves	17,957	2,662	(338)	20,281	(10,576)	7,589	17,294

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026****Appendix C - Ward Budget Spending Q3 - Funds Allocated to 31 December****Councillor Ward Fund Balances – 25/26**

Activity	Spend	Balance £2,000
Cllr Joe Baker	2,000.00	0
Cllr Juliet Barker-Smith	800.00	1,200.00
Cllr Juma Begum	1,450.00	550.00
Cllr William Boyd	1,200.00	800.00
Cllr Brandon Clayton	2,000.00	0
Cllr Claire Davies	1,200.00	800.00
Cllr Matthew Dormer	0	2,000.00
Cllr James Fardoe	0	2,000.00
Cllr Andy Fry	650.00	1,350.00
Cllr Bill Hartnett	2,000.00	0
Cllr Sharon Harvey	1,950.00	50.00
Cllr Chris Holtz	1,000.00	1,000.00
Cllr Joanna Kane	2,000.00	0
Cllr Sid Khan	0	2,000.00
Cllr Wanda King	2,000.00	0
Cllr Alan Mason	2,000.00	0
Cllr Sachin Mathur	0	2,000.00
Cllr Gemma Monaco	0	2,000.00
Cllr David Munroe	1,600.00	400.00
Cllr Rita Rogers	1,500.00	500.00
Cllr Gary Slim	2,000.00	0
Cllr Jen Snape	2,000.00	0

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Activity	Spend	Balance £2,000
Cllr Jane Spilsbury	1,050.00	950.00
Cllr Monica Stringfellow	2,000.00	0
Cllr Craig Warhurst	500.00	1,500.00
Cllr Ian Woodall	0	2,000.00
Cllr Paul Wren	1,200	800
Total	32,100.00	21,900.00

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Appendix D - Treasury Management Position

1. SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to set out a quarterly update on the Council's Capital and Treasury Management Strategies, including all prudential indicators.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet are asked to:

- Note the Council's Treasury performance for Q3 of the financial year 25/26.
- Note the position in relation to the Council's Prudential indicators.

3. BACKGROUNDIntroduction

3.1 The Authority has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve, as a minimum, treasury management semi-annual and annual outturn reports.

3.2 This quarterly report provides an additional update and includes the requirement in the 2021 Code of quarterly reporting of the treasury management prudential indicators. The non-treasury prudential indicators are incorporated in the Authority's normal quarterly revenue report.

External Context

3.3 **Economic background:** Early in the first quarter was dominated by US trade tariffs and the negative impact on equity and bond markets. While this was reversed somewhat in the second quarter with equity markets making gains, it also saw a divergence in US and UK government bond yields. UK yields persisted at higher levels as investors demanded higher returns in the form of term premia due to the more uncertain UK fiscal and economic position.

3.4 The latter part of the period included the government's November autumn Budget. Despite much speculation and drip-feeding of potential policies in the weeks leading up to the event, what was ultimately announced was generally deemed more muted than had been anticipated, helping ease investors' fears of significantly higher government borrowing.

3.5 UK consumer price inflation (CPI) inflation was 3.2% in November 2025, down from 3.6% in the previous month and lower than the 3.5% expected, but still well above the Bank of

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England (BoE) target. Core CPI eased to 3.2% from 3.4%, against forecasts of it staying at 3.6%.

- 3.6 According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the UK economy expanded by 0.7% in the first quarter of the calendar year, by 0.3% in Q2 and by 0.1% in Q3. Of the subsequent monthly figures, the ONS estimated that GDP fell by 0.1% in October.
- 3.7 The labour market continued to ease over the period as unemployment rose, vacancies fell and inactivity remained flat. In the three months to October 2025, the unemployment rate rose to 5.1%, higher than the level previously expected by the BoE, while the employment rate slipped to 74.9%.
- 3.8 The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted 5-4 to cut Bank Rate to 3.75% in December 2025, as was expected. Policymakers wanting a cut judged that disinflation was established while those preferring to hold Bank Rate at 4% argued that inflation risks remained sufficiently material to leave it untouched at this stage.
- 3.9 The November BoE Monetary Policy Report projected GDP would expand by a modest 0.2% in calendar Q4 2025. Estimates of inflation in the report were quickly out of date when CPI fell quicker than expected in November. Predictions of a modestly growing economy were echoed by the Office for Budget Responsibility in its Economic and Fiscal Outlook published with the Autumn Statement which revised down its estimate of annual GDP to around 1.5% between 2025 and 2030.
- 3.10 Arlingclose, the authority's treasury adviser, held a central view that Bank Rate would be cut further in 2025/26 with most BoE policymakers remaining more worried about weak GDP growth than higher inflation. In line with Arlingclose's central forecast, Bank Rate was reduced to 3.75% in December. Further cuts are expected in 2026, with the central forecast being that Bank Rate will be eased to around 3.25%.
- 3.11 The US Federal Reserve continued cutting rates, reducing Fed Funds Rate target range by 0.25% at its December meeting to 3.50%-3.75%. The meeting minutes noted that most policymakers judged that further rate cuts would be likely in 2026 if inflation continues to ease, however they were still divided in their assessment of the risks between inflation and unemployment.
- 3.12 The European Central Bank (ECB) held its key interest rates in December for a fourth consecutive meeting, maintaining the deposit rate at 2.0% and the main refinancing rate at 2.15%. The ECB maintained that future policy decisions will remain data-dependent, that inflation is close to its 2% target and that the euro area economy continues to

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expand despite a challenging global environment, including heightened geopolitical risks and trade tensions.

- 3.13 **Financial Markets:** After declining sharply early in the period, sentiment in financial markets has been mostly buoyant, but risky assets remained volatile. Bond yields initially declined early in the period, but increasing uncertainty around the UK's economic and fiscal outlook caused medium and longer yields to rise. Yields remained elevated until the third quarter when the potential negative impact of the UK Budget were deemed less than expected and yields eased modestly.
- 3.14 Equity markets gained the previous declines seen in the April sell-off and have continued to rise, even in the face of ongoing uncertainty around the existence of an AI-related 'bubble' and concentration in US and global stock markets.
- 3.15 Over the period, the 10-year UK benchmark gilt yield started at 4.65% and ended at 4.48%. However, these nine months saw significant volatility with the 10-year yield hitting a low of 4.39% and a high of 4.82%. It was a similar picture for the 20-year gilt which started at 5.18% and ended at 5.11% with a low and high of 5.05% and 5.55% respectively. The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 4.10% over the nine months to 31st December.
- 3.16 **Credit review:** Arlingclose maintained its recommended maximum unsecured duration limit on most of the banks on its counterparty list at 6 months. The other banks remain on 100 days.
- 3.17 Earlier in the period, Fitch upgraded NatWest Group and related entities to AA- from A+ and placed Clydesdale Bank's long-term A- rating on Rating Watch Positive. Fitch later upgraded Clydesdale Bank and HSBC, but downgraded Lancashire CC and Close Brothers.
- 3.18 In May, Moody's downgraded the United States sovereign long-term rating to Aa1 and affirmed OP Corporate's rating at Aa3. Moody's later upgraded Transport for London, Allied Irish Banks, Bank of Ireland, Toronto-Dominion Bank, DZ Bank, Nordea and HSBC and downgraded Close Brothers.
- 3.19 S&P upgraded Clydesdale Bank, Allied Irish Banks and Bank of Ireland, and assigned Warrington Council a BBB+ rating.
- 3.20 After spiking in April following the US trade tariff announcements, UK credit default swap (CDS) prices trended down before picking up modestly in October and November. They

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declined again in December and ended the year in line with levels seen in the first half of the year and most of 2024.

- 3.21 European banks' CDS prices have generally been flatter and lower compared to the UK, as have Singaporean and Australian lenders while some Canadian bank CDS prices have remained elevated since the beginning of the period in part due to ongoing trade tensions with the US.
- 3.22 At the end of the period CDS prices for all banks on Arlingclose's counterparty list remained within limits deemed satisfactory for maintaining credit advice at current durations.
- 3.23 Financial market volatility is expected to remain, and CDS levels will be monitored for signs of ongoing credit stress. As ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by Arlingclose remain under constant review.

