



Shareholders Committee

Mon 1 Dec
2025
6.30 pm

Oakenshaw Community Centre,
Castleditch Lane, B98 7YB

If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact
Jess Bayley-Hill

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GUIDANCE ON FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS

Please note that this is a public meeting.

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.

Shareholders Committee

Monday, 1st December, 2025
6.30 pm
Oakenshaw Community Centre

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:	Sharon Harvey (Chair)	Bill Hartnett Jane Spilsbury
	Ian Woodall (Vice- Chair)	
	Juliet Barker Smith	

- 1. Apologies for Absence and Named Substitutes**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
- 3. Rubicon Leisure Council Funding and Support (Pages 5 - 12)**
- 4. 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 3 – financial or business affairs;

and may need to be considered as ‘exempt’.

- 5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 13 - 24)**
- 6. Rubicon Leisure Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring Report 2025-26 (Pages 25 - 36)**
- 7. 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**

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Redditch Borough Council**Shareholders Committee****1 December 2025****Rubicon Leisure – Council Funding and Support**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sharon Harvey
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Debra Goodall
Report Author	Job Title: Debra Goodall, Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services Email: debra.goodall@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel:
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
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.	

1. SUMMARY

The Council set up Rubicon Leisure Limited in 2018 to deliver the Council's Leisure and Cultural activities. As part of the arrangements, the Council provides ongoing support services to Rubicon under service level agreements.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Shareholders Committee are asked to note:

1) The position in terms of:

- a) The budget and Medium Term Financial Plan position for 2026/27 to 2028/29
- b) The Closure of the 2023/24 Accounts and 2024/25 Accounts
- c) VAT
- d) The stabilisation of the Council's finance service
- e) The update on Technology One ledger system

3. KEY ISSUES**2026/27 Budget Process and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to 2028/29**

- 3.1 Following the closure of all the outstanding statements of accounts, the Council is following a budget setting process that will include enhanced budget review and consultation and continuing governance by Councillors and Scrutiny Committees. Any relevant actions from the Chancellor's autumn budget on 26 November 2025 will be factored in as will the provisional Local Government Settlement which is expected to be announced before Christmas. The Council will set its annual budget for 2026/27 at its meeting scheduled for 23 February 2026.

Redditch Borough Council**Shareholders Committee****1 December 2025**

- 3.2 As part of this process, a significant number of Capital bids relating to Rubicon have been included, some initiated by Rubicon as potential ways to increase revenue and some by the Council's property department as a requirement to maintain the quality of the Council-owned assets. Attached at Appendix 1 is the provisional list of Rubicon related bids received to date. This does not in any way signify acceptance or approval of the bids. The final capital programme for the Council including the Rubicon bids will be determined in February 2026.

2023/24 and 2024/25 Annual Accounts

- 3.3 The Council has now published all the outstanding statements of accounts. It has received disclaimed opinions on the accounts up to and including the financial period 2022/23.
- 3.4 The publication of the draft 2023/24 accounts has happened and these are currently being audited by the newly appointed external auditors Ernst and Young (EY). This has been delayed due to the original appointed auditors leaving the local government sector and EY being 'on-boarded' at short notice. It is expected that these will also receive a disclaimed opinion with EY.
- 3.5 The 2024/25 accounts have been published in unaudited and draft format by the required deadline and EY anticipate commencing their audit in early November with issuance of an opinion by the statutory backstop date of 27 February 2026.
- 3.6 EY will issue a statement on the Council as a going-concern and a value for money assessment even if the accounts are disclaimed.

VAT

- 3.7 The Council submitted a consolidated VAT return in December 2024 and has been submitting quarterly returns and (if required) payments since then. It has engaged external tax consultants to assist with its returns and look at any historic issues. The Council continues to maintain a dialogue with HMRC regarding any outstanding VAT issues.

Stabilisation of the Council's finance service

- 3.8 The Council is seeking to increase the capacity and resilience of its finance service through a number of ways, including a recruitment campaign and will engage with Members as appropriate. Any immediate pressures are being addressed through a hybrid of a permanent recruitment campaign to resource the service as deemed necessary combined with an urgent need to recruit covering interim staff whilst the permanent team is established. Interim resource has successfully been recruited into key roles within the finance team.

