



# Executive Committee

Mon 23 Feb  
2026  
6.30 pm

Oakenshaw Community Centre,  
Castleditch Lane, B98 7YB

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

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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.

## Agenda

### Membership:

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

### 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 5 - 24)

### 4. Leader's Announcements

### 5. Pet Cremation Service (Pages 25 - 38)

### 6. Repairs and Maintenance and Damp and Mould Policies (Pages 39 - 68)

This item is due to be pre-scrutinised at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026. Any recommendations arising from the meeting will be published in a supplementary pack for the Executive Committee meeting.

### 7. Quarter 3 Housing Improvement Plan Update (Pages 69 - 84)

This item is due to be pre-scrutinised at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026. Any recommendations arising from the meeting will be published in a supplementary pack for the Executive Committee meeting.

### 8. Quarter 3 Housing Performance (Pages 85 - 100)

This item is due to be pre-scrutinised at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026. Any recommendations arising from the meeting will be published in a supplementary pack for the Executive Committee meeting.

# **Executive**

Monday, 23rd February, 2026

## **9. Medium Term Financial Plan Budget Report 2026/2027 to 2028/29 including Treasury Management Strategy, Capital Strategy and Investment Strategy)**

This report and appendices will follow in a supplementary pack for the meeting.

This item is due to be pre-scrutinised at a meeting of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2026. Any recommendations arising from the meeting will be published in a supplementary pack for the Executive Committee meeting.

## **10. Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Pages 101 - 112)**

## **11. 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.

## **12. 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**



# Executive Committee

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Sharon Harvey (Chair), and Councillors Juliet Barker Smith, Juma Begum, Jen Snape, Monica Stringfellow and Ian Woodall

### Observers:

Councillors William Boyd, Brandon Clayton, Claire Davies, Matthew Dormer, Joanna Kane, Gemma Monaco and Rita Rogers

### Officers:

Hannah Corredor, Amanda Delahunty, Matthew Eccles, Claire Felton, Rebecca Green, Debra Goodall, John Leach, Guy Revans, David Riley, Darren Whitney and Judith Willis

### Democratic Services Officers:

Jess Bayley-Hill and Eve Davies

## 67. APOLOGIES

Apologies of absence were received on behalf of Councillors Jane Spilsbury and Bill Hartnett.

## 68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 69. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader advised that at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 12th January 2025, Members had pre-scrutinised the following items:

- Minute Item No. 71 - Biodiversity First Consideration Report
- Minute Item No. 72 - Homelessness Prevention Grant Funding 2026/27 to 2028/29 (including Rough Sleeper Grant) and Domestic Abuse Grant

At the end of their discussions, the Committee had endorsed the recommendations contained within both reports.

Chair

# Executive Committee

---

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

In addition, a further recommendation to the Homelessness Prevention Grant Funding 2026/27 to 2028/29 (including Rough Sleeper Grant) and Domestic Abuse Grant had been proposed which was contained within the 'Additional Papers 2' pack.

In advance of the Executive Committee meeting, the Budget Scrutiny Working Group had also pre-scrutinised the following items during a meeting held on 7th January 2026:

- Minute Item No. 75 - Business Rates - Discretionary Rates Relief Policy 2026/27
- Minute Item No. 76 - Council Tax Base Report 2026/27
- Minute Item No. 77 - Council Tax - Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026/27
- Minute Item No. 78 - Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27
- Minute Item No. 79 - Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy 2026/27
- Minute Item No. 80 - Housing Revenue Account Rent Setting 2026/27
- Minute Item No. 81 - Medium Term Financial Plan 2026-27 to 2028-29 Fees and Charges and consultation outcome including Worcestershire Regulatory Services Budget Recommendations

The group endorsed the recommendations outlined within the reports but did not propose any further recommendations.

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

## 70. MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that

**the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 25th November 2025 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.**

## 71. BIODIVERSITY FIRST CONSIDERATION REPORT

The Climate Change Manager presented the Biodiversity First Consideration Report.

It was explained to Members that Redditch Borough Council had a legal duty under The Environment Act 2021 to publish a Biodiversity

# Executive Committee

---

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

Duty Report covering the period up to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026. The deadline for publication of the report was 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

The 'Top Achievements' outlined in the report were highlighted to Members, which included:

- Green Flag Awards for Morton Stanley Park and Overdale Park (2025)
- Citizen Science biodiversity monitoring via iNaturalist
- Grass verge biodiversity initiative (70% verges managed for pollinators)
- Tree planting and species diversification
- Pesticide reduction and alternative weed control methods

Members were advised that the Council had led a number of community engagement initiatives across the Borough.

Moving forward, it was explained that the aim was to expand wildflower meadows alongside developing park management plans to create habitats for species.

The Council was continuing to work closely with Worcestershire County Council; Redditch Borough Council had actively engaged with the Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

It was noted that the Council would continue to monitor biodiversity net gain with colleagues from the Planning department as well as working with the Parks and Open Spaces team to identify additional Green Flag Award applications as part of the Local Plan.

In concluding his presentation, the Climate Change Manager highlighted the risks, which related to insufficient monitoring of biodiversity outcomes. It was explained that risks would be mitigated through the actions outlined in the report in addition to the Climate Change Strategy which was due to be considered at a future Executive Committee meeting.

During discussion on the item, Members raised the following points:

- Members thanked the Climate Change Manager and the officers involved in producing the comprehensive report.
- The efforts invested in achieving Green Flag Awards for parks across the borough were commended, and the ongoing work to submit further applications for additional locations was warmly welcomed. A query was raised

# Executive Committee

---

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

regarding which parks were being considered next for an award, it was confirmed that Arrow Valley Park had been identified and work was ongoing with other parks across the borough.

- Members welcomed that the Council's commitment to biodiversity was being embedded in new strategies and policies being developed.
- The challenges moving forward, such as resource constraints for monitoring, were noted.

The Chair commented that she was proud of the work that had been carried out and welcomed the measures that were being implemented which would make the environment better for future generations.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) **the findings of the Biodiversity First Consideration Report be noted;**
- 2) **Members agree to publish the full Biodiversity First Consideration Report to the Council's website.**

**72. HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION GRANT FUNDING 2026/27 TO 2028/29 (INCLUDING ROUGH SLEEPER GRANT) AND DOMESTIC ABUSE GRANT**

The Housing Development and Enabling Manager presented the Homelessness Prevention Grant Funding 2026/27 to 2028/29 (including Rough Sleeper Grant) and Domestic Abuse Grant report.

Members were advised that Government had typically awarded funding on an annual basis, however a ring-fenced grant for a three-year period had been awarded from 2026.

It was recommended that this funding be awarded to partners that worked closely with Redditch Borough Council to provide valuable homelessness prevention services. The grant would be allocated to the services outlined within the report, with the addition of a new service that would be delivered by the Citizens Advice Bureau. This service aimed to prevent homelessness for homeowners who were facing repossession and would also extend to tenants in private rented accommodation.

The Committee was informed that this grant would not cover the cost for services related to temporary accommodation, which were

# Executive Committee

---

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

currently being met through the Homelessness Prevention Grant for Temporary Accommodation. Instead, the Council would be receiving funding from Government through the Revenue Support Grant which would be used for temporary accommodation services from April 2026.

The Chair informed Members that a recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been proposed at a meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026. Details of the recommendation were tabled at this meeting.

Members were of the opinion that the additional recommendation was sensible given that funding had been granted for a three-year period. This would enable monitoring to be carried out each year and would ensure that all grant funding was spent, with any leftover funding being allocated appropriately.

In concluding discussions on the report, Members thanked the Portfolio Holder and the officers involved in formulating the strategy. It was remarked that this long-term plan would ensure stability of the Council and ensure that its role would be fulfilled in relation to preventing homelessness.

## **RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) Temporary Accommodation Services currently met by Homelessness Prevention Grant are now met from the Temporary Accommodation element of the Revenue Support Grant 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29.**
- 2) Subject to approval of recommendation 1 above by Council, the initiatives detailed in the table below be approved to receive the Council's Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Grant and Domestic Abuse Grant allocations of funding for 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29, subject to satisfactory performance; and should additional funding be announced at a later date by the Government for subsequent years then this would need to be the subject of a further report.**

## **RESOLVED that**

- 3) Subject to the agreement of recommendations 1 and 2 above, delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to use any unallocated Grants, or Homelessness Prevention**

# Executive

## Committee

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

**Grant mid-year top up, during each year or make further adjustments and uplifts as necessary to ensure full utilisation of the Grants for 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29 in support of existing or new schemes.**

### Proposed Allocation of Homelessness Prevention Grant

Initiatives	2026/27 (up to £700,638)	2027/28 (up to £744,361)	2027/29 (up to £772,087)
St Basils Young Persons Supported Housing	67,005	67,005	67,005
Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership Co-ordinator – contribution towards county-wide development and delivery of housing initiatives in partnership with other agencies	10,500	10,500	10,500
Severe Weather Emergency Provision	33,460	33,460	33,460
Redditch Nightstop – Accommodation and Support	44,518	44,518	44,518
Redditch Nightstop Core Funding	13,000	13,000	13,000
Maggs Rough Sleeper Outreach Service	106,822	106,822	106,822
GreenSquare Accord – 6 units of supported accommodation for Ex Offenders or those likely to offend	15,586	15,586	15,586
Newstarts - Furniture Project to provide furniture for homeless households.	10,000	10,000	10,000
Homelessness Prevention - Spend to Save budget for use by Housing Options Officers	17,060	17,060	17,060
St Basils Young Persons Pathway	31,116	31,116	31,116

# Executive

## Committee

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

Worker			
Onside Advocacy Mental Health Support Worker	39,100	39,100	39,100
Homelessness Prevention Officers	150,000	150,000	150,000
Part Time Empty Homes Officer	7,681	7,681	7,681
Batchley Support Group	15,000	15,000	15,000
CAB financial advice for home owners and private renters	27,611	27,611	27,611
No First Night Out/No Second Night Out	18,394	18,394	18,394
St Pauls Housing Led/Housing First Support Service	60,642	60,642	60,642
County Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator	5,000	5,000	5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£672,495</b>	<b>£672,495</b>	<b>£672,495</b>
<b>Underspend</b>	<b>£28,143</b>	<b>£71,866</b>	<b>£99,592</b>

### Proposed allocation of Domestic Abuse Grant

Initiatives	2026/27 (up to £35,697)	2027/28 (up to £35,697)	2028/29 (up to £35,697)
Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator	4,813	4,813	4,813
Domestic Abuse Research and Intelligence Officer	4,884	4,884	4,884
Domestic Abuse Housing Solutions Officer Top Up	6,000	6,000	6,000
New Starts	5,000	5,000	5,000
Batchley Support Group	5,000	5,000	5,000
St Basil's Young Persons Pathway Worker (YPPW)	10,000	10,000	10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£35,697</b>	<b>£35,697</b>	<b>£35,697</b>
<b>Underspend</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>

# Executive Committee

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Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

**4) Officers provide an annual update in respect of the Homelessness Prevention Grant initiatives that received Council funding.**

## 73. PAY POLICY 2026-2027

The Assistant Director of Transformation and Corporate Services presented the Pay Policy Statement 2026-27 report for the Executive Committee's consideration.