Local Context

- 3.24 On 31st December 2025, the Authority had £29.49m net borrowing arising from its revenue and capital income and expenditure. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while balance sheet resources are the underlying resources available for investment. These factors are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary

	30.9.25	31.12.25
	Actual	Actual
	£m	£m
General Fund & Regeneration CFR	28.82	28.82
HRA CFR	127.60	127.60
Total CFR	156.42	156.42
External borrowing**	103.93	103.93
Internal borrowing	52.49	52.49
Less: Usable reserves	-18.10	-18.10
Less: Working capital	-4.90	-4.90
Net borrowing	29.49	29.49

* Finance leases, PFI liabilities and transferred debt that form part of the Authority's total debt

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** shows only loans to which the Authority is committed and excludes optional refinancing

- 3.25 The treasury management position at 31st December and the change over the quarter is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Treasury Management Summary

	30.9.25 Balance £m	Movement £m	31.12.25 Balance £m	30.12.25 Rate %
Long-term borrowing				
- PWLB	98.93	0	98.93	3.35%
- LOBOs				
- Other	5.00	0	5.00	4.71%
Short-term borrowing				
Total borrowing	103.93	0	103.93	4.03%
Long-term investments				
Short-term investments	5.80	-0.60	5.20	4.72%
Cash and cash equivalents				
Total investments				
Net borrowing	98.73	-0.60	98.13	

Borrowing Strategy and Activity

- 3.26 As outlined in the treasury strategy, the Authority's chief objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriately risk balance between securing lower interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required, with flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change being a secondary objective. The Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. At the present time short term interest rates are higher than long term interest rates.
- 3.27 Policy interest rates have risen substantially since 2021 although they have largely plateaued over the last year. Over the last quarter gilt yields have risen slightly overall, having had a number of peaks and troughs. There has been downward pressure from lower inflation figures, but also upward pressure from unexpectedly positive economic data. Data from the US continues to impact global markets including UK gilt yields.

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- 3.28 The PWLB certainty rate for 10-year maturity loans was 5.38% at the beginning of the period and 5.34% at the end. The lowest available 10-year maturity certainty rate was 5.17% and the highest was 5.62%. Rates for 20-year maturity loans ranged from 5.71% to 6.30% during the period, and 50-year maturity loans from 5.46% to 6.14%. The cost of short-term borrowing from other local authorities has been similar to Base Rate during the period at 4.0% to 4.5%.
- 3.29 CIPFA's 2021 Prudential Code is clear that local authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return and that it is not prudent for local authorities to make any investment or spending decision that will increase the capital financing requirement and so may lead to new borrowing, unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the Authority. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield unless these loans are for refinancing purposes. The Authority has no new plans to borrow to invest primarily for financial return.
- 3.30 **Loans Portfolio:** On 31st December, the Authority held £103.93m of loans, as part of its strategy for funding previous and current years' capital programmes. Outstanding loans on 31st December 2025 are summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Borrowing Position

	30.9.25 Balance £m	Net Movement £m	31.12.25 Balance £m	31.12.25 Weighted Average Rate %	31.12.25 Weighted Average Maturity (years)
Public Works Loan Board	98,93		98,93	3.35%	23
Banks (LOBO)					
Banks (fixed term)	5.00		5.00	4.71%	25
Local authorities (long-term)					
Local authorities (short-term)					
Total borrowing	103.93		103.93		

Treasury Investment Activity

- 3.31 The CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes (revised in 2021) defines treasury management investments as investments that arise from the organisation's cash flows or treasury risk management

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activity that ultimately represents balances that need to be invested until the cash is required for use in the course of business.

- 3.32 The Authority does not hold any invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the period, the Authority's investment balances ranged between £5.3 and £11.0 million due to timing differences between income and expenditure. The investment position is shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Treasury Investment Position

	30.9.25 Balance £m	Net Movement £m	31.12.25 Balance £m	31.12.25 Income Return %	31.12.25 Weighted Average Maturity days
Banks & building societies (unsecured)					
Banks & building societies (secured deposits)					
Covered bonds (secured)					
Government	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Local authorities and other govt entities					
Corporate bonds and loans					
Money Market Funds	5.8	-0.6	5.2	2.9%	30
Total investments	5.8	-0.6	5.2	0.0	0.0

- 3.33 Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the optimum rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.
- 3.34 As demonstrated by the liability benchmark in this report, the Authority expects to be a long-term investor and treasury investments therefore include both short-term low risk instruments to manage day-to-day cash flows and longer-term instruments where limited

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additional risk is accepted in return for higher investment income to support local public services.

- 3.35 Bank Rate was reduced to 3.75% in December 2025 and remained at that level through the rest of the quarter. Short-term interest rates largely followed this trend, staying close to the Bank Rate. The rates on DMADF deposits have been constant at 3.95%.

Non-Treasury Investments

- 3.36 The definition of investments in the Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Authority as well as other non-financial assets which the Authority holds primarily for financial return. Investments that do not meet the definition of treasury management investments (i.e. management of surplus cash) are categorised as either for service purposes (made explicitly to further service objectives) and or for commercial purposes (made primarily for financial return).
- 3.37 Investment Guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Welsh Government also includes within the definition of investments all such assets held partially or wholly for financial return.

Treasury Performance

- 3.38 The Authority measures the financial performance of its treasury management activities both in terms of its impact on the revenue budget and its relationship to benchmark interest rates, as shown in table 5 below.

Table 5: Performance

	Actual £m	Budget £m	Over/ under
<i>PWLB Maturity Loan 1</i>	15.00		
<i>PWLB Maturity Loan 2</i>	25.00		
<i>PWLB Maturity Loan 3</i>	40.00		
<i>PWLB Maturity Loan 4</i>	18.93		
<i>Barclays Loan</i>	5.00		
Total borrowing	103.93	175.00	-71.07
<i>Short-term Investments</i>	5.20	10.00	-4.80
Total treasury investments	5.20	10.00	-4.80

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- 3.39 On 10th April 2024 amended legislation and revised statutory guidance were published on Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The majority of the changes take effect from the 2025/26 financial year, although there is a requirement that for capital loans given on or after 7th May 2024 sufficient MRP must be charged so that the outstanding Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) in respect of the loan is no higher than the principal outstanding less the Expected Credit Loss (ECL) charge for that loan.
- 3.40 The regulations also require that local authorities cannot exclude any amount of their CFR from their MRP calculation unless by an exception set out in law. Capital receipts cannot be used to directly replace, in whole or part, the prudent charge to revenue for MRP (there are specific exceptions for capital loans and leased assets).

Compliance

- 3.41 The Director of Resources and Section 151 officer reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the quarter complied fully with the principles in the Treasury Management Code and the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy. Compliance with specific investment limits is demonstrated in table 6 below.

Table 6: Investment Limits

	2025/26 Maximum	31.12.25 Actual	2025/26 Limit	Complied? Yes/No
Any single organisation, except the UK Government	£4m each			
UK Central Government	Unlimited			
Unsecured investments with banks and building societies	£2.5m in total			
Loans to unrated corporates	£1m in total			
Money Market Funds	£20m in total	5.2m		Yes
Foreign countries	£5m per country			
Real Estate Investment Trusts	£2.5m in total			

- 3.42 Compliance with the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for external debt is demonstrated in table 7 below.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026**Table 7: Debt and the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary

	2025/26 Maximum	31.12.25 Actual	2025/26 Operational Boundary	2025/26 Authorised Limit	Complied? Yes/No
Borrowing	175.00	103.93	170.00	180.00	Yes
PFI and Finance Leases	1.50	0	1.50	1.50	Yes
Total debt	176.50	103.93	171.50	181.50	

- 3.43 Since the operational boundary is a management tool for in-year monitoring it is not significant if the operational boundary is breached on occasions due to variations in cash flow, and this is not counted as a compliance failure

Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

- 3.44 As required by the 2021 CIPFA Treasury Management Code, the Authority monitors and measures the following treasury management prudential indicators.