Redditch Borough Council**Shareholders Committee****1 December 2025****Technology One recovery**

- 3.9 Running concurrently with the stabilisation process is a full root and branch review of the Technology One system. It is likely that some elements of the current system can be fixed through 'patches' whilst other parts may well need a full re-instatement. There is currently a health check underway with Tech 1. Any revised implementation will be entered into with the support of Technology One and will include full interaction with end-users and a re-specification based on the feedback from user-acceptance testing.
- 3.10 It was originally intended to bring a further update on progress to date with Technology One recovery in the December Committee report. However, the outcome of the Health check had not been received at the time of the preparation of this report. A meeting is being arranged with Tech One and it is hoped that a verbal update will be available in time for the Shareholders Committee meeting.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 No Legal implications have been identified.

5. Council Priorities - Implications**Relevant Council Priorities**

- 5.1 The Council's priorities are included in the Council's corporate plan and guide the Council's approach to budget making ensuring the authority focuses on the issues that are most important for the Borough and the communities the authority serves. Financial monitoring and strategies are integrated within all of the Council's priorities.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 The green thread runs through the Council plan. Every report has potential financial implications and these in turn can have implications on climate change. These will be addressed and reviewed through individual reports when relevant by climate change officers will ensure the correct procedures have been followed to ensure any impacts on climate change are fully understood.

6. Other Implications**Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)**

- 6.1 The Council has agreed to work on a proposal for a two unitary model for Worcestershire and will submit a final proposal to government by 28 November 2025 in accordance with the published timescale. Pending the government decision, work is underway to assess the impact on the Council services and staff.

Redditch Borough Council**Shareholders Committee****1 December 2025****Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.2 None as a direct result of this report.

Operational Implications

- 6.3 Managers meet with finance officers to consider the current financial position and to ensure actions are in place to mitigate any overspends.

7. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 The financial monitoring is included in the corporate risk register for the authority

8. **APPENDIX**

Appendix 1 – Rubicon provisional capital bids for MTFP 2026/7 to 2028/29

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Debra Goodall – Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services
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Redditch Borough Council**Shareholders Committee Report – 1 December 2025****Appendix 1****Rubicon provisional capital bids for MTFP**

Project Title	Project Brief	Capital Costs
Abbey Stadium Dry Changing Rooms, Central Core, Staff Welfare & Office Space	To complete works to redesign and upgrade the existing facilities following phase 1 enabling works, including M&E, asbestos removal and Structural works	£225,000
Abbey Stadium - flat roof replacement	Flat roof replacement over original building area	£280,000
Abbey Stadium Track Lighting	Potential requirement for additional funding for track lighting / Track	£90,000
Forge Mill - Sluice, Launder and Sluice	Make single sluice operational by installing new winding mechanism, plus associated enabling work. Remedials to cast iron launder and sluice.	£20,000
Forge Mill - Window Replacement	Replacement of original windows to due H&S risk	£15,000
Arrow Valley lakeside Slipway and landing area replacement	To replace Slip way and adjoining landing areas into the lake	£300,000
AVCC car park extension	Extend the existing carpark closest to the visitor centre, to double capacity, extending into Stitch Meadow	£375,000
Batchley Community Centre Carpark Resurface	Resurfacing due to condition and H&M responsibility for users and adjoining premises	£80,000
AVVC Reconfiguration of upstairs space	Reconfiguration of the upstairs space to allow direct public access from the lift to mezzanine and potential increased storage facilities	£25,000
Arrow Valley Visitors centre Replacement windows	to replace timber windows in the centre	£75,000
AVVC External Shelter	To design and install permanent shaded / covered all weather seating area	£25,000
AVVC permanent external storage facilities	To design and install multi-functional external storage facilities	£60,000
Arrow Valley Visitors Kitchen Extension	To extend Kitchen facilities and reconfigure the counter and service areas	£400,000