Members were reminded that the Council was required to produce a Pay Policy Statement each year under the Localism Act 2011. The policy set out the Council's pay structure in line with the Act, details of which were contained within the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance expressed that he felt this policy reflected a fair settlement for staff and protected their wages against Cost-of-Living pressures.

**RECOMMENDED that**

**the Pay Policy 2026/27 be approved.**

## 74. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS 2026-2027

The Electoral Services Manager presented the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) Recommendations 2026-2027 report.

Members were advised of the recommendations that had been produced by the IRP. It was highlighted that the IRP had since made a slight amendment to the first recommendation, which meant the proposed increase to the Basic Allowance was 4.62% rather than 4.5%.

The report outlined the recommendations in relation to Special Responsibilities Allowances (SRA). It was noted that Redditch Borough Council had previously agreed more than one SRA per Member. In addition, although not part of the IRP's report, Members were informed that the covering report noted the renumeration of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Members were advised that the Committee was obliged to regard but not necessarily to agree to the IRP's recommendations.

The Chair explained that being a Councillor was a difficult role which involved a high level of commitment, including attendance at meetings in addition to considerable work behind the scenes. Her

# Executive Committee

---

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

personal view was that Members worked hard and deserved to be renumerated fairly. However, she felt that this decision needed to be opened to wider debate involving those Councillors not in attendance at the meeting this evening.

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 1. Council consider the Independent Renumeration Panel's report and determine based on the information provided what increase, if any, to agree to the Basic Allowance for 2026/27.**
- 2. Special Responsibility Allowances remained at the same level as those listed in the Member's Scheme of Allowances 2025/26.**
- 3. Travel allowances for 2026/27 continued to be paid in accordance with the HMRC mileage allowance;**
- 4. Subsistence allowances for 2026/27 remain unchanged;**
- 5. The Dependent Carer's Allowance remains unchanged.**

**75. BUSINESS RATES - DISCRETIONARY RATES RELIEF POLICY 2026/27**

The Revenue Services Manager presented the Business Rates - Discretionary Rates Relief Policy 2026 – 2027 report.

It was explained to Members that under Section 47 of The Local Government Finance Act 1988, Redditch Borough Council had power as a billing authority to award discretionary rate relief to ratepayers.

Members were informed that charities which were in receipt of 80 per cent mandatory charitable relief could receive a further 20 per cent discretionary relief, and not-for-profit organisations could receive relief of up to 100 per cent relief.

The report included a rural settlement list. It was explained that certain types of property situated within a rural settlement and with a rateable value below specific thresholds were entitled to rural rate relief. The properties eligible for rural rate relief were the sole post office, general store, public house and petrol station within a rural settlement. These properties could receive discretionary relief of up to 100 per cent if the rateable value of the property occupied was less than £16,500, the use of the property was of benefit to the local community, and it was in the interest of taxpayers for relief to be provided.

# Executive Committee

---

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

It was reported that the main amendment to the existing policy involved a shift from the current strict criteria for discretionary relief to a more principles-based approach. This would remove hard limits and would allow the Council to look at the financial needs of an organisation. The intended result was to encourage relief for organisations where there was a financial need.

In summary, the Committee was being asked to re-adopt the existing policy with criteria being redefined by principles to allow increased flexibility for officers to make decisions on relief.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance thanked the Revenue Services Manager for the report. He emphasised that the purpose of rate relief was to ensure a viable charitable section within the borough of Redditch to support those in need. The rural element would also allow such areas to be supported and ensure communities were well served.

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) A non-domestic rates discretionary relief policy is approved and adopted from 1st April 2026;**
- 2) The rural settlement list as set out in Appendix A of the policy is approved and adopted for use from 1st April 2026.**

## 76. COUNCIL TAX BASE REPORT 2026/27

The Revenue Services Manager presented the Council Tax Base Report for 2026/27.

Firstly, Members were informed that there was a typographical error and the recommendations should have stated 'recommend that' rather than 'resolve that'.

Members were advised that the report set out the calculation of the council tax base for 2026/27. The tax base calculation was required as part of determining council tax for the forthcoming financial year.

The council tax base was calculated using data held by the authority as of 30th November 2025. This data reflected the number of dwellings in each valuation band and accounted for exemptions, discounts and reductions. The figure was then adjusted to account for anticipated changes as well as losses on collection.

# Executive Committee

---

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

It was reported that this information would subsequently be shared with the precepting authorities and council tax Band D would be set.

Members thanked officers involved in producing this report as a formal piece of administration for the Council.

The Chair noted that council tax was vital to all services in Redditch and other precepting authorities.

## **RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) The calculation of the council tax base for the whole and parts of the areas for 2026/27 be approved; and**
- 2) In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the figures calculated by Redditch Borough Council as its tax base for the whole area be 26,480.1 and for the parts of the area listed below be:**

Parish of Feckenham	380.8
Rest of Redditch	26,099.3
<b>Total for the Borough</b>	<b>26,480.1</b>

## **77. COUNCIL TAX - EMPTY HOMES DISCOUNTS AND PREMIUMS 2026/27**

The Revenue Services Manager presented the Council Tax - Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026/27 report.

It was explained to Members that no changes were being recommended regarding the existing level of premiums on unoccupied homes.

As the billing authority, Redditch Borough Council had discretionary power to decide whether to remove the standard 50 per cent discount and whether to apply a discount of between 1-50 per cent for empty homes and up to 100 per cent for second homes.

Currently, the Council provided a 100% discount for homes that were empty for 14 days or less, after which time any discount was removed. This allowed for a transitional period for those moving home and change over between tenants.

In relation to long-term empty homes, properties that had been unoccupied for one year or more, the maximum level of premium was applied.

Members were advised that the Council had powers to apply premiums for second homes. If this was agreed, the earliest date

# Executive Committee

---

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

for premiums on second homes to take effect would be 1<sup>st</sup> April 2027. Given the context of Local Government Reorganisation, it was thought that it would be more appropriate for the future unitary authority to take a decision on this. Furthermore, such premiums were typically applied in areas where second homes had a detrimental impact on the local area, but this was not seen to be a problem in Redditch. It was noted the report mentioned that additional council tax would be levied, but it was not recommended that this proposal be adopted for the reasons aforementioned.

Members were reassured that guidance from Government had been considered during preparation of the proposals.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance welcomed the enabling legislation which would allow Redditch Borough Council to implement a case by case basis approach and provided flexibility for officers.

## **RECOMMENDED that:**

- 1) the determinations set out in Appendix A be adopted with effect from 1st April 2026;**
- 2) The Assistant Director of Finance and Customers Services be authorised to consider, on a case-by-case basis, a reduction to the long-term empty premium under Section 13A(1)(C) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992;**
- 3) the council retains the existing discounts for unoccupied and furnished homes, as set out in Appendix A and does not implement additional council tax premiums for unoccupied and substantially furnished homes.**

## **78. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2026/27**

The Revenue Services Manager presented the Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27 report.

Members were informed that the scheme was a replacement for council tax benefit, which was abolished in 2021.

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 the Council introduced an income-banded scheme for working-age applicants which categorised them based on their household composition. It was explained that income bands needed to be up rated each year in line with inflation as otherwise those who needed support might not be able to access it.

There was provision in scheme to allow bands to be decided by Members on an annual basis. As the rate of benefits were set to

# Executive Committee

---

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

increase by 3.8 per cent in 2027, it was recommended that the income bands were raised by the same percentage. This would ensure that the scheme remained relevant and safeguarded vulnerable residents.

It was highlighted that this scheme was only available for working-age residents and that pensioners had other means of support available.

Members were pleased that this would allow the most vulnerable residents in the community to continue to be protected.

**RECOMMENDED that:**

- 1) The council tax reduction scheme is retained for 2026-27 tax year, subject to uprating of income bands by 3.8% in-line with increases to national benefits as set out in the table at Appendix A.**

## **79. DISCRETIONARY COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION POLICY 2026/27**

The Revenue Services Manager presented the Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy 2026/27 report.

Under section 13A(1)(C) of The Local Government Finance Act 1992 the Council had the power to reduce the amount of council tax that a resident is liable to pay. The power could be exercised on a case-by-case basis or by determining a class of case in which the liability would be reduced. It was reported that some councils applied the discretionary reduction for care leavers or special constables for example.

The existing policy set out when the Council would use their discretionary powers to provide case-by-case reductions for Worcestershire County Council care leavers, support under Government's flood recovery framework, wider Government support, and reductions in cases of exceptional hardship.

The Committee was informed that the Marie Curie charity had produced a report which advocated for council tax discounts to be applied for those suffering from a terminal illness with less than one year to live.

The report titled 'Dying in Poverty' asked local authorities to include terminal illness as a criterion in their council tax reduction schemes or provide a discretionary discount. It was explained that it would not be possible to adjust the Council Tax Reduction Scheme due to

# Executive Committee

---

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

time constraints, so it was proposed that an amendment would be made to the Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy.

It was noted that medical evidence would be required to confirm a resident's diagnosis, and the financial position of the household would also be taken into consideration when making a decision on awarding a reduction.