Liability Benchmark

- 3.45 This indicator compares the Authority's actual existing borrowing against a liability benchmark that has been calculated to show the lowest risk level of borrowing. The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. It represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level of £2m required to manage day-to-day cash flow

	31.3.25 Actual	31.3.26 Forecast	31.3.27 Forecast	31.3.28 Forecast
Loans CFR	149.26	153.79	158.21	159.98
Less: Balance sheet resources	-21.80	-22.10	-23.20	-22.90
Net loans requirement	127.46	130.69	135.01	137.08
Plus: Liquidity allowance	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20
Liability benchmark	127.66	130.89	135.21	137.28
Existing borrowing	103.93	113.22	116.87	117.54

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- 3.46 Following on from the medium-term forecast above, the long-term liability benchmark assumes capital expenditure funded by borrowing of £118m, minimum revenue provision on new capital expenditure based on a 40-year asset life and income, expenditure and reserves all increasing by inflation of 2.0% p.a. This is shown in the chart below together with the maturity profile of the Authority's existing borrowing. Presently borrowing has been delivered through the use of internal resources and the Council has no long-term borrowing.

Maturity Structure of Borrowing

- 3.47 This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of all borrowing were:

	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	31.12.25 Actual	Complied?
Under 12 months	50%	0%	0%	Yes
12 months and within 24 months	50%	0%	0%	Yes
24 months and within 5 years	50%	0%	0%	Yes
5 years and within 10 years	50%	0%	0%	Yes
10 years and above	100%	0%	0%	Yes

- 3.46 Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

Long-term Treasury Management Investments

- 3.47 The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The prudential limits on the long-term treasury management limits are:

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	No fixed date
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£0.5m	£0.5m	£0.5m	£0.5m
Actual principal invested beyond year end	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Complied?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

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- 3.48 Long-term investments with no fixed maturity date include strategic pooled funds, real estate investment trusts and directly held equity but exclude money market funds and bank accounts with no fixed maturity date as these are considered short-term.

Additional indicators**Security:**

- 3.49 The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

	2025/26 Target	31.12.25 Actual	Complied?
Portfolio average credit rating	A	UK Govt	Yes

Liquidity:

- 3.50 The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three-month period, without additional borrowing.

	31.12.25 Actual	2025/26 Target	Complied?
Total cash available within 3 months	Nil	Nil	Yes
Total sum borrowed in past 3 months without prior notice	Nil	Nil	Yes

Interest Rate Exposures:

- 3.51 This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk.

Interest rate risk indicator	2025/26 Target	31.12.25 Actual	Complied?
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>rise</u> in interest rates	500,000	0	Yes
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>fall</u> in interest rates	500,000	0	Yes

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3.52 For context, the changes in interest rates during the quarter were:

	<u>30/09/25</u>	<u>31/12/25</u>
Bank Rate	4.00%	3.75%
1-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.58%	4.37%
5-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.95%	4.78%
10-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	5.53%	5.34%
20-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	6.14%	5.88%
50-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	5.98%	5.71%

3.53 The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investment will be replaced at new market rates.

4. IMPLICATIONS**Legal Implications**

4.1 A number of statutes governing the provision of services covered by this report contain express powers or duties to charge for services. Where an express power to charge does not exist, the Council has the power under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 to charge where the activity is incidental or conducive to or calculated to facilitate the Councils statutory function.

Service / Operational Implications

4.2 Monitoring is undertaken to ensure that income targets are achieved, with Treasury Management activities taking place on a daily basis.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

4.3 The only impact of treasury transactions is in respect of ethical investment linked to the Councils investment counterparties. Presently the Council has a limited counterparty list based on financial risk to the Authority.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 There is always significant risk in relation to treasury transactions, this is why Councils appoint Treasury advisors, which in the case of Redditch is Arlingclose. In addition, there is the requirement in this area to provide an Annual Strategy report containing indicators/limits that must be met, a quarterly update and closure report all of which must be reported to full Council.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026****6. APPENDICES**

None

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

MTFP 2025/26 – February 2025 which contains this year's Capital Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy and MRP Policy.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Debra Goodall – Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services
(Deputy S151)

E Mail: Debra.Goodall@bromsgroveandredditchbc.gov.uk

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive****2nd March 2026****Appendix E - Procurement Pipeline**

Title	Council	Contract Value £
DMIC Build	Redditch	10,000,000
Retrofit WAVE 3 Contractor	Redditch	6,000,000
Fleet Replacement	Redditch	5,895,000
Fire Safety Works Contract - CLC Renewal	Redditch	4,500,000
Fleet Replacement	Redditch	1,950,000
Remodel - Auxerre House	Redditch	1,500,000
Civil Engineering Works	Redditch	1,500,000
Loxley Close - Development	Redditch	1,300,000
Retrofit WAVE 3 Assessor and Designer	Redditch	1,000,000
Retrofit WAVE 3 Co-ordinator	Redditch	1,000,000
Void Contract	Redditch	1,000,000
Communal Boiler Replacement	Redditch	700,000
External Staircase	Redditch	500,000
Refurbishment of the Anchorage	Redditch	500,000
Roofing Repairs and Replacement	Redditch	500,000
Microsoft Licences	Redditch	483,000
Fire Alarm and Emergency Lighting Servicing, Repairs and Installation	Redditch	430,000
Commercial Heating Systems Servicing, Maintenance and Installations	Redditch	350,000
Lift Installation and Refurbishment	Redditch	300,000
Data SIMS	Redditch	300,000
Door Entry, Access Control Planned, Responsive Maintenance	Redditch	300,000
Supply of HVO Fuel	Redditch	300,000
Refuse and Recycling Products	Redditch	250,000
Fencing and Groundworks	Redditch	250,000
Vehicle Hire	Redditch	200,000
Domestic Food Collection	Joint	23,000,000
Hybrid Mail Solution - Sending Letters	Joint	2,500,000
Corporate Building Electrical Contract	Joint	2,500,000
Food Caddy Purchase and Delivery	Joint	1,300,000
Public Space CCTV Maintenance	Joint	400,000
Fire Alarm, Extinguisher Contract	Joint	380,000
Lifeline Call Handling	Joint	200,000
eFinancials RTU Extension	Joint	208,598

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive

2nd March 2026

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 17th February,
2026

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer (Chair), Councillor Craig Warhurst (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Claire Davies, James Fardoe, Andrew Fry and Rita Rogers

Officers:

Guy Revans, Simon Parry, Debra Goodall, Jonathan Elger and Andrew Rainbow

Democratic Services Officers:

M Sliwinski

69. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Boyd, Mathur, and Wren. The Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Hartnett, had also submitted his apologies.

70. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest nor of party whip.

71. MINUTES

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 12th January 2026 were submitted for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that

The minutes of the meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 12th January 2026 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

72. PUBLIC SPEAKING

Chair

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 17th February, 2026

There were no public speakers registered to speak at this meeting.

73. **TASK GROUPS, SHORT SHARP REVIEWS AND WORKING GROUPS - UPDATE REPORTS**

[With agreement of the Committee, agenda item 12 - Task Groups, Short Sharp Reviews and Working Groups - Update Reports – was considered at this point in the meeting (after agenda item 4 – Public Speaking)].

The Working Group and Task Group updates were provided as follows:

a) Budget Scrutiny Working Group

Councillor Warhurst reported that the Group was due to meet on Friday 20th February 2026. An interim Budget update would also be provided at this meeting. An update on the Council's Budget position was subsequently provided by the Assistant Director for Finance and Customer Services.

It was noted that the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) position as reported in the MTFP 2026/27 to 2028/29 at the Executive Committee meeting on 13th January 2026 was an overspend of £345,000 for 2026/27, an underspend of £55,000 in 2027/28, and an underspend of £85,000 in 2028/29. Members were informed that there had been a number of movements since and the updated position on MTFP as of this meeting was that of an £177,000 underspend in 2026/27, £224,000 underspend in 2027/28, and £686,000 underspend in 2028/29.