Redditch Borough Council**Shareholders Committee Report – 1 December 2025**

AVVC seating and landscaping to waterside area	To fully retain and landscape the waterside space and create waterside seating area. To include alteration of fence line to maximise space	£150,000
Palace theatre Refurbishment of Auditorium Seating	To refurbish Auditorium seating	£50,000
Arrow Valley visitors Centre Wet change Refurbishment	To refurbish the basement wet changing rooms to bring back to a usable area , Decoration , cleaning and showers and lighting	£35,000
AVVC Extend external Balcony	To extend the existing balcony to wrap around building as additional means of escape and additional seating	£100,000
Palace theatre Replacement Grid	To replace the Theatre Grid to enable mechanical lifting instead of the rope manual pulling	£250,000
Arrow Valley Visitors Centre Repair Solar Thermal system and new Solar PV.	To restore the solar thermal (Hot Water) system back to working order. To incorporate into replacement covering to balcony area	£200,000
Abbey Stadium - Padel Courts	Installation of 2no. External Padel Courts	£500,000
Palace Theatre Dressing Room Ventilation	MVHR linked to showers to provide ventilation	£15,000
Abbey Stadium replacement of Colorado swimming / diving timing system	To replace timing system used in the pool	£35,000
Abbey Stadium Refurbish Wet side Cubicles and Vanity units	To replace wet side Vanity units and Cubicles	£150,000
Buggy storage area	Provide storage and recharge area for buggies	£20,000
Abbey Stadium replacement Dosing System	To replace Dosing System in Abbey Stadium	£150,000
Palace Theatre New Front of House doors and counter	To install an additional serving counter in the reception to improve sales	£100,000
Windmill Community Centre Replacement windows	To replace windows with Double glazed units	£75,000
Winyates Green Replacement windows	To replace windows with Double glazed units	£75,000
Batchley Community Centre Replace windows	To replace the Blue Windows with a new window	£150,000
Forge Mill - External Storage	External Storage for potential storage of items stored at Depot, Chapel	£20,000
Bordesley Abbey VC Heating Upgrade	Replace existing storage heaters to improve energy performance	

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Palace Theatre Additional seating (Capital)	Reposition of the box office, to allow 4 rows of additional seating to be installed	£250,000
Oakenshaw Meeting Room Carpark resurface and edging repairs	Resurface the carpark and replace the brick on edge carpark kerbs	£125,000
AVVC Floating Pontoon	Install floating pontoon for additional water sports activities	£15,000
		£4,435,000

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Shareholders Committee

Thursday, 21st August,
2025

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Sharon Harvey (Chair), Councillor Ian Woodall (Vice-Chair)
and Councillors Juma Begum, Bill Hartnett and Jen Snape

Also Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer and B Clawson-Chan (Managing Director,
Rubicon Leisure Limited)

Officers:

Ruth Bamford and Debra Goodall

Democratic Services Officers:

Jess Bayley-Hill

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Juliet Barker Smith and Jane Spilsbury and it was confirmed that Councillors Jen Snape and Juma Begum were attending as their substitutes respectively.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Shareholders Committee held on 27th February 2025 be confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

Chair

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Thursday, 21st August, 2025

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4. TO CONSIDER ANY URGENT BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PROPERTY 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 consideration on this occasion.

5. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that:

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

- Minute Item No 6 – Quarter 4 Performance Monitoring Outturn Report 2024/25
- Minute Item No. 7 – Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring Report 2025/26

6. QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE MONITORING OUTTURN REPORT 2024/25

The Managing Director of Rubicon Leisure Limited presented the Quarter 4 Performance Monitoring Outturn Report for the 2024/25 financial year.

The Committee was informed that Rubicon Leisure Limited had performed well in 2024/25, with income increasing across a range of venues. In particular, performance had been strong at the Abbey Stadium and performance had exceeded targets for the Palace Theatre. Food and Beverage offers across many of the venues operated by Rubicon Leisure Limited had attracted additional income thereby having a further positive impact on performance.

During consideration of this item, reference was made to the Council's finance system which supported Rubicon Leisure Limited. There had been issues reported with this system which had

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impacted on both Council services and Rubicon Leisure Limited. Discussions had been held by senior officers at the Council with representatives of the finance system to try to identify solutions that could help to resolve this issue.

Reference was made to the community centres which were operated by Rubicon Leisure Limited on behalf of the Council. Members welcomed the online booking system that could be used to book the community centres for meetings. It was noted that this online booking system revealed whether a particular venue had already been booked on a specific date and time, although private booking details were not advertised on this system in order to comply with data protection rules.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

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

7. QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT 2025/26

The Managing Director of Rubicon Leisure Limited presented the Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring Report for the 2025/26 financial year.