Members welcomed the additional support for those suffering from a terminal illness. It was felt that this would give a period of grace to residents in such circumstances and would offer support for them and their families.

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) The revised section 13A(1)(C) policy be approved and adopted from 1st April 2026.**

## **80. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT RENT SETTING 2026/27**

The Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services presented the Housing Revenue Account Rent Setting 2026/27 report. Prior to the meeting a typographical error had been identified in the report published in the main agenda pack for this meeting. An updated version of the report had been published in an Additional Papers pack for this meeting.

Members were asked to note that this was a standard annual report in respect of the Council's statutory requirement to increase rent. The recommendation to raise rent by 4.8 per cent was based on the Consumer Price Index Figure +1 per cent, which was used to establish the limit on annual rent increases for social housing.

The report also set out proposed service charges for tenants and leaseholders for the period 2026-27. It was noted that an inhouse caretaking and cleaning team had been established in 2025, there were no raises recommended for these services.

It was highlighted that there had been a typographical error and recommendation three should have referred to section 3.4 of the report rather than 3.1.

In discussing the report, Members commented on the following points:

- Members welcomed that the Council had invested heavily in their housing service. It was noted that technology had been

# Executive

## Committee

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

improved, a damp and mould team had been established as well as caretaking and cleaning services. Overall, this had led to an improvement in the housing stock.

- The rent rises were in line with the methodology that had always been used so were thought to be fair.
- Given that the caretaking and cleaning services were in their infancy, it was thought to be wise to not make any changes to their charges while the services were being embedded.
- A 4.8 per cent increase was lower than previous years, this was seen to be positive as it ensured that the impact on tenants wasn't too harsh.

### RECOMMENDED to Council that:

- 1) the actual average rent increase for 2026/27 be set as 4.8%.
- 2) Garage rent increase by 4.8%.
- 3) the service charges to Council tenants and leaseholders be set as detailed in the table below.

Service Charge	Applies Lease holder	Benefit eligible?	Weekly charge 2025/26 (48 weeks)	Proposed Weekly charge 2026/27 (48 weeks)
Cleaning & Caretaking - Communal Areas	Y	Y	£6.40 (introduced November 2025)	£6.40*
St David's & Queens Cottages Concessionary TV Licences	N	N	£0.16	£0.16
St David's & Queens Cottages Extra Care Scheme	N	Y	£39.30	£40.10
Communal Charges at	N/A	Y	New	£5.93

# Executive

## Committee

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

Baxterley Close (8 properties)				
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**81. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2026-27 TO 2028-29 FEES AND CHARGES AND CONSULTATION OUTCOME INCLUDING WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services presented the Medium Term Financial Plan 2026-27 to 2028-29 Fees and Charges and consultation outcome including Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Budget Recommendations report. Appendices C and D to the report were contained within the Additional Papers pack 1.

The report provided an overview of the Council's current financial position and outlined the next steps that would be taken as part of the budget setting process, WRS recommendations and fees and charges.

Members were informed that the income position was a deficit of £435,000 and £345,000 respectively at the starting points for 2026/27 and 2027/28. In addition, there was a funding gap of over one million pounds for the existing budgets. It was reported that inflation remained high at just over 3 per cent which was impacting on service costs.

The financial pressures on the Council were highlighted to Members. At Quarter Two, the overall revenue financial position was a £381,000 overspend position with savings of £2.342 million of which £1.145 million was yet to be delivered. Plans would need to be put in place to mitigate the in-year overspend.

The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was announced on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2025. This set out the detail of funding allocations for individual councils including details of the new funding distribution model (Fairer Funding Review 2.0).

Overall, District Councils Core Spending Power (CSP) within the Provisional Settlement was lower than other councils, coming out at an estimated 3.4 per cent increase in CSP over the following three years. Compared to 2025/26, the Council had a net increase in CSP of £0.8 million in 2026/27, £1.3 million in 2027/28 and £1.7 million in 2028/29. However, this included the Recovery Grant of £350,000 which had not been confirmed beyond 2028/29.

# Executive Committee

---

Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

In addition to the changes relating to the Fairer Funding Review, the Recovery Grant had been confirmed on an ongoing basis for the following three years. This would result in the Council receiving £326,000 per annum for the subsequent three years.

The key pressures were identified as:

- The additional 0.2 per cent Pay Award increase from 2025/26 which was above the assumed increase in the budget of 3 per cent, amounting to £18,000 going forward.
- A further 1 per cent Cost of Living of £126,000.
- Funding gap from 2025/26 budgets of £1.062 million.
- Additional costs relating to Worcestershire Regulatory Services which were £18,000 for 2027/28 and £50,000 for 2028/29.

These pressures had been offset by changes in the pension rate of £216,000 in 2026/27, reducing slightly to £198,000 in 2028/29. As well as council tax income and fees and charges.

Members were also provided with an update on the Budget Consultation for 2026/27 which ran from 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025 to 29<sup>th</sup> December 2025.

An invite had been sent directly to all members of the Community Panel and links had been sent to partners to share with their contacts. The survey was publicised in local media and numerous times on social media. It was noted that the response rate was significantly lower than the previous year, however at least one response had been received from every area within the Borough.

The notable responses were highlighted to Members as follows:

- How important are the current Redditch Borough Council priorities to you? Green, Clean and Safe received scored 54.2 per cent
- The top three services voted as most important for the Council to invest in were: Community Safety, Parks and Open Spaces and the local economy.
- Nearly 50 per cent of respondents said they supported fees and charges rising by 4 per cent to keep them in line with inflation and rising staffing costs.
- 52 per cent of respondents owned their own homes.
- Over 33 per cent of respondents had a long-standing health condition or disability.

# Executive Committee

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Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

The Portfolio Holder for Finance thanked the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services and the team involved in producing the detailed report. It was noted that although the Council had received more funding from Government, that there would still be a tight financial settlement for the following few years. Reassurance was given that savings would be made where possible and the Council would be delivering value for money.

**RESOLVED** that

- 1) The updated position in respect of the 2026/27 annual budget and for the Medium-Term Financial Plan up to 2028/29 be noted;**
- 2) To note that a further report in February would include additional information from the Local Government Settlement to give a final financial position for the Council.**

**RECOMMENDED** to Council that

- 3) the feedback from the Consultation on the Budget 2026/27, attached as Appendix D, be noted.**
- 4) the proposed fees and charges for 2026/27, including proposed fees and charges for Worcestershire Regulatory Services, attached as Appendices C and D, be approved.**
- 5) The increases to the Council's budget for Worcestershire Regulatory Services of £18k for 2027/28 and £50k for 2028/29, as recommended by the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board, be approved.**

**82. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The minutes from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025 were noted.

**83. 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.

**84. TO CONSIDER ANY URGENT BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE HEAD OF LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PROCUREMENT SERVICES PRIOR TO THE**

# Executive

## Committee

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Tuesday, 13th January, 2026

**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.

The Meeting commenced at 6.31 pm  
and closed at 7.36 pm

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**Executive Committee**23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Sharon Harvey
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Simon Parry, Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services
Report Author Adam Smith	Job Title: Bereavement Services Manager Contact email: adam.smith@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 62174 ext 3352	
Wards Affected		Abbey Ward (All wards)
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		Economy, Regeneration, & Prosperity
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 delivery of a pet cremation service at the Abbey Crematorium be approved.**

**Subject to approval of resolution 1 above, the Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that:-**

- 2) **A budget of £50,000.00 is added to the Capital Programme for 2026/27 within the Medium-Term Financial Plan for the purchase of the Pet Cremator Machine and all ancillary plant equipment associated with the delivery of this service.**
- 3) **the following fees be charged for the Pet Cremation service:**
  - a) **small pets £50 - £145;**
  - b) **cats £145 - £175; and**
  - c) **dogs £175 - £250.**

## Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

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### 2. BACKGROUND

#### Executive Summary

2.1 This proposal introduces a dedicated Pet Cremation Service at Abbey Cemetery, Redditch, designed to complement our respected human bereavement services and establish a sustainable new income stream for the council. The service leverages our experienced cremator operators to deliver compassionate, high-quality care for pet owners across Redditch, Bromsgrove, neighbouring areas, and.

2.2 Abbey Cemetery's rear yard is the preferred location, enabling discreet integration with existing operations, minimal disruption, efficient oversight, as well as an emphasis on utilising operational space within the current footprint. We will secure APHA (Animal and Plant Health Agency) licensing, procure and install the cremator, and operate to APPCC (The Association of Private Pet Cemeteries and Crematoria) code of practice—introducing phased enhancements such as memorial viewing areas. Financial modelling (7 cremations/day capacity) indicates **break-even by Month 5** and strong income potential thereafter. Key risks—staff unsettlement and public perception—will be mitigated through restructure/upskilling and transparent communications.

2.3 It is important to note that this service will be treated totally separate to the current human cremation service both in terms of operational equipment used to carry this service out, but also from a customer service perspective.

#### 2.4 Vision and Mission

Redditch and Bromsgrove Bereavement Services operates with empathy, care and understanding at its core. Our mission is to provide the highest standard of cremation and burial services, offering choice, affordability, and unwavering support to those coping with bereavement. We are committed to serving the community's needs with dignity and professionalism. These principles also guide our expansion into pet cremations, ensuring a seamless and compassionate service for residents who wish to honour their beloved pets with the same respect and care.

These principles underpin the expansion into pet cremations, providing a seamless and compassionate offer for residents.

## Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

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2.5 Pet cremation and memorialisation is among the fastest-growing areas in the UK with 57% of households (16.2 million) own pets, with the pet population up from 35 million to 38 million (+9%) between 2022 and 2023. Worcestershire recorded 259,900 households in 2021, up 8.4% since 2011; applying the 57% ownership rate suggests roughly 148,000 pet-owning households locally, with further demand likely from adjoining counties. The UK pet funeral market is expected to grow from £110 million in 2024 to £195 million by 2030, driven by owners seeking dignified, personalised services. These trends show strong local and national demand, making a new pet cremation service a timely and viable opportunity.

2.6 This new element of bereavement service delivery will create a new revenue stream further improving the cost effectiveness of the overall operation. The effect of this additional income will be to release funds elsewhere within the council for use in other key areas of service delivery.