It was explained that this updated MTFP position was due to a number of factors. For this financial year, the previously budgeted gap of £1,062 million had been managed down through work around vacancy provision and, in addition, there had been changes to the Council's calculation of business rates appeals and loses in line with Government's recommended practice and changes to assumptions on Members' allowances reducing costs. An additional Council Tax growth had been built for 2027/28 as 180 properties would be added in the Borough and there were assumptions of Council Tax increases of 2.99% for 2027/28 and 2028/29. It was reported that the three-year final local government finance settlement for 2026/27 to 2028/29 had not resulted in significant movements to the Council's budget position compared to previous assumptions.

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The Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services highlighted that the key risks within the budget around the vacancy figure saving built into the budget following the establishment review, the inflation assumptions around areas such as Council's contracts, and the delivery of £250,000 of savings across service areas as the savings targets had not been delivered by all service areas. It was highlighted that capital financing available to the Council at present was also restricted at £1.1 million compared to £1.6 million submitted in capital funding bids by the service areas and Rubicon.

In addition there were challenges in terms of the impact of local government reorganisation (LGR) on the Council's revenue, sustainability constraints, and the need to deliver projects requested by elected members before the unitary local government structure is due to come into effect in April 2028.

To address these challenges, it was explained by the Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services that the review of reserves had been carried out and following this it had been proposed to create the following Reserves:

- Risk Reserve of £2.5 million
- Local Government Reorganisation Reserve of £500,000 in 2026/27 and £500,000 in 2027/28 (which would be profiled so that expenditure was matched to demand)
- Community Investment Fund of £1.6 million – to add to the current £1.1 million capital financing available and provide fund for projects.

It was noted that the Council also would work on policy for flexible use of capital receipts to utilise those for transformation projects where possible. It would also be the aim to increase the General Fund reserves slightly over the next three years.

Following the presentation of the Budget Update, questions and comments were made as follows:

- Mitigation of the £1.062 million budget gap – It was explained by Officers that the budget gap emerging out of last year's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) had been mitigated through work on this year's budget through proposals as set out in the presentation provided.
- Utilising reserves before the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) – The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Performance, Engagement and Governance

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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addressed the Committee and explained that the Executive was currently reviewing the capital projects proposals for utilising some of the Council's reserves before LGR unitarisation. It was explained that the Council needed to account for and assess what funds were realistically required for LGR. The Deputy Leader added that the reserves that could be utilised by the Council before LGR were therefore lower than the Council's total reserves figure and the Council made a commitment to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) that a proportion of the authority's reserves would be handed over to a new unitary authority structure.

- Members queried when plans would be finalised for investing the Council's reserves that could be utilised prior to the unitarisation in initiatives in Redditch. It was responded that most spend decisions were not yet made and that these decisions would take place over the next few months. The Deputy Leader explained that among the initiatives to be funded would be upgrades to or creation of play areas in parts of the Borough where this provision was lacking or insufficient.
- A question was raised regarding the protracted arrangements regarding some of the specific section 106 agreements. It was responded that a review of the Council's Section 106 arrangements was currently ongoing. Officers undertook to provide a response to Members regarding the specific query raised in the meeting.

b) Performance Scrutiny Working Group

Councillor Warhurst reported that there were currently no meetings of Performance Scrutiny that were planned to take place.

c) Post-16 Education Task Group

The Chair of the Task Group, Councillor Warhurst, reported that the next meeting of the Task Group was due to take place tomorrow (18th February).

RESOLVED that

the Task Groups and Working Groups Update Reports be noted.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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74. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LGR) - UPDATE REPORT

An update was provided on the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) including the reminder of the current timetable for LGR and the work that had been undertaken already in preparation for LGR and the future work arrangements.

It was recapped that five district authorities in Worcestershire: Redditch Borough, Bromsgrove District, Malvern Hills, Worcester City, and Wychavon had submitted a joint proposal to Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) titled Transforming Worcestershire advocating for the North/South two unitary option in Worcestershire. The other proposal that was submitted by Worcestershire County Council and Wyre Forest District Council was advocating a single unitary authority for Worcestershire. The Government's statutory consultation on these proposals was expected to launch shortly and following these the Government would be considering the proposals and was expected to make its decision before the summer recess in July 2026.

The Executive Director reported that following a successful system wide workshop on the 7th of January 2026 with Chief Executives, Monitoring Officers, Transformation leads and Section 151 Finance Officers from every authority in Worcestershire, the Councils had established interim governance for preparatory pre-decision activity in regard to LGR from January 2026 until receipt of a decision from MHCLG before the summer recess in July 2026. A monthly LGR Programme Board had been established with Chief Executives from the seven authorities as core members. This board will report to Members via the cross-county Leaders Board as necessary.

There were five key workstreams as part of this preparations phase and senior officers from Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils were the Senior Responsible Officers (SROs) in respect of two of the workstreams – on Programme Management and Service Delivery.

Following the presentation of the report, it was commented that part of the rationale for the Council allocating a £500,000 per year LGR reserve was to support the transformation and allow officers to charge any costs associated with LGR transformation work to the reserve created. It was further commented by Members that there would be resource issues associated that would be increasing as the LGR progressed that would need to be considered and planned for.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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RESOLVED that

- 1) the progress to date in submitting an application to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for a two-unitary model titled, 'Transforming Worcestershire', be noted.
- 2) the governance that has been established for Local Government Reorganisation in Worcestershire and the next steps outlined in this paper be noted.

75. QUARTER 3 HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE - PRE-SCRUTINY

A Quarter 3 update on the Housing Improvement Plan was provided for Members' consideration. A summary of progress against each of the Consumer Standards was presented within the report and some of the Consumer Standards metrics were highlighted within the presentation for this item.

The overall progress was that 15 actions within the Housing Improvement Plan had been completed within Quarter 3 of 2025/26 compared to 6 completed actions at Quarter 2. 9 of the actions completed at Quarter 3 were denoted as green-rated.

On the overdue repairs and maintenance jobs, it was reported that since the Regulatory Judgment, the number of overdue jobs had reduced from circa 3,000 to 1,047 at the end of Quarter 3.

In terms of overdue fire safety remedial actions, it was explained by Officers that there would be a proposal within the budget to provide additional funding to finance fire door/compartimentation works and accelerate the programme.

In terms of engagement with the tenants, new communications strategy was currently being drafted and a draft engagement policy was being worked on and was expected to be presented before the Overview and Scrutiny and Executive Committees in June 2026. This year's Tenant Satisfaction Survey was reported to have achieved 887 responses which was a 35 per cent increase on last year's response rate. It was expected that the Civica Cx Tenants Portal would go live in April 2026.

To strengthen staff resourcing, following a review, a Senior Complaints Officer had been recruited, starting in December 2025,

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and the post of a Complaints Officer would be recruited to in Q4 2025/26.

For anti-social behaviour (ASB), there was one outstanding item relating to the implementation of an ASB module on the Housing Management Software, which was to provide greater consistency and performance in monitoring of cases.

A Member commented that the report appeared to indicate that issues with software systems for housing management and for repairs and maintenance were among the main reasons preventing the Council from addressing the backlog in repairs and issues around tenants portal and housing management.

The Assistant Director Environmental and Housing Property Services clarified that the Civica Housing Management System was operating correctly and the use of the system by the Council had evolved as Officers learned and utilised more modules on the system. In contrast, there had been issues experienced with the Total Mobile repairs and maintenance system with the project being behind schedule. To address the problems experienced, the Council's Officers met with Total Mobile representatives, and a project team had been formed to work on resolving these problems.

It was highlighted that the Total Mobile project implementation suffered from issues such as initial consultant assigned to work with the Council not being able to effectively resolve the issues that the Council experienced with the system as well as previous issues with capacity in the Housing Team hampering the project. The focus remained on staff members being trained to feel confident in using the system before it would be rolled out and it was now expected that the Total Mobile system would go live in May 2026.