The Committee was advised that the venues operated by Rubicon Leisure Limited had performed well during the first quarter of the 2025/26 financial year. The Abbey Stadium in particular was performing well. In addition, Pitcheroak Golf Course was also performing well and it was anticipated that the good weather had had a positive impact on custom.

The offer at the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre continued to grow. A new outdoor kiosk had been introduced alongside outdoor activities on the Arrow Valley Lake. However, the discovery of blue-green algae on the lake in August 2025 had had an impact as the company had had to stop certain activities for health and safety reasons.

The number of events held by Rubicon Leisure Limited were growing. This included 'Sounds in the Grounds' which had been a

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success, although that event had taken place in the second quarter of the financial year.

Forge Mill Needle Museum had had its strongest year on record. The new food and beverage offer at the venue had had a positive impact. A new kiosk was due to be introduced at Forge Mill Needle Museum and it was likely that this would have a further positive impact.

Performance at the community centres had been driven by the number of people and organisations hiring the venues. This was having a positive impact on performance.

Members were asked to note that both Forge Mill Needle Museum and the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre and lake had been nominated for awards by Visit Worcestershire. These nominations had been welcomed in recognition of the hard work of staff and volunteers. The outcomes of the awards process remained to be confirmed by the date of the Committee meeting.

Rubicon Leisure Limited had a strategic partnership with Heart of Worcestershire (HOW) College. As part of this partnership, students from the college could secure work experience with Rubicon Leisure Limited. Some students had subsequently gone on to secure permanent employment with the company.

Once the report had been presented, Members discussed the following points in detail:

- The reasons for the maintenance works at the swimming pool and when they were likely to be resolved. Clarification was provided that some of this had been planned maintenance works which had been necessary but had resulted in the closure of the pool. Further planned maintenance would be required.
- The impact of the blue-green algae on activities held at the Arrow Valley Lake. The Managing Director of Rubicon Leisure Limited explained that the majority of activities had had to end, although the pedalo swans had continued to be available.
- The cause of the blue-green algae and how this might be resolved. Members were informed that rainy weather was needed to help clear the blue-green algae, which had occurred due to the unusually hot weather that had been experienced during the summer months in 2025.
- The performance that had been reported for the hire of meeting room facilities at the Arrow Valley Countryside

Shareholders Committee

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Centre. Members were asked to note that use of the venue had increased compared to the same quarter in 2024/25.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

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

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 7.02 pm

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

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE****1st December 2025****RUBICON LEISURE QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT 2025-26**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Juliet Barker Smith
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford, Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Culture Services
Ward(s) Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	N/A
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. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To update Shareholders on the operational performance of Rubicon Leisure Limited for the period July – September 2025.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to **RESOLVE** that

the report be noted.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The performance monitoring report for the first quarter of 2025/26 is attached at Appendix A. This report details the work that has been undertaken by Rubicon Leisure Limited during this quarter.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications detailed in this report.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Council must retain control over the company to ensure that the company continues to benefit from the Teckal exemption. This allows the Council to contract with it for the delivery of leisure services without conducting an open procurement exercise.
- 5.2 The contractual documentation in place between the Council and Rubicon Leisure Limited contains the necessary mechanisms, checks and balances to incentivise good performance and to ensure compliance with the Teckal exemption.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE****1st December 2025**

6. Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.1 As can be seen in the performance monitoring report, Rubicon Leisure Limited continues to provide opportunities across leisure and culture to help inspire the communities of Redditch to live healthier and happier lives. By reviewing the performance update, the Shareholders can help to ensure that the community and local partners are supported by the leisure and cultural offer, and that Rubicon Leisure continues to deliver on the Council's corporate priorities.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Rubicon Leisure maintains risk registers in relation to both service delivery and Health and Safety compliance. These are regularly monitored, and any updates reported to the Rubicon Board at each meeting.

8. APPENDICES

- 8.1 Appendix A - Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring Report (2025-26)

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 Service Specification as reported to the Executive Committee and Council in September 2018.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
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