2.7 In 2016 Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council launched the first council owned Pet cremation service and have successfully developed an integrated service for their local communities. This has provided the business model for this project providing the evidence and case study necessary to make a success of our new facility.

### 2.8 Local Market Landscape

Three established pet crematoria operate within a 15–45 minute drive radius of Redditch and the local competition in this market sees the closest pet cremator located within 10 miles of Redditch Crematorium, the 2<sup>nd</sup> closest at 15 miles, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> closest over 20 miles away.

This underscores both market maturity and the opportunity for a high-quality public service alternative.

## 3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

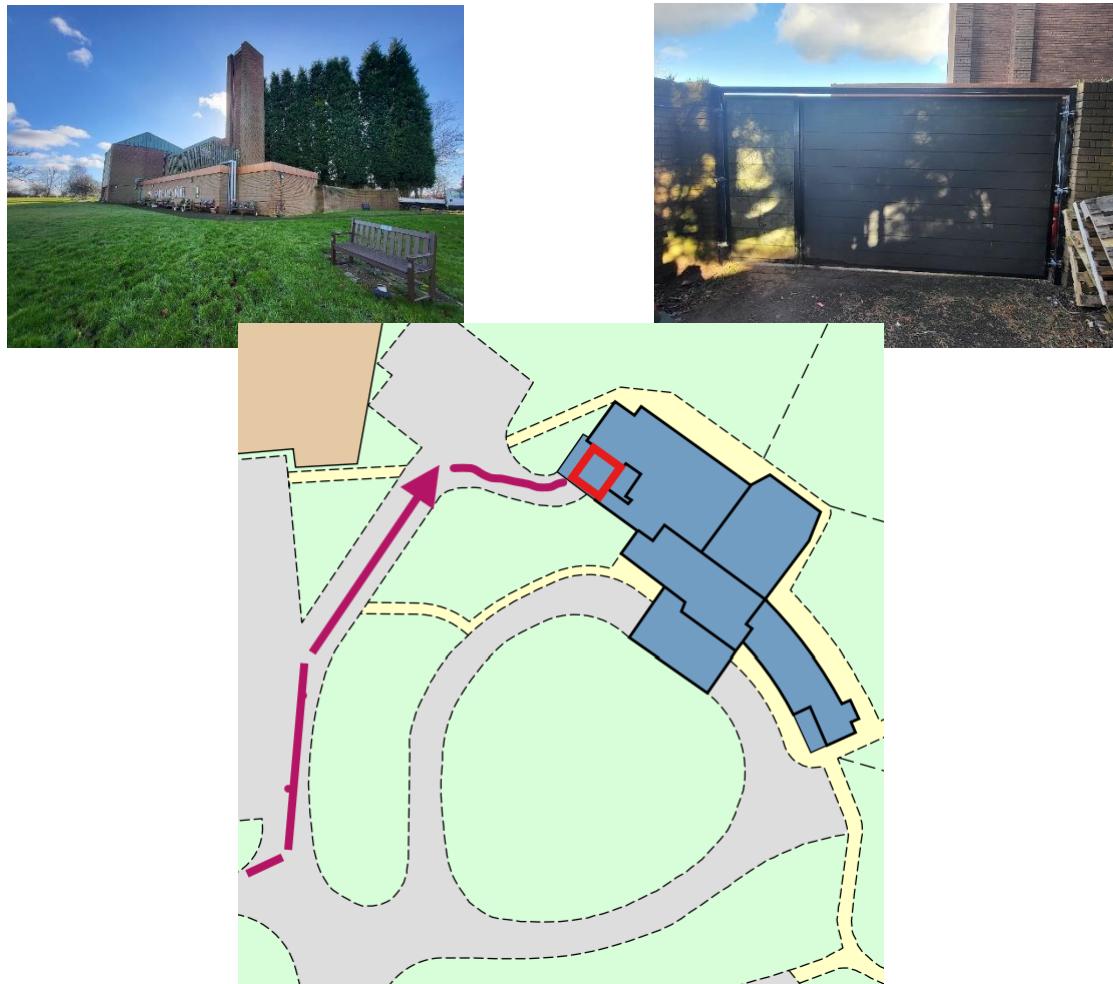
3.1 A review of how this service will work operationally has been undertaken and should approval be given, we will place it here. Part of the considerations at the crematorium end of the operation are as follows.

## Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

**3.2** We assessed two potential locations within Abbey Cemetery for installation, utilities, accessibility, and aesthetics. The crematorium rear yard is the only viable option for the reasons described below.

- Discreet siting behind the crematorium, out of sight from human funeral services.
- Minor gate reconfiguration to optimise access and animal transfer.
- Ability to run power; efficient incorporation into current staff workflows.
- Future-proofing for additional filtration systems if regulations change.



*Image: Redditch Crematorium highlighting direction for pet cremation service.*

## Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

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### 3.3 Regulatory and Governance

- Apply for APHA (Animal and Plant Health Agency) licence to operate within government standards.
- Operate under APPCC (The Association of Private Pet Cemeteries and Crematoria) code of practice and seek listing among recommended pet crematoria.

### 3.4 Project Plan and Key Milestones

- Confirm site and aesthetics, coordinating with Property Services on enabling works (power, fuel, drainage).
- Stakeholder communications, any public consultation requirement, already reached out to Veterinary practices over last 3 months of 2025, WRS and council contract adjustments.
- Procure cremator (lead time 14–18 weeks); schedule installation and infrastructure works.
- Transfer chilled storage from Redditch and Bromsgrove depots to Abbey Cemetery; align Regulatory Service processes.
- Install cremator, complete supplier handover, and deliver comprehensive staff training; commence operations under APPCC membership.

### 3.5 Key Milestones

#### Phase 1 – Core Operations:

- Establish process with local Regulatory Service to bring roadkill to our facility.
- Inform local veterinary practices of the option to bring deceased animals. Prices will drive budget, and are designed to be competitive.
- Continue proactive public communications via social media and targeted press releases.

#### Phase 2 – Client Experience Enhancements:

- Create a designated office/memorial area to offer memorials and viewing options.

**Executive Committee**23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**3.6 Risk Management**

- Risk of inaction: missing a significant revenue opportunity and leadership position in integrated bereavement care.
- Staff un settlement: mitigated via 1 new post (grade 4 post already in budget, but a grade 5 post required), consultation, and upskilling, including official training.
- Public reaction: mitigate through clear communications (website, social media, stakeholder forums, member committees).

**3.7 Financial Case and Procurement**

Manufacturers offer a range of cremators—from £23k for units without filtration up to £500k for fully filtered systems with ancillary equipment.

Our preferred option is to go with is the Addfield PET200 for the following reasons;

- It is the most cost-effective front-loaded cremator on the market, it is more labour intensive for staff to use a top loaded machine. With a front-loaded machine, mechanical wheels can be used to respectfully transfer the deceased animal from vehicle to machine or storage without staff having to man handle the carcass.
- This machine is manufactured in the UK and has all spare parts within the UK also.
- Remote maintenance would be set up if the software on the machine was to have an issue.
- Maintenance agreement being offered by supplier incorporates all staff initial training into the purchase and installation cost. Supplier representative would remain on site with staff for the first week of operation.

*Note: Any and all procurement regulations will be adhered to throughout any required tender process.*

Ramp-up utilisation (Months 1–9): 20–50% per week, with corresponding monthly income and surplus projections (see original table). Breakeven in Month 5 at ~30% weekly utilisation.

**3.8 Marketing and Launch Timeline**

- January - March: Agree on which cremator to be ordered through procurement process, pre-installation communications via website,

## Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

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appropriate communications made to Vets and any other potential stakeholders regarding this new service, B&RC channels, and social media; councillor site visit; direct mail to database; publish new price list.

- March/April 2026: Launch with announcements via social media, website, B&RBC communications, and local papers; inform councillors, vets, animal charities, and suppliers; staff ready to offer the new service.
- 3-month intervals (June/September/December): Follow-up promotion via social media and R&B Communications.
- Capacity and Revenue Assumptions:  
Benchmark capacity: 7 pets/day × 5 days = 35/week ⇒ £7,000/week at 100% utilisation.

### 3.9 Planning Considerations

A relevant Heritage Statement has been created and the crematorium is not listed or on the Redditch Local Heritage List but would be considered a non-designated heritage asset due to its architectural interest and its position in the townscape. It is described in the Worcestershire Pevsner as, 'Crematorium, Bordesley Lane. An excellent example, on an elevated site, by Richard Twentyman (Twentyman, Percy and Partners), 1971 -3; planned as early as 1955. Brick, copper roofs. Curving memorial corridor, its E wall fully glazed, leading to the chapel, also with its own flat-roofed porte cochere. Reverential interior, with angled timber-slattered roof, curving white roughcast side walls, and glazed E wall behind the catafalque (with view across the Arrow Valley). -Small detached office in matching style.'

Adjacent to the site is the scheduled monument at Bordesley Abbey, see the link below to the description. The crematorium is within the setting of the scheduled monument, however the pet cremator will be to the west of the site, so would not impact on the setting of the scheduled monument.

An official Operating Statement will be confirmed based on this report being passed through to the next phase. However, an operating model of how this service will work is detailed in the next paragraph.

## Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

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### 3.10 Operating Model

As stated earlier in this report, we are looking at applying charges of the following: small pets £50-£145, cats £145 -£175, dogs £175 - £250. This enables the service to have some flexibility regards breeds.

### 3.11 Administration

- Bookings will be made via phone call or email to the office, which will be input into Abavus and confirmation of booking sent out to company/vets practice who are handling the animal and family.
- Relevant information taken will be; name, contact information of pet owner (if not WRS contract, e.g. roadkill). Name of animal, animal type and any breed details needed in line with APHA licence and APPCC.
- Day of cremation, usual cremation monitoring details will apply; temperatures, emissions monitoring, times charged in/raked out. All records kept in line with regulatory service requirements.
- Booking times will be organised to ensure no clashes are created between animal and human cremation slots. In the early phases of this process, an early morning drop off time will be allocated, as well as an end of operational day time. As the business and numbers grow, timeslots will be managed accordingly as the average turnaround time between death and cremation for animals is shorter, we will be able to allocate time slots that have not been utilised for human services. For context the average time for human cremations between death and funeral service is roughly two weeks but often goes up to 3 weeks in busier periods.