The number of stock condition surveys undertaken was queried as Members commented that the proportion of the housing stock having had the survey completed was reported at a higher figure in prior years. It was clarified that the Social Housing Regulator required the figure for stock condition surveys to reflect those done over the last five years only. The Council's figure had dropped because there was a drop in the number of surveys undertaken, in particular over the pandemic period. It was noted that as of present only 20 per cent of housing stock had a condition survey undertaken in the last five years with 25 per cent having no recorded condition survey. It was explained that from 2022-23 there had been an increase in the number of surveys undertaken and

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there was a programme in place to improve the reported figure to 100 per cent.

The Assistant Director Environmental and Housing Property Services explained that the format of the quarterly Housing reports would change for the next quarter with a forward view of what is planned in terms of work for the next quarter and a statistical summary showing if the planned work targets had been met.

A question was asked with respect of the frequency at which the Council revaluated its housing stock property values. It was responded that there was annual valuation in place.

RESOLVED that

the Housing Improvement Plan Quarter 3 2025/26 Update, which includes actions to address areas for improvement, confirmed as part of the Regulator of Social Housing inspection process, be noted.

76. QUARTER 3 HOUSING PERFORMANCE - PRE-SCRUTINY

The Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services presented the Housing Consumer Standards Report for Quarter 3 2025/26. The report detailed the Council's performance in relation to 10 of the Regulator of Social Housing tenant satisfaction measures.

It was reported that there had been some improvement compared to Quarter 2 in respect of the Homes that Do Not Meet the Decent Homes Standards measure. The current non-decency percentage (i.e. housing stock properties which did not meet the Decent Homes Standard) was 10.95 per cent, which was a decrease from a figure of 11.90 per cent at Quarter 2.

For non-emergency and emergency repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale, it was noted that there had been a plateau in performance over Quarter 3. In terms of outstanding repairs, an example was given in terms of 40 outstanding fencing jobs. Work was ongoing to assess the shortfall in performance against the priority codes and to ensure that accurate and timely closure of jobs was completed on the system.

Most measures under maintaining building safety showed 100 per cent compliance with issues experienced in electrical test of communal areas (EI02) where the performance had fallen below

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target due to two electrical inspection certificates having yet to be received from the contractor. The Council had also experienced resource issues in the area of electrical compliance through this quarter with the Electrical Compliance Manager leaving in September 2025 and the Council being unable to recruit into this position either on a permanent or temporary basis. In the interim, corrective actions were identified through the contractor carrying out the inspections.

The complaints performance was discussed and it was noted that at Quarter 3 there had been more complaints received, largely due to seasonal issue with wetter weather resulting in more issues such as leaks. 80 per cent of complaints received over Quarter 3 related to repairs and maintenance.

In terms of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), it was reported that at Quarter 3, 55 new ASB cases were started and 56 cases were closed within the period. The team were managing 65 live ASB cases as of report writing. It was highlighted that there was a year-on-year rise in the number of ASB cases and it was thought that several factors contributed to this increase, such as the continued cost of living crisis and the impact of this on people's mental health and general wellbeing as well as the year-on-year improvements in the Council's recording and capturing of incidents of ASB/Nuisance and Hate Crime.

It was highlighted that with the new Neighbourhood and Tenancy Team structure coming into place and expected to be fully staffed by March 2026, a further rise in ASB cases as all local areas in the Borough would be covered by a Neighbourhood and Tenancy Officer. However, to provide more prevention support, there would also be an increase in the numbers in the Tenancy Sustainment Team which should stop many cases from escalating to enforcement.

Following the presentation of the report, there were several aspects of the report discussed by Members:

- Number of properties with gas supply capped – It was clarified that the figure of 181 at paragraph 3.10 referred to the total number of properties that had their gas supply capped as of the end of Quarter 3. This compared to 204 properties at end of Quarter 2. It was explained that in some cases this was due to the tenants themselves requesting to have their gas supply capped, but there was some concern about the number of properties where Officers had not been

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admitted to undertake gas inspections and where access could not be gained the gas supply had been capped for safety reasons.

- It was reported that the properties where gas was capped for a more significant period of time were prioritised in terms of tenancy visits and details were shared with the Neighbourhood and Tenancy team to provide opportunity for tenancy visits to ensure any underlying issues could be identified and support solutions for the household provided. It was further clarified that where gas to the property was capped, the tenant remained responsible for arranging matters with their gas supplier such as ending the contract, and the tenant rather than the Council remained liable for any gas bills.
- Carbon monoxide detectors – A question was asked about the brand and model of carbon monoxide detectors being installed by the Council in its housing stock. Officers undertook to provide details of this to Members.
- A specific question was asked by a Member with regard to the condition of the steps in Abbeydale. Officers commented that there had been issues identified including with threads and depth of cover on the steps which was being investigated by the Council. A specific response would be provided to the Member concerned outside the meeting.

RESOLVED that

the Council's Quarter 3 Housing Performance for 2025/26 in respect of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (Landlord) be noted.

77. REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE AND DAMP AND MOULD POLICIES - PRE-SCRUTINY

The report in respect of the Repairs & Maintenance Policy and the Damp & Mould Policy was presented to Committee. It was noted that these policies, subject to consideration at this Overview and Scrutiny meeting, recommendation by Executive Committee and approval by Full Council, would cover all Council house tenants regardless of tenancy type.

It was highlighted that in the Repairs and Maintenance and Damp and Mould Policies, the Council planned to introduce a new

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 17th February, 2026

timescale for completion of larger works (titled Planned Maintenance Repair) where the target time for completion would be up to 60 working days. This would be for works which could not wait to be completed as part of the investment works programme and would be dealt with on a programmed repairs basis.

Following the presentation, Members discussed several matters in relation to the report and the Policies:

- Communication with the tenants regarding the Repairs and Maintenance and the Damp and Mould Policies – It was reported that these new policies would be communicated to residents through the Council's website, which would be updated once these Policies are approved, and detail would also be included in the Housing Annual Report which is sent to all tenants in printed form.
- Advice on mould and damp – It was remarked that more reliable information and education on the need to appropriately ventilate properties to prevent damp and mould was needed, including through modernising the Council's website and offering more responsive advice so that information was quickly available to the tenants.
- Need for professional information on damp and mould prevention – Members discussed the need for a better, more targeted communication from the Council around damp and mould prevention. It was commented that it was important to provide messaging and advice to challenge perceptions, such as to opinions that actions to eliminate damp/mould such as keeping heating at higher temperature and ventilating homes regularly would lead to more expensive and unaffordable energy bills.
- Officers explained that work with the third sector around provision of advice and support was important as was work of the Housing Tenancy Team to ensure tenants who needed financial support were claiming the correct benefits for example.
- Overcrowding and rehousing of tenants in cases of damp and mould issues that could not be resolved – It was explained that overcrowding did not lead in itself to damp and mould issues, however, because the property was overcrowded this could lead to other issues that in turn led to damp and mould. It was noted that provision of alternative

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properties or temporary housing was dependent on the turnaround in the void properties that the Council had; however, in cases where no resolution to issues with serious damp and mould could be found and there were no void properties available, then temporary accommodation would be provided for tenants in the property affected. If the property could not be brought up to acceptable standard, the tenants affected would also be put on the appropriate priority council house waiting list banding so they could be re-housed as soon as possible.

- Members discussed the possibility of adding references to sources of financial support available to tenants who were struggling with damp and mould and were finding it difficult to afford energy heating costs to the Damp and Mould Policy as well a reference to advice on how tenants could better insulate their homes to prevent issues with damp and mould. The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Performance, Engagement and Governance reassured the Committee that these suggestions would be reported to and considered by the Executive Committee but added that naming any specific support organisations within the Policy should be avoided.

Following the discussion, the recommendations that the Repairs and Maintenance Policy and the Damp and Mould Policy both be approved were endorsed by the Committee.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) The Repairs and Maintenance Policy, which forms part of the Councils Housing Asset Management Strategy, be approved.**
- 2) The Damp and Mould Policy, which forms part of the Councils Housing Asset Management Strategy, be approved.**

78. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

The Chair presented the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2025-26 for consideration by Committee Members. The final report would be presented to the Full Council meeting on 2nd March 2026.

RESOLVED that

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 17th February, 2026

the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2025-26 be approved.

79. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME - SELECTING ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY

The Executive Committee Work Programme was submitted for Members' consideration. It was noted that an update on environmental enforcement from Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) would be provided at the next meeting of Overview and Scrutiny (16th March) in addition to the scrutiny of the two Executive reports by WRS that were added to the Overview and Scrutiny work programme previously.

RESOLVED that

the Executive Committee's Work Programme be noted.

80. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme was submitted for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that

the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be noted.

81. EXTERNAL SCRUTINY BODIES - UPDATE REPORTS

Updates on the meetings of External Scrutiny Bodies were provided as follows:

- a) West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Overview and Scrutiny Committee

As Councillor Boyd submitted his apologies for this meeting, there was no update on this external scrutiny body.

- b) West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny

Councillor Fardoe reported that he had submitted his apologies at the last meeting of the Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny.

- c) Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)

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Councillor Fry reported that there were recent postponements and cancellations to meetings of this Committee and there was currently a busy work programme with the most recent meeting taking place on 11th February 2026 at which annual review of Public Health and overview from the West Midlands Ambulance Service were considered.

Councillor Fry reported a concern with the number of vacancies on the HOSC. There were currently three vacancies on the HOSC all of which were from Worcestershire County Council elected members.

RESOLVED that

the External Scrutiny Bodies updates be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 8.07 pm

**Executive Committee
2026****17 March****Grants to Voluntary Bodies Awarding of Grants 2026/27**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Juma Begum
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Judith Willis, Assistant Director Community & Housing Services
Report Author	Job Title: Judith Willis Contact email: judith.willis@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 64525
Wards Affected	All wards, although specific grants are proposed for organisations that are based in Astwood Bank and Feckenham, Matchborough and Woodrow and North Ward
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Economy, Regeneration & Prosperity Green, Clean & Safe Community & Housing
Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	
This report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS**The Executive Committee RESOLVE that:-**

- 1) **grants be awarded to voluntary sector organisations as detailed in paragraph 3.3 of this report and as set out below:**

Organisation	Funding Recommended	Project
Acorns	£10,000	Specialist palliative care for children from Redditch
Astwood Bank Community CIC	£10,000	Astwood Bank Carnival

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Carers Careline	£10,000	Carers Careline support for unpaid carers
P&E Sports CIC	£10,000	Matchborough Positive Activities for Young People
Primrose hospice	£9,225	Volunteer and Befrienders Wellbeing
Redditch Nightstop	£10,000	Safe Accommodation & Support Project
Where Next	£10,000	Where Next Redditch Core Costs
YMCA	£9,184	Church Hill Youth Wellbeing & Mentoring Support
New Starts	£5000	Local People Helping Local People
Oasis	£5000	Christians Against Poverty Debt Centre
Total	£88,409	

- 2) **the additional wording in bold set out below, be added to paragraph 9.5 of the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Policy in order to allow scoring to support smaller and local charitable organisations:**

“There will be no pre-determined demographic allocation of funds but priority will be given to local Redditch organisations whose projects are based in Redditch and funding will be used only for the benefit of Redditch residents, this is compared to larger national charities”

2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 On 2 September 2025, the Executive Committee approved the Voluntary Sector Grants Scheme for the period 2026/27 to 2028/29. Approval included that a Grants Panel, comprising elected Members, to

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17 March

be established to consider and make recommendations to the Executive Committee in relation to higher grants (valued at £2k up to £10k).

- 2.2 There is a total grants pot of £100k available to the voluntary sector available to apply for, of which £90k is for higher grants. There is a lower grants pot of £10k with an Officer panel for the lower grant application decisions.
- 2.3 A Grants to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Grants Policy was also approved by the Executive Committee, and a copy is attached at Appendix 2.
- 2.4 The Grants Panel was nominated and approved by Executive Committee on 6 November 2025. The Panel Comprises of: Councillor Warhurst (Chair) and Councillors Dormer, Munrow, Rogers and Wren.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The Higher Voluntary Sector Grants were advertised in November 2025. A total of 29 grants applications were received. The value of all applications was £274,692 compared to the available budget of £90k.
- 3.2 The Grants Panel considered all the applications at meetings held on 2nd and 16th December 2025. The applications were scored in line with the VCS Grants Policy and using a scoring matrix. A list of all successful organisations that applied are contained in Appendix 1 and a list of unsuccessful organisations are contained in Appendix 3 (Exempt item).
- 3.3 Following the scoring of the applications the Grants Panel recommend the following grants to be awarded:

Organisation	Funding Recommended	Project
Acorns	£10,000	Specialist palliative care for children from Redditch
Astwood Bank Community CIC	£10,000	Astwood Bank Carnival

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Carers Careline	£10,000	Carers Careline support for unpaid carers
P&E Sports CIC	£10,000	Matchborough Positive Activities for Young People
Primrose hospice	£9,225	Volunteer and Befrienders Wellbeing
Redditch Nightstop	£10,000	Safe Accommodation & Support Project
Where Next	£10,000	Where Next Redditch Core Costs
YMCA	£9,184	Church Hill Youth Wellbeing & Mentoring Support
New Starts	£5000	Local People Helping Local People
Oasis	£5000	Christians Against Poverty Debt Centre
Total	£88,409	

- 3.4 During consideration of the applications, the Grants Panel recommended that the Grants Policy be amended to enable future scoring to proactively support smaller and local charitable organisations.
- 3.5 It is proposed that the Grants Policy and the associated Scoring Matrix is amended to include: There will be no pre-determined demographic allocation of funds **but priority will be given to local Redditch organisations whose projects are based in Redditch and funding will be used only for the benefit of Redditch residents, this is compared to larger national charities.** This recommended amendment is shown in bold text in section 9.5 of the Policy attached as Appendix 2. An additional criteria will also be added to the Scoring Matrix to reflect this priority.

**Executive Committee
2026****17 March**

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The allocation of the £90k grant funding is contained within the Council's approved budget, as recommended by Executive Committee and approved by the subsequent Council meeting in September 2025.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council needs to continue to ensure that it has a transparent and fair grants scheme and ensure that we comply with the 2015 Local Government Transparency Code.
- 5.2 Whilst grant funding and concessions to the VCS are not a statutory function, under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to incur expenditure which in its opinion is in the interest of and will bring direct benefit to its area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants. The direct benefit accruing must also be commensurate with the expenditure incurred.
- 5.3 There is further power to make grants to voluntary organisations providing recreational facilities under section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. Depending on the option within this report that is approved, a new VCS grants policy will be required.
- 5.4 Local Authorities must comply with the 2015 Local Government Transparency Code and Best Value Duties.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**Local Government Reorganisation**

- 6.1 The Scheme will operate until 28/29 at which point Local Government Reorganisation may have taken place in Worcestershire and the Scheme would operate under new authority. Any new authority would then determine future funding for a Grants Scheme within the Borough. No other District Council in the County operates a Grants Scheme to this level. Bromsgrove District Council operates a smaller Equalities Grants Scheme worth £10k per annum. The other Districts have Grant Schemes that are available such as rural communities funding, but this is external.
- 6.2 Worcestershire County Council Public Health fund a variety of Voluntary Sector and Community Schemes.