### 3.12 Transfer of animals/ storage/ cremation operation.

- Deceased animal will be expected to be delivered to rear of crematorium building to the west of the site at the back yard gates at agreed time of booking, in a suitable vehicle, in a covered material that is of natural fibres.
- Signage will be in place in order to manage the logistics at key points of the cemetery, Pet Cremation will be directed to the left of the crematorium building whilst human funeral services will be directed straight on to the large entrance at the south face of the building.
- The deceased pet will be placed on to a suitable set of mechanical wheels that the team will use to bring animal from the vehicle to

## Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

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either the cremator if it is up to temperature or placed onto suitable racking. The deceased pet will not be visible to the public or visitors/contractors who may be in the vicinity of the working area. Suitable ID tag will be placed onto the animal from the moment it is received by the team.

- After cremation is complete, the remains will be cremulated and poured into a suitable biodegradable urn and stored appropriately. ID card that was originally placed on deceased will have been tagged onto the machine during the cremation, then placed with the ashes/urn afterwards maintaining a dignified process for the animals loved ones to have peace of mind in our processes.

### 3.13 Staffing

- In order to ensure all elements of Bereavement Services are covered 100% a business case will be submitted in the coming weeks for a new post which will incorporate both human and pet cremations as well as other elements of the service. Therefore, a rota can be created where staff cover pet cremations on a weekly basis as well as other elements. A grade 4 post has already been budgeted for from past staffing structure proposal, a grade 5 post will be an appropriate level for this requirement, therefore a further on cost of roughly 5K per year to current staff structure.
- Shift patterns will be created to coincide with booking slots, **potentially an 8 – 4 early shift and a 10-6 later shift to be confirmed.**

### 3.14 Equipment requirements

- Pet Cremator
- Mechanical wheels for transfer of carcass.
- Storage racking, up to 10 spaces.
- PPE
- Fridge.
- Cremulator

### 3.15 Further Considerations

- Soft rebranding to integrate pet services into Bereavement Services (e.g., logo/crest/staff uniform).

**Executive Committee**23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

- Online shop (integrated or standalone) for memorials and guidance, building on comparable practice (e.g., Worcester City Council).
- On-site card payments via Stripe handheld devices to enhance user friendliness for families, suppliers, and veterinary practices.
- Abavus integration: All records on new council system. This will help develop a customer database for when memorial packages are available.

**4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS****4.1 Capital**

- Pet cremator £35,000.00
- Mechanical wheels £3,000.00
- Storage racking £2,000.00
- Cremulator £10,000.00

**4.2 Savings to consider**

- Current roadkill disposal contract would be reversed and provide an estimate of £5,000.00 in savings for RBC.
- The facility would also take animal carcasses generated by WRS uprising a further in service saving of circa £10,000 per annum

**4.3** Table below details estimated payback period.

	Month one	Month two	Month three	Month four	Month five	Month six	Month seven	Month eight	Month nine
<b>Usage</b>	20% / week	20% / week	30% / week	30% / week	30% / week	40% / week	40% / week	40% / week	50% / week
<b>Expenditure £15 per pet (£)</b>	420	420	630	630	630	840	840	840	1050
<b>Income (£) per month</b>	5,600	5,600	8,400	8,400	8,400	11,200	11,200	11,200	14,000
<b>Surplus</b>	5,180	5,180	7,770	7,770	7,770	10,360	10,360	10,360	12,950

## Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

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### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 It should be noted that the Council is not statutorily obliged to provide residents with a pet cremation service.

### **6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Local Government Reorganisation**

6.1 New revenue stream to help support council income targets irrespective of whether through LGR there are 1 Unitary council or 2 .

#### **Relevant Council Priority**

6.2 Economy, Regeneration, & Prosperity. This will be a new service for local people and will generate funds to reinvest in local services

#### **Climate Change Implications**

6.3 The introduction of a pet cremation service will increase on-site energy use and emissions from the gas-powered cremator, but this is partially offset by reduced transport emissions as local residents, vets, and WRS will no longer need to travel to facilities 10–20 miles away. The cremator is UK-manufactured, lowering supply-chain emissions, and is compatible with future filtration or efficiency upgrades should council net-zero commitments require them. Use of biodegradable urns, efficient integration with existing utilities, and the opportunity to adopt renewable electricity and energy-efficient operational practices provide further mitigation and support alignment with the Council's climate objectives.

#### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

6.4 N/A

### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 Risk of inaction: missing a significant revenue opportunity and leadership position in integrated bereavement care.

7.2 Staff unsettlement: mitigated via 1 new post (grade 4 post already in budget, but a grade 5 post required), consultation, and upskilling, including official training.

7.3 Public reaction: mitigate through clear communications (website, social media, stakeholder forums, member committees).

**Executive Committee**

**23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

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**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

N/A

**Executive Committee**23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Sharon Harvey	13 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2026
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Simon Parry	13 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2026
Financial Services	Maqsood Ahmed	14 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2026
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings – Principal Solicitor - Governance	14/01/26
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Eccles	15 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2025

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**Executive Committee**23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**Report title**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bill Hartnett	
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes	
Relevant Assistant Director	Simon Parry – Assistant Director for Environmental and Housing Property Services	
Report Author	Job Title: Andrew Rainbow Contact andrew.rainbow@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 07925095646	email:
Wards Affected	All	
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No	
Relevant Council Priority	Community and Housing	
Key Decision - No		
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 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.**

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Repairs and Maintenance Policy sets out the overall approach that Redditch Borough Council will take in relation to repairs and maintenance of properties in the Councils housing stock.
- 2.2 The principles of this policy apply to all Council house tenants regardless of tenancy type. However, the full provisions of this policy only apply to customers living in social, affordable and market rented homes with secure tenancies.
- 2.3 This policy has been reviewed and updated in light of new Government guidance, the latest legislation and best practice.

## Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

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- Awaab's Law: Guidance for social landlords and timeframes for repairs in the social rented sector.
- The Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025
- Regulator for Social Housing  
(Further information can be viewed on the Gov.UK website)

2.4 RBC is committed to delivering a range of maintenance services that are shaped around the legitimate expectations of customers and to ensuring homes and communal facilities are safe and well maintained.

2.5 The death of Awaab Ishack on 21st December 2020 due to a severe respiratory condition as a result of prolonged exposure to mould in the family home, prompted a campaign for the introduction of "Awaab's Law".

2.6 Following the subsequent coroner's report and public outcry the Government announced plans to make major changes to the law on damp and mould. "Awaab's Law", was introduced through the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 which received the royal assent in July 2023. The new legislation regarding tenants affected by damp and mould requires landlords to investigate and repair reported health hazards within specified timeframes

2.7 In January 2025, in response to these proposed changes from the Government, RBC agreed to introduce a specialist Damp and Mould team, who are based in Housing Property Services. Since the decision was taken to introduce this team, staff have been recruited and are working for the council.

2.8 The next step in the process will be for the Council to formally adopt and approve a Damp and Mould Policy. As this forms part of the Housing Asset Management Strategy this needs to be reported through to Council.

2.9 The report addresses points relating to the Council's ageing housing stock, financial constraints and workforce and how to deliver services efficiently.

## Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

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### 3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

#### Repairs and Maintenance Policy

- 3.1 Housing Property Services are moving towards a modern approach to providing services to customers. With the implementation of new software and new processes, the Council will ensure that there is an approach to service delivery that focuses on the needs of residents.
- 3.2 The Council will be able to offer a greater level of transparency and communication with customers as well as with colleagues across RBC.
- 3.3 Housing Property Services are aiming to incorporate a new job category "Planned Maintenance with a time scale of 60 days. This is work that falls outside of the authorities fast reactive service approach.
- 3.4 Compliance and data management will be as important as providing the service to meet legal and contractual obligations.
- 3.5 Members are being asked to approve the revised Repairs and Maintenance Policy.

#### Damp and Mould Policy

- 3.6 There are a variety of applications that can be employed and to different property types when tackling damp and mould. This includes a mix of applications such as mechanical, electrical and non-mechanical. No single element will fix the problem. The Damp and Mould team must assess the building to understand the root cause before they can address the problem.
- 3.7 Social housing providers are now expected to meet very strict deadlines for processing and responding to complaints about damp and mould. The time limits are set out in the main report on page 6 as a flow chart and has been taken from Government guidelines.
- 3.8 To formalise the Council's approach to managing damp and mould a Damp and Mould Policy has been developed (Appendix 2). Members are asked to approve this policy to ensure that the Council continues to comply with best practice in meeting the needs of customers.

### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Not applicable within this report.

## Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

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### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Council is subject to a range of statutory and regulatory duties relating to the repair and upkeep of its housing stock.
- 5.2 The Regulator of Social Housing provides for consumer standards which require social landlords to have an accurate, up to date and evidenced understanding of the condition of their homes. The Regulator's tenant satisfaction measures are a core set of performance measures against which all social housing providers must publish their performance. The Council's has been updating the Executive Committee on its performance in this regard separately.
- 5.3 Under Awaab's Law landlords must act within specific timeframes, provide tenants with information, offer alternative accommodation if needed and are subject to stiffer penalties for non-compliance than in the past.

### **6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Local Government Reorganisation**

- 6.1 There are no specific implications in relation to local government reorganisation.

#### **Relevant Council Priority**

- 6.2 Community and Housing
  - Ensure the Council's housing stock is clean and safe to live in.
  - Finding somewhere to live.

#### **Climate Change Implications**

- 6.3 No specific climate change implications have been identified.

#### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.4 Awaiting feedback from the relevant team.

### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 Without an up-to-date policy, the Council will not be compliant with the authority's operational duties and those expected by the Regulator of Social Housing. The policy will make the Council more transparent and provide for a more consistent approach to service delivery.

## Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

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### 8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 - Repairs and Maintenance Policy.  
Appendix 2 – Damp and Mould Policy

**Executive Committee**23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Bill Hartnett	Dec 2025
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Simon Parry	Dec 2025
Financial Services	Kunmi Joseph	N/A
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings	Jan 14 2026
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Becky Green	
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Not Applicable	N/A



## REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

Created By	Andrew Rainbow			
Date Approved				
Date Published				
Maintained By	Andrew Rainbow			
Review Date	August 2025			
Version Number	Modified By	Modifications Made	Date Modified	Status
VI	SP		Feb 2023	

### 1. Scope of Policy

## Appendix 1

1.1 This policy sets out the overall approach that Redditch Borough Council will take in relation to the repair and maintenance of properties.

1.2 The principles of this policy apply to all residents regardless of tenancy type. However, the full provisions of this policy only apply to customers living in social, affordable and market rented homes with secure tenancies.

1.3 The full provisions of this policy do not apply to:  
new homes that are within the initial defect's liability period of up to a year after handover (customers should refer to their welcome pack for details); or  
Leasehold properties see link [Leaseholders Handbook RBC](#) section 5 pages 11 & 12.

1.4 RBC is committed to delivering a range of maintenance services that are shaped around the legitimate expectations of residents and to ensuring homes and communal facilities are safe and well maintained.

## 2. Policy Aims and Objectives

2.1 We aim to provide all our residents with a safe, warm and secure home that is well maintained.

2.2 We understand how important this service is to our residents, and we are striving to make improvements to achieve the following aims and objectives:

### Managing Repairs Services

- Resident-Focused Approach: Ensure residents are treated with empathy and respect throughout the repair process.
- Compliance and Data Management: Maintain properties to meet all legal and contractual obligations, supported by accurate and up-to-date asset and repairs data.
- Transparency and Communication: Share performance information with resident groups, confirm appointments, and keep residents informed if repairs require multiple visits.
- Efficiency and Coordination: Work collaboratively with contractors to minimise disruption, monitor performance, and strive for first-time fixes.
- Continuous Improvement: Actively listen to resident feedback and improve services accordingly.
- Clear Responsibilities: Make repair responsibilities and escalation routes transparent to residents.

### Quality

- Strong Governance: Apply rigorous contract, risk, cost, and performance management across all repair's services.

## Appendix 1

- Performance Monitoring: Use inspections, resident surveys, and photographic evidence to track and improve quality.
- Efficiency and Standards: Aim for first-time fixes, provide updates for complex repairs, and recall contractors if work is substandard.
- Appointments and Data: Ensure all repairs are pre-arranged, set clear rules for missed appointments, and analyse data to identify trends and improve service.
- Record Keeping and Innovation: Maintain detailed visit records, share relevant information with contractors, and embed innovation in service improvements.
- Regulatory Learning: Actively learn from feedback from the Housing Ombudsman, Social Housing Regulator, and other authorities.

### 3. Policy Outline

#### 3.1 Classification of Repairs and Maintenance Activities

Repairs are classified based on their urgency and the level of risk they pose to the property and its occupants. Issues that present an immediate danger to health, safety, or security are treated as emergencies and addressed promptly, while less critical problems are scheduled according to their impact on comfort and functionality. This approach ensures that the most serious hazards are resolved quickly, protecting both residents and the integrity of the home.

#### 3.2 The Table below sets out the various Priority Codes, their timescales, definitions and examples of such repairs.

<u>Job Category</u>	<u>Priority Code</u>	<u>Timescale</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Example</u>
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## Appendix 1

Emergency *	1	24 Hours - Will be made safe, then follow up if needed	Issues which pose an immediate health, safety or security risk.	Major Disaster or fire, Severe storm damage. Uncontrollable water leak within property
Urgent	2	5 Working Days	Issues which pose a health risk, but not an immediate risk.	Partial loss of electric power No hot water Blocked sink Unblock second toilet in the property.
Routine	3	up to 20 Working Days	Work that poses no threat to occupants and/or may require substantial repairs.	Repair dripping tap Renewal of bath, hand basin Remove Graffiti
Planned Maintenance Repair	4	up to 60 Working Days	These are works that cannot wait for the investment works programme and will be packaged together and dealt with on a programmed repairs basis.	Major plastering works to walls and ceilings. Large fencing areas. Certain works in relation to Awaab's Law.

**Damp and Mould**

## Appendix 1

**We understand that damp and mould are significant concerns for many of our tenants and leaseholders, and we recognise the health risks they can cause. Although damp, condensation, and mould can be complex issues to manage, we are committed to addressing each case promptly and effectively, taking a proactive and thorough approach to resolving these problems whilst following necessary requirements.**

**Please see our Damp and Mould Policy for details**

### **4. Repairing Responsibilities**

4.1 The Council is responsible for most repairs and maintenance within the council owned housing stock and the upkeep of communal areas (Appendix 1). However, Residents are responsible for some repairs Under the Tenancy Agreement and this Policy.

4.2 Residents must report repairs promptly and allow access to their property for inspections and any necessary work. Repairs, maintenance, and replacement of certain items within the home are outlined in the Tenancy Agreement and the Tenant's Handy Hints guide, available on the Council's website.

For full list of Residents repair responsibilities see Appendix 3.

### **5. Planned repairs**

5.1 These are substantial or grouped works that require a lead-in period and may involve resident consultation. They typically include tasks needing two or more tradespeople for more than two days on a single element, such as bathroom or kitchen replacements scheduled before their planned renewal date. Examples include:

- Boundary fencing works
- Full roof replacement.
- Complete replacement of windows or doors.
- Bathroom or kitchen upgrades where the scheduled renewal date is in the future, but the asset is beyond economical repair

For a full list of planned maintenance works see appendix 2.

### **6. Out of hours service**

## Appendix 1

6.1 Redditch Borough Council provides an out-of-hours repair service exclusively for emergency issues occurring outside normal working hours (8:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday), including weekends and Bank Holidays.

6.2 All qualifying emergency reports will be attended within **2 hours**. The out-of-hours call handler will dispatch a trade operative to make the property safe or, where possible, complete the repair immediately.

6.3 If follow-up work is required, the Business Support Team will contact the customer on the next working day to arrange a suitable appointment, based on the urgency of the outstanding repair.

## 7. Responsive Repairs Service

### 7.1 Reporting Repairs

7.1.1 To ensure the service is accessible for all residents, RBC will maintain a range of ways for repairs to be reported. These include:

- by phone
- online
- via any employee or representative

7.1.2 Residents are responsible for reporting repairs to RBC and must allow access to their home for any work, inspections or surveys to be carried out by the RBC or any of its contractors or representatives.

7.1.3 All requests for repairs reported by residents will be assessed against the RBC's repairing obligations, as outlined in the RBC Housing Repairs Handy Hints Booklet Aug 23 WEB. Redditch Borough Council may charge for undertaking repairs where damage has been caused by the customer, members of their household or visitors to the property.

### 7.2 No Access

7.2.1 We and our contractors will make three separate attempts to gain access, using a range of communication methods including phone calls, emails, and text messages. If these attempts are unsuccessful, a written appointment letter will be issued.

7.2.2 If access is still not granted, the case will be referred to the Tenancy Team to carry out a tenancy audit. This audit will confirm whether any barriers exist, such as a protected characteristic requiring reasonable adjustments. The Tenancy Team may

## Appendix 1

involve a Senior Trade operative during the audit to discuss access or arrange the works at that time.

7.2.3 If the audit does not resolve the issue, one of the following actions will be taken:

Suspected Abandonment: If the property appears abandoned, the Tenancy Team will initiate the abandonment process to recover possession.

7.2.4 Tenancy Support Required: If the resident needs assistance to manage their tenancy (e.g., hoarding or property condition issues preventing access), they will be referred for tenancy sustainment support.

7.2.5 Legal Enforcement: The case will be escalated to the Prevention Enforcement Group to consider applying for an access injunction through the courts to complete the necessary works.

### 7.3 Home Improvements

7.3.1 A secure tenant has a legal right to make alterations and improvements to their home if they obtain written permission before they carry out any works and seek all relevant permissions including Planning and Building Regulations approval etc.

7.3.2 We will not unreasonably withhold consent when a request to carry out improvements/alterations is made. If consent is provided, the resident will become responsible for any subsequent repairs, maintenance or replacement of the improvement/alteration. At the end of the tenancy, a resident may claim compensation for certain eligible improvements carried out provided they have the relevant consent.

### 7.4 Leaseholder Obligations

7.4.1 We will not carry out repairs for leaseholders where the terms of the lease state that a repair is their responsibility. Leaseholders' repair responsibilities are set out in detail within the individual lease agreement. The same recharge approach will apply to leaseholders as for tenants. We will not carry out repairs to homes we manage for third parties unless expressly identified in formal agreements.

We will consult with leaseholders in accordance with the Leaseholders handbook.

For more details please consult the [leaseholder handbook](#).

## Appendix 1

### 8. Equality and Diversity

8.1 We are committed to fairness and equality for all regardless of their colour, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion or belief, family circumstances or offending history, as referred to in our relevant policies. Our aim is to ensure that our policies and procedures do not create an unfair disadvantage for anyone, either directly or indirectly.

An Equality Impact Assessment will be required in respect of this policy and which identified no negative impacts on any person/group with a protected characteristic as a result of this policy.

### 9. Complaints

9.1 Residents and service users can complain in person, over the telephone, in writing, by email and digitally.

9.2 To complain by telephone then resident, service users and their representatives should telephone 01527 64252 during office hours and state to the customer service team if they are unhappy with a situation that they wish to have rectified or wish to make a complaint about the service that they have or have not received.

9.3 To complain by email, residents, service users, or their representatives should address their complaint to  
[housingreviewsandcomplaints@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:housingreviewsandcomplaints@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

9.4 To complain in writing correspondence should be sent to:

Housing reviews and Complaints  
Town Hall  
Walter Stranz Square  
Redditch  
B98 8AH

9.5 To complain digitally residents and service users and their representatives can access the our website by pasting the following URL into their browser:  
<https://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/residents/my-home/housing-complaint-or-enquiry/i-am-a-council-tenant/>

## Appendix 1

### **10. Monitoring and Review**

10.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years or on the introduction of new legislation or best practice guidance, whichever is the sooner.

10.2 Redditch Borough Council will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and propose

changes where necessary to enhance service delivery and improve the customer experience. Performance data and customer satisfaction results will be reviewed through quarterly performance reports, tenant engagement opportunities, Portfolio Holder meetings, and Senior Management Teams to identify areas requiring improvement or further review.

### **11. Associated Documents**

List of documents - associated policies, procedures and publications:

Aids and Adaptations Policy

Asbestos Management Policy

Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy

Electrical Safety Policy

Fire Safety Management Policy

Gas and Fuel Burning Appliance Safety Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Rechargeable Repairs Policy

Water Systems (Legionella) Management Policy

Asset Management Strategy

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Our Customer Commitments

A Guide to Undertaking Your Own Home Improvements

Lettable Standard

Rechargeable Repairs Guide

Allocations Policy

Tenancy Management Policy

Damp and Mould Policy

## **Appendix 1 – RBC repair responsibilities.**

### **Repair of Structure and Exterior**

To keep the structure and exterior of the premises in good repair including:

- The roof/s.

## Appendix 1

- Drains (excluding drains maintained by mains provider), gutters and external pipes.
- Outside walls, outside doors, windowsills, window catches, sash cords (glass) and window frames, including any necessary external painting or decoration.
- Internal walls, skirting boards, doors and door frames, door jambs, thresholds, floors, ceilings and kitchen units and work surfaces (but not painting and decoration).
- Internal plaster work (not filling of minor cracks prior to decorations).
- Chimneys and chimney stacks and flues \*(leasehold shared chimney stacks will fall under section 20 and the section 20 process followed).
- Boundary walls, fences, steps and ramps.
- Footpaths from the drive/public footpath to the front door and from the front door to the backdoor.
- Car parking areas (where provided by RBC).
- Garages and outbuildings (where provided by RBC).
- Stair and passenger lifts.

### **Repair of Installations**

To keep in good repair and proper working order any installations provided or adopted by RBC for space heating, water heating and sanitation and for the supply of water, gas and electricity, including:

- Water pipes and tanks, gas pipes and electrical wiring.
- Electrical sockets and light fittings (but not plugs or non RBC appliances).
- Basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes.
- Water heaters, boilers, fireplaces, fitted fires and radiators (where provided by RBC).
- Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors (where provided by RBC).

### **Repair of Communal Areas**

To take reasonable care to keep the following in reasonable repair and fit for use by the customer and other occupiers and visitors to the premises.

- Communal entrances, halls and passageways.
- Stairways and passenger lifts.
- Rubbish chutes.
- Lighting.
- Any other communal parts.

### **Decoration of Exterior and Communal Areas**

## Appendix 1

To maintain the exterior of the property and any internal communal areas in a reasonable state of decoration.

## Appendix 2 – Repair timescales

Component replacement and works not classed as repairs

RBC will complete these works within the timeframes listed below. These are works outside the scope of a repair and as such are not subject to responsive repair KPI's

Alterations to kitchen and bathrooms where authorised (not Aids & Adaptations work)

Replacement security doors and replacement windows

Replacing out of date smoke alarms

Extra electrical sockets or light fittings where authorised

Legionella works- (Timeframe according to risk identified)

Fire risk assessment works, including fire doors. (Carried out by an external contractor) (Timeframe according to risk identified)

Gas fires will be inspected as part of the LGSR, however no repairs will be carried out if found faulty and will be condemned until repairs are carried out by the tenant and a compliance certificate issued or removed altogether. Electric fires are tenants' responsibility, and no repairs will be carried out if faulty.

Adjustments to categories and timescales will be made to support vulnerable customers who have no available support to assist them.

To keep in good repair and proper working order any installations provided or adopted by RBC for space heating, water heating and sanitation and for the supply of water, gas and electricity, including:

Water pipes and tanks, gas pipes and electrical wiring

Electrical sockets and light fittings (but not plugs or non RBC appliances)

Basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes

Water heaters, boilers, fireplaces, fitted fires and radiators (where provided by RBC)

Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors (where provided by RBC)

## Appendix 3 – Tenant repair responsibilities.

### General

Residents are responsible for keeping the interior of their home in a good condition and to decorate all internal parts as often as is necessary to keep them in good

## Appendix 1

decorative order. Residents are also expected to take reasonable precautions to prevent damage once a repair fault has been identified.

To repair, renew or replace as necessary any parts of the structure, installations, fixtures or fittings inside or outside the building that are damaged by the customers, a member of the household or someone the customer has allowed into the property, including children. Criminal damage or vandalism should be reported to the Police and a police crime number obtained.

Not to make any changes to the structure of the property, its fixtures and fittings, boundary fence or wall or anything connected to the provision of services to the property without written permission from RBC.

RBC are not responsible for any sheds that have not been provided by RBC within the curtilage of the property and as such they are tenant responsibility in all cases.

To maintain any approved changes to the structure of the property, its fixtures and fittings, boundary fence or wall or anything connected to the provision of services to the property.

To take reasonable steps to avoid moisture build up (condensation) within the property and causing damage.

To pay in full any rechargeable repair cost due to misuse or damage to the structure or fittings of the property.

### **Internal Decoration and Other Matters**

To keep the interior of the premises in good and tenantable repair and in clean and good decorative condition, and to decorate all internal parts of the premises as frequently as is necessary to keep them in reasonable decorative order.

### **Minor Repairs**

- Residents are responsible for carrying out minor repairs such as the following:
- Replacing plugs and chains to baths, basins and sinks
- Replacing keys that are lost or when resident have been locked out
- Testing and maintaining battery smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, including battery replacement
- Repair and maintenance of secondary heating, including electric or gas fires, open fires and wood burners.
- Sweeping chimneys as often as necessary to prevent fires and to ensure efficient operation

## Appendix 1

- Replacing fuses, light bulbs, fluorescent tubes and their starters for standard fittings.
- Cleaning baths, wc pans and washbasins
- Replacing toilet seats
- First attempt to clear blockages in sinks, hand basins, water pipes, toilets or gullies
- Repairing minor plaster cracks or holes to walls and / or ceilings
- Taking steps to prevent water in pipes and tanks from freezing
- Repairing gas/electric cookers and all white goods not provided by RBC
- Garden Maintenance including trees
- Replacing washing lines and posts or restringing including rotary dryers (except in communal areas).
- Maintaining garden paths and patio/hard standings outside of the defined repairs in appendix 2.1
- Maintaining driveways not installed by RBC
- Repairing any fences installed by customers
- TV aerials (except communal aerials) and any damage to property or neighbouring property caused by their installation.
- TV/BT/Multimedia points and extensions within the home
- Ensure the property is appropriately heated and ventilated-and report non-functional extractor fans
- Cleaning off mould and condensation
- Altering doors for carpets.
- Alterations to install additional appliances, fittings or fixers (after seeking prior permission from RBC)
- Residents own Gas and electric cookers and hobs must be installed by an approved qualified contractor and evidence of certification provided to RBC.
- Re-glazing of external windows and doors where the customer has caused the damage.
- Removal of pests in the home (rats, fleas, wasps, etc.)
- Minor repairs to internal door handles, catches.
- The provision of window restrictors
- Replacement window lock keys

## Appendix 4 – Rechargeable repairs guide.

Residents can be charged for repairs under the following circumstances:

- If the resident asks RBC to carry out extra work that is their responsibility
- If the resident replaces any fixtures or fittings, or does any repairs or improvements without first obtaining RBC's written permission

## Appendix 1

- If RBC has to repair anything that the customer, members of their family, visitors or pets have damaged (including blocked toilets or waste pipes caused by neglect or misuse)
- If the resident misuses the emergency call-out system
- Re-lighting boilers where this is caused by an act or omission of the resident
- Any repairs that are the resident's responsibility
- Any damage to a chimney where there is a solid fuel appliance and is caused by burning incorrect fuel or failure to maintain appliance if their own has been fitted.

In certain circumstances residents may qualify for a waiver where vulnerability can be demonstrated, this will be decided on a case-by-case situation.

RBC will consider the replacement of locks where this is required to protect the resident from domestic violence or burglary. RBC will also carry out the work at no cost to the resident where this is required through no fault of the customer.

When a resident does not carry out repairs that are their responsibility and failure to do so causes a risk to the resident, neighbours or the property, RBC may carry out the repair and recharge the cost to the resident.

Where a resident is deemed to be vulnerable by way of disability, immobility through old age or for any other reason, RBC may carry out works that would normally be the responsibility of the resident to complete without recharging. Each case will be considered on its merits, the decision will be at RBC'S discretion based on known information and individual circumstances.

RBC expects that the resident takes reasonable care to avoid damage to the property, as an example: leaving the front or rear door open and the wind blows it shut and the glass in the door shatters this would be classed as a recharge.



## Damp and Mould Policy

<b>Created By</b>	Andrew Rainbow			
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## Appendix 2

### **Purpose of the Policy**

This policy sets out our approach to dealing with damp and mould in council homes and communal spaces that we maintain. It covers the services we provided to tenants who rent their home under a tenancy agreement.

For leaseholders, we will meet the responsibilities as set out in terms of the lease.

### **The key principles of the policy are:**

- Zero tolerance approach to the occurrence and resolution of damp and mould
- No blame Culture – ‘It’s not a lifestyle issue’
- Everyone’s Responsibility – All staff have a duty to address
- Being Pro-active – Acting to fully remedy, via investment works
- Providing easy access to services – For reporting issues and making a complaint

Through listening to our tenant’s, building safety has been identified as their number one priority. This is further emphasised by the Regulator for Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman as an area of critical importance.

Health and Safety of our tenants is a key priority for Redditch Borough Council, this is defined in our Strategic Plan and addressed in this policy, through a series of both reactive and proactive approaches.

Under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), damp and mould cases are categorised as Category 1 (CAT1) hazard, which is the highest, most serious form of hazard classification.

Damp and mould issues in homes can have a serious impact on the health and well-being of the occupants and cause damage to property. We aim to do everything we can to make sure our tenants stay safe, healthy, and well in their homes.

This policy sets out our approach to dealing with damp and mould in council homes and communal areas, both reactive and pro-active. It covers the services we provided to tenants and acknowledge that different properties, often of different ages, require different approaches by Redditch Borough Council.

### **Statutory Obligations**

## Appendix 2

Redditch Borough Council has a statutory obligation Under Section 11 (1) (a) of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (LTA). The act states that the:

"Structure and exterior of the dwelling-house" as well as "the supply of water, gas and electricity" and "heating and heating water" need to be kept in working order.

As part of our duty of care to tenants, we must repair the defect to the structure\exterior of the property which is resulting in damp.

The key responsibilities a landlord has when there are damp issues is to make sure a correct diagnosis is obtained and to carry out the treatment. damp is a mandatory repair under the HHSRS. This also stresses that landlords must ensure mould doesn't affect a tenant's physical and mental health.

Mould is a fungus which is known to cause breathing difficulties. Tenants who suffer from asthma or rhinitis conditions, or are taking any cancer treatment, may suffer serious health problems if exposed to it.

Other key legal and regulatory references are set out below:

- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11)
- Housing Act 2004
- Decent Homes Standard 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Home Standard, Regulator of Social Housing 2015
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Conditions Claims (England) 2021

### **Definition of Damp, Mould and Causation**

## Appendix 2

### Damp

Dampness is an excess of moisture that can't escape from a structure, which may go on to cause significant damage to the building such as collapsed ceilings and rotten timber elements.

### Mould

Is a type of fungus. It spreads through spores, which are invisible to the naked eye but are in the air around us all the time and can quickly grow on surfaces where dampness persists, or water has formed into a visible covering.

There are four main causes of dampness in homes in England. It is important to understand the difference between them because they each need different solutions:

**Water leaks** from defective supply and waste pipework (especially in bathrooms and kitchens) can affect both external and internal walls and ceilings. The affected area looks and feels damp to the touch and stays damp regardless of the prevailing weather conditions. It is the result of a problem or fault with the home, which requires repair.

**Rising damp** is caused by water rising from the ground into the home. Water gets through or around a defective damp proof course (DPC) or passes through the masonry that was built without a DPC. Rising damp will only affect basements and ground floor rooms it will be present all year round but can be more noticeable in winter. It is extremely uncommon but is generally the result of a problem or fault with the home, which requires repair.

**Penetrating damp** appears because of a defect in the structure of the home, such as damaged brickwork, missing roof tiles, loose flashing, or leaking rainwater goods. These defects allow water to pass from the outside to the floors, walls, or ceilings. Penetrating damp is far more noticeable following a period of rainfall and will normally appear as a well-defined 'damp-patch' which looks and feels damp to the touch. It is the result of a problem or fault with the home, which requires a repair.

**Condensation** is the most prevalent type of dampness and is caused by moisture in the air (water vapour) inside the dwelling encountering a colder surface, such as a window or wall. The drop in temperature causes liquid water to form on the surface and then soak in. It is usually found in kitchens, bathrooms, the corners of rooms, on north facing walls and on or near windows – all places that either tend to have a lot of moisture in the air, or to be cold generally, "Known as cold spots". It is also found in areas of low air circulation such as behind wardrobes and beds, especially when they are pushed up against external walls.

## Appendix 2

**Defining Damp and Mould and its Causes:** 'We will identify the root causes of any damp and mould' circulation such as behind wardrobes and beds, especially when they are pushed up against external walls.

All homes in England can be affected by condensation because the climate is often cool and wet. Normal household activities also constantly release moisture into the air. Good practice in the home minimises and alleviates condensation, and in many cases will prevent it causing dampness and persistent mould. However, on occasion the root cause can be a problem that requires a repair or an improvement to the home. In others, a different solution may be needed (for example, in cases of severe overcrowding).

## Our Commitment

In line with our organisational culture and values we will do everything we can to make sure we:

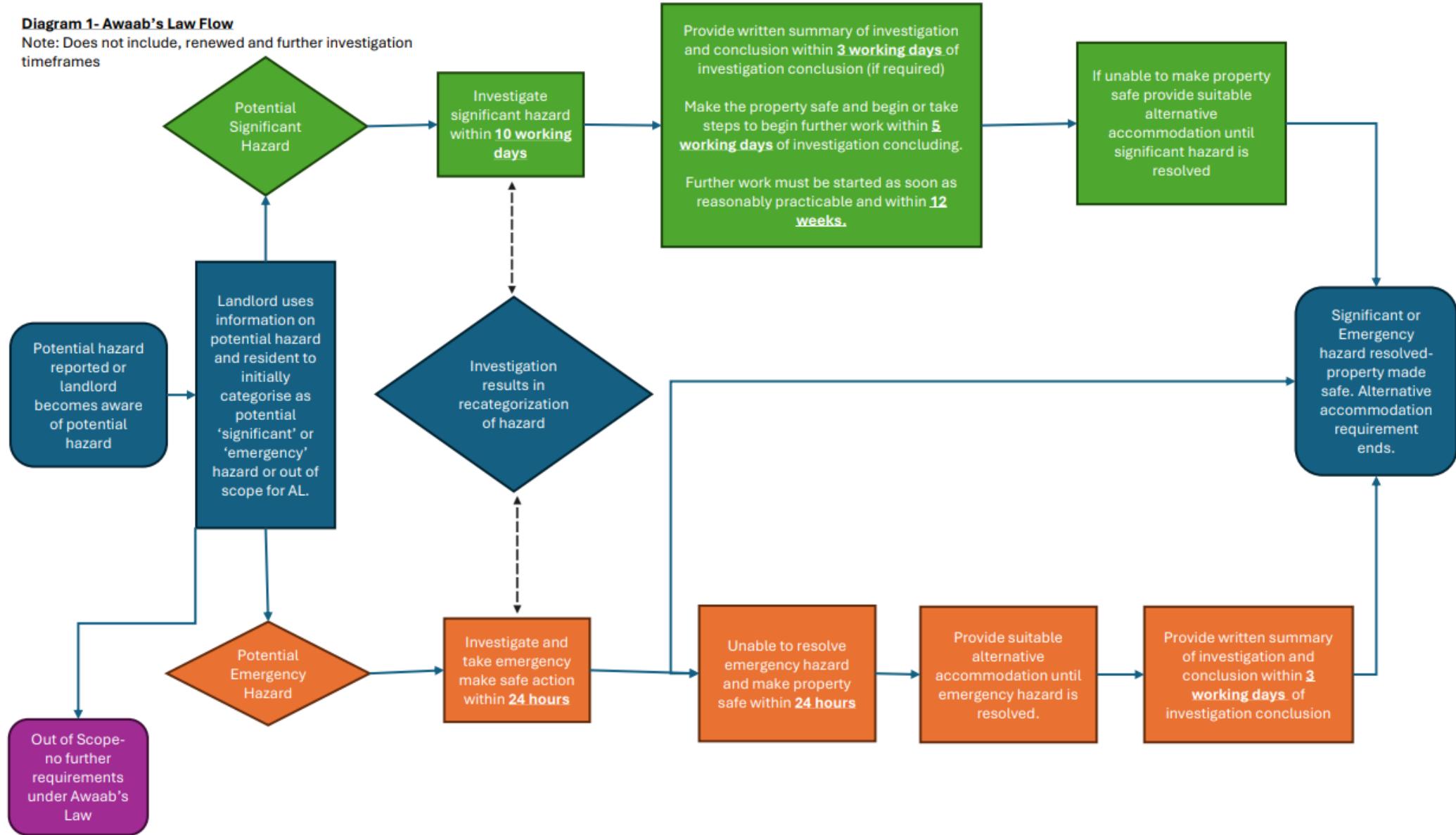
- Provide dry, warm, healthy, and safe homes for our tenants which are free from any hazards
- Comply with legislative, regulatory, and contractual (including tenancy and lease) obligations
- Ensure the fabric of our homes is protected from deterioration and damage resulting from damp
- Treat tenants reporting damp and mould with empathy and respect
- Take responsibility for diagnosing and resolving damp and mould in a timely and effective way
- Support tenants in resolving damp and mould in a way that is appropriate to the problem
- Communicate with our tenants clearly and regularly regarding any actions we plan to take and any actions our tenants are advised to take
- Ensure staff are trained to enable them to spot potential causes of damp, mould, and condensation so they can advise tenants, diagnose problems, and provide solutions
- When applying this policy, make reasonable adjustments for people who have a disability and will take into account the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

## Appendix 2

### Our

**Diagram 1- Awaab's Law Flow**

Note: Does not include, renewed and further investigation timeframes



## Appendix 2

### Pro-Active approach

- We will take action to identify homes that may be at risk of developing problems with damp and mould - We will use data (stock condition, EPC to help us understand the potential in relation to damp and mould and where appropriate use technology to monitor and reduce the risk and occurrence.
- We will use the investment programme and asset management strategy to ensure we take steps to remove the root causes of damp and mould growth - We will mitigate any increased risks of damp and mould by investing in 'fabric first' principles, by improving thermal efficiency, when decarbonising the council's homes and making sure that adequate ventilation and heating systems are installed and maintained.
- When a property becomes vacant, and prior to re-letting, we will identify and remedy any issues which may cause damp through our 'voids standard' works. A Building Surveyor will carry out a survey to ensure standards are maintained.
- We will provide information on our website, and through other communication channels such as social media and newsletters to raise awareness about the causes of damp and mould. This will include details about how everyday activities in the home can generate condensation and what tenants can do to help prevent damp through, for instance, ventilation, controlling the build-up of moisture and adequate heating. Where there is mould growth, we will provide advice on how this will be treated - We actively encourage tenants to report repair requests and log complaints where required.
- All front-line staff and contractors will have the skills and knowledge to identify signs of damp and mould and discuss with tenants how to manage the problem - Staff are trained to look out for signs whenever they visit a tenant's home and clear guidance is given on how to signpost and refer.
- All council homes will receive a physical inspection every 12 months proactively targeting damp and mould. This will be achieved via Stock Condition Surveys, EPC Surveys, Voids, Heating Checks, Capped Off Properties Checks and Fire Door Inspections.
- We will utilise customer data from 100% post surveys to all tenants that have reported a repair, raised a complaint or disrepair claim in relation to damp, mould and condensation over the past 12 months on a periodic basis.
- We will continue to work with our Tenants Panel (TBC) ensuring