**Executive Committee
2026****17 March**

- 6.3 There is a Strengthening Worcestershire fund that is match funded by Worcestershire County Council which is delivered by the Community Foundation on their behalf, as they must generate match funding to give out alongside the County Council's contribution to grow their investment pot.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.4 The Grants to Voluntary Bodies Scheme supports work across the third sector that support the Councils vision "A Council which listens to and delivers quality services for our communities, residents and businesses" and the Council priorities:

- Economy, Regeneration & Prosperity
- Green, Clean & Safe
- Community & Housing

Climate Change Implications

- 6.5 The green thread runs through the Council Plan. It is proposed that, should the scheme continue for 2026/27 and 2028/29, there will continue to be a question on the application form, although not included in the scoring, which would ensure applicants were giving consideration to the impact of climate change.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.6 The VCS support many members of the community and add social value. Alongside this, the sector support community relations and cohesion. In submitting funding applications organisations are asked 'who is your target audience and how do you ensure that your proposed project/service will reach them and will be open and accessible to all?' The panel scored this element of the application. Organisations are also asked, where appropriate, to confirm they have an Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy in place.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Given the number of organisations applying for this funding, the Council are unable to fund the breadth and diversity of projects versus the number of organisations who applied. However, organisations such as

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Bromsgrove and Redditch Network offer support to more inexperienced groups in finding and applying for other sources of funding. The UKSPF for 25/26 also provided funding to support the Voluntary Sector and Community Groups with bid writing training.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – List of Successful Grant Applications

Appendix 2 – Voluntary & Community Sector Grants Policy

Appendix 3 – List of Unsuccessful Grant Application (Exempt item)

Background Papers - Voluntary Sector Grants Scheme for the period 2026/27 to 2028/29 Executive Committee report dated 2nd September 2025 - [REPORT TITLE](#)

**Executive Committee
2026****17 March****9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Begum	14/1/26
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Guy Revans, Executive Director	14/1/25
Financial Services	Deb Goodall Assistant Director Finance and Customer Service	14/1/26
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings Principal Solicitor - Governance	14/01/26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green Policy Manager	14/1/26
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Not applicable	N/A

Appendix 1 successful higher grant applications 2026-27

The amount available for the 2026-27 Higher Main Grant Programme is £90k. The Council welcomed applications from VCS organisations for projects, programmes, events, initiatives and core costs for the value of £2k to £10k The Council's grant programme is based around the Strategic Purposes of Redditch Borough Council. These are:

- Economy, regeneration and prosperity
- Green, clean and safe
- Community and housing

Organisation	Name of the Project	Amount requested	Comments
Acorns	Specialist Palliative Care for children from Redditch	£10,000	
Astwood Bank Community Group CIC	Astwood Bank Carnival	£10,000	
Carers Careline	Carers Careline	£10,000	
NewStarts	Local People Helping Local People	£5,000	
Oasis Christian Centre	Christians Against Poverty Debt Centre	£5,000	
P&E Sports CIC	Matchborough Positive Activities for Young People	£10,000	
Primrose Hospice	Volunteer and Befrienders Well-Being	£9,225	
Redditch Nightstop	Safe Accommodation & Support Project	£10,000	
Where Next Association	Where Next Redditch core costs	£10,000	
YMCA Worcestershire	Church Hill Youth Wellbeing & Mentoring Support	£9,184	
Total available for allocation			£90,000
Total of successful applications			£88,409

Appendix 2

**REDDITCH BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

**POLICY FOR GRANT
FUNDING TO THE
VOLUNTARY AND
COMMUNITY SECTOR
(VCS) APRIL 2026 -
MARCH 2029**

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL POLICY FOR GRANT FUNDING TO THE
VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR (VCS) 2026 - 2029**

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**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL POLICY FOR GRANT GIVING TO THE
VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR (VCS) 2026 - 2029**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Redditch Borough Council recognises and supports the valuable role of the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in helping resident's access activities, services and advice in areas such as health, welfare, sport, recreation, culture and education.
- 1.2 Working closely with VCS in Redditch helps deliver and add value to the Council's own services, meet the objectives in its corporate plan and support its communities to thrive.
- 1.3 This policy is for Councillors, Officers and the VCS to:
- Guide the allocation of funding, ensuring decisions are consistent, fair and transparent
 - Provide a coordinated funding service to the VCS
 - Ensure value for money
- 1.4 Under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to incur expenditure which in its opinion is in the interest of and will bring direct benefit to its area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants. The direct benefit accruing must also be commensurate with the expenditure to be incurred. The Council needs to continue to ensure that it has a transparent and fair grants scheme, ensuring that we comply with the 2015 Local Government Transparency Code.
- 1.5 There is further power to make grants to voluntary organisations providing recreational facilities under Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This Policy applies to the allocation of grants to Voluntary and Community Sector organisations through the Council's VCS Grants Programme. It does not apply to any other means of financial support from the Council that may be available under other schemes.
- 2.2 There may be other VCS Grant funding opportunities available which can be facilitated by the Council on behalf of another organisation where parts of this policy would be relevant.
- 2.3 This policy will be utilised by Members and Officers to guide decision making around the VCS Grants Programme. Members and Officers may apply discretion to the policy in exceptional circumstances if it is deemed appropriate.

3. PURPOSE OF GRANT FUNDING

- 3.1 Redditch Borough Council is committed to supporting Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to help them deliver projects and activities which have a positive and beneficial impact on the local community and its residents.
- 3.2 The Council's VCS Grants Programme will make financial contributions to support certain Voluntary and Community Sector groups in Redditch that actively assist the community to enjoy a better quality of life.
- 3.3 The Council Plan 2025 – 2028 was developed in consultation with a range of stakeholders to agree the priorities the council should focus on. At the heart of the Council Plan are three main priorities:
- Building strong economic development
 - A clean, green and safe Redditch
 - Housing which meets the needs of our communities

Applications for grant funding will only be provided where it is demonstrated that a defined and positive impact will be made. Organisations must demonstrate an outcome focussed approach and that their project and/or activity will clearly support one or more of the Council's Core Priorities.

Periodically, the Executive Committee can review the amount available to the VCS through the Programme and how this may be allocated.

4. AVAILABLE FUNDING

- 4.1 In 2025-26 the amount of VCS Grant funding was approximately £150k. For the period 2026-29, it will remain at £150k. This includes £50k which is ring fenced for a grant in respect of Financial Advice and Problem-Solving category, leaving a total of £100k for the Main Grants Programme.
- 4.2 The separate £10k pot specifically for projects seeking grants between £500 and £2k will remain for 2026-29. This ensures smaller initiatives receive enhanced consideration and more opportunity in the competitive bidding process. The remaining £90k will be used for higher grants over £2k and up to £10k.

There are separate application forms for each size of grant.

- 4.3 VCS organisations can bid for funding for core costs, project, salary, events, and equipment costs.
- 4.4 VCS groups may only submit one application to the Financial Advice and Problem-Solving Grant category (if applicable) and one application to the VCS main Grants Programme. A further application may be made to the VCS main Grants Programme if it is in partnership with another VCS organisation(s).

5. WHO CAN APPLY

5.1 To be eligible to apply for a grant, an organisation must be able to prove that:

- it is voluntary, non-profit making and operated with no undue restrictions or limitations on membership;
- it is not a statutory organisation;
- they have a clear legal identity - they can demonstrate effective management of the organisation's business;
- it has a bank account in the name of the organisation that requires the authorisation of at least two people who are unrelated to each other and who do not live in the same household to make payments or withdrawals of any kind from the account;
- any proposed project and/or services are undertaken in the Borough of Redditch, and/or will be wholly or principally for the direct benefit of residents in the Borough of Redditch;
- it actively promotes equality issues within its structure and operations;
- it meets all legal requirements;
- any previous grants received from Redditch Borough Council have been spent in accordance with the grant award conditions attached to them; and
- it does not have more than 12 months' worth of expenditure in reserves or savings.

6. WHAT WILL AND WILL NOT BE FUNDED BY A GRANT

6.1 The following highlights what types of applications will or will not be funded.

What will be funded:

- Grant applications will only be considered for projects and activities that will be undertaken in the Borough of Redditch, and/or will be for the direct benefit of its residents.
- Grants may be given to fund core costs of VCS groups, direct delivery of projects/activities and revenue or capital projects (excluding structural purchases i.e. building or building works).
- The Council encourages joint/partnership applications from more than one voluntary sector organisation.

What will NOT be funded:

- Grants will NOT be awarded to any organisation if it is deemed to be a political party, has the nature of a political party, or is engaged in campaigning for a political purpose or cause.
- Funds will NOT be provided for the furtherance or propagation of a faith promoted by any organisation which is, or is deemed by the Council to be, of a religious nature. This does not exclude applications from faith-based groups who want to deliver community-based projects.

- The programme will NOT fund structural purchases, i.e. buildings or building works.
- Grants CANNOT be used for retrospective funding; that is to replace money that has already been spent, or to cover items or services that have already been bought.
- No ongoing commitment should be given to the funding of salary costs or the project. This is a one-off payment.
- If funding for the same project has been awarded from another awarding body – duplicate funding will not be authorised.
- The Council reserves the right to not fund VCS organisations that have outstanding debts to the Council or if there is a record of unsatisfactory monitoring from previous funding by the Council.

6.2 Any grant awarded must only be used for the approved purpose, i.e. applicants must be able to demonstrate how the funding will be spent as outlined in their grant application and they will have to retain evidence of actual expenditure and provide this for future monitoring purposes.

7. RISK CONSIDERATIONS IN GRANT GIVING

7.1 The Council has a clear duty to ensure that best use is made of its resources. Risk is considered in this process in relation to failure to achieve best use of Council resources.

7.2 The Council does understand however that the creativity and innovation of the voluntary sector can carry risks for non-delivery, for example where a new idea does not work out as intended but will use the general principle of requiring a lower level of risk the higher the amount of funding provided. Maximum levels of funding will only be provided where the risk of non-delivery is very low.

7.3 In order to achieve an appropriate balance between managing risk and supporting innovative ideas or new organisations, a grant limit of £2,000 will apply to:

- organisations that have been in existence for less than one year; and
- organisations that do not have audited accounts.

Any project or activity proposals above this amount will require the group or organisation to:

- have a good track record of delivery;
- be in receipt of a range of funding streams;
- be registered with either the Charity Commission or Companies House, or other appropriate government regulator; and
- have a set of their latest audited accounts.

Evidence of all the above will need to be provided through the application process.

7.4 Payment schedules will also support the monitoring of accountability for use of public money whilst appreciating the possible cash-flow issues that may be experienced by voluntary and community sector organisations. The general principle will be that a payment schedule of frequent monitoring and instalments is agreed with Grants Team staff. General guidelines for payment schedules are:

- Grants of £2,000 or less will be paid in full in advance of the project being delivered. Payment will be made to successful applicants within 2 months of approval with monitoring information required once the project or activity is successfully delivered;
- Grants over £2,000 will be paid in two equal instalments. The first payment will be made to successful applicants within 2 months of approval, and the second payment will be made 4 months after the first payment subject to satisfactory monitoring information.

8. GRANT CONDITIONS

- 8.1 Information on the conditions that will apply to a grant will be made available to all applicants before they apply. Monitoring information will be required on all grants (see section 10).
- 8.2 All grant offers will be subject to the grant recipient accepting the grant conditions. A full set of grant conditions and monitoring requirements will be agreed with grant recipients before the final grant award is made. No changes will be made after this time.
- 8.3 Monitoring will be signed off by the VCS Grants Officer before each payment is due, with any concerns being discussed with the Assistant Director Community and Housing. It may affect a VCS organisations ability to receive future funding if they do not submit satisfactory monitoring returns when required.
- 8.4 VCS Groups will not be able to carry any unspent funding into the following financial year. All funding should be spent with the year the grant is awarded.
- 8.5 VCS groups must have delivered their funded activities by the end of the grant funding year (i.e. 31st March).
- 8.6 Any funding which is not allocated will be returned to the Council budget at the end of the financial year.

9. **APPLICATION PROCESS AND DECISION MAKING**

9.1 All opportunities for Voluntary and Community Sector grant funding from Redditch Borough Council will be openly advertised using a minimum of:

- Notice of the opportunity on the 'Voluntary Sector Support' section of the Redditch Borough Council website.
- Through the usual Council communications channels including the local press.

9.2 Information provided to grant applicants will include:

- the amount of money that is available in total;
- the minimum and maximum amount of money that is available to each applicant;
- clear information on the purposes for which funding is offered;
- clear information on eligibility criteria;
- details of the full assessment criteria against which applications will be judged;
- a full list of conditions that will apply to the grant;
- the deadline by which applications must be submitted; and
- the date by which applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application.

Grant application forms will be made available in paper (upon request) and electronic formats.

9.3 Applicants must complete a standard application form and provide any relevant supporting documents (or electronic links to those documents). This is to ensure objective assessment of all grant applications. The Council will not award any grant to an organisation whose application has not been formally assessed.

9.4 All grant applications will be assessed using pre-selected assessment criteria. The details of the assessment criteria will be made available to all applicants before they apply for funding. The assessment criteria will include:

- clear outline of how the priorities for which the grant is made available will be met;
- the outcome(s) that the proposal will achieve;
- the structure and delivery plan that will support the achievement of the stated outcomes;
- the clarity of the proposal's financial outline;
- the organisation's ability to successfully manage finance, evidenced by submission of accounts, bank statements and cash flow forecasts as appropriate;

- the approach to health and safety, duty of care, and other appropriate best practice requirements including safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, and the organisation's ability to successfully manage these on the project; and
 - the sustainability of work after the period of grant support.
- 9.5 All assessment criteria will be based on meeting need within the community. There will be no pre-determined demographic allocation of funds **but priority will be given to organisations whose projects are based in Redditch and funding will be used only for the benefit of Redditch residents.** Some funding opportunities may be restricted to a particular delivery area, e.g. to a specific ward, but only where this is to address a specific identified need.
- 9.6 In the first instance, all applications will be reviewed by the VCS Grants Officer to ensure they are eligible for scoring. Applications may be screened out at this stage if they: ask for an amount of money that is outside the upper and lower limits set for this grant programme; do not meet the eligibility criteria as set out under "who can apply" in this policy; and/or the application does not meet the guidelines as set out in "what will or will not be funded" section of this policy.
- 9.7 The higher grant applications will then be assessed by a panel of Members. This panel will consist of a five Members with the VCS Grants Manager providing a supporting role to the panel. The panel meeting will be chaired by the opposition. A scoring matrix will generally be utilised to score applications. A copy of the matrix will be made available in the Guidance Notes for the Programme. The Executive Committee will have delegated authority for final approval of all applications received in the scheme. Their decision is final and not subject to any appeal process.
- 9.8 The lower grant applications will be assessed by a panel of Officers. This panel will consist of two Officers with the VCS Grants Manager providing a supporting role to the panel. A scoring matrix will generally be utilised to score applications. A copy of the matrix will be made available in the Guidance Notes for the Programme. The Assistant Director of Housing and Community will have delegated authority for final approval of all lower grant applications received in the scheme. Their decision is final and not subject to any appeal process.
- 9.9 If two or more applications have the same score in the main VCS Grant Programme Grant process, firstly the application with the highest scores for scoring section 1 element 3 (Council priorities), then section 2 element 5 (target audience) and then finally section 3 element 8 (outcomes and impact) will be approved.
- 9.10 If two or more applications submitted are similar in nature or the Grants Panel consider them to be duplication, the Grants Panel will implement the process detailed in 9.7 to determine which application should be awarded funding.

- 9.11 Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback (upon request) on the strengths and weaknesses of their application.
- 9.12 Complaints against the process used to award a grant will be dealt with using Redditch Borough Council's complaints procedure. The Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services will handle the initial complaint. There is no right of appeal as to the decision itself.

10. TIMESCALES

- 10.1 There will be a minimum of three weeks from announcement of the grants opportunity to the closing date for applications, and a maximum of 12 weeks from the closing date for applications to applicants receiving notification of the outcome.
- 10.2 Approval timescales will be indicated year on year in conjunction with launch & deadline timescales for the current Grants programme. These will apply to projects commencing 1st April of the following year.

11. MONITORING

- 11.1 All grant funded projects will be monitored with applicants obliged to submit details of how the project is progressing.
- 11.2 Monitoring requirements that will apply to a grant will be commensurate with the amount of money awarded and will be agreed by the Grants Team with the funded organisation before final confirmation of a grant award is made.
- 11.3 Receipts and other monitoring information may be requested by the Council as proof of spend within six months of the grant being received by the organisation.
- 11.4 Regular monitoring of the project will enable the Council to make sure that the outcomes and effectiveness of the funding as well as the funding expenditure are all consistent with the original funding proposal.
- 11.5 The Council reserve the right to withhold future payments and reject any further applications if they are dissatisfied with how grant funding has been used.

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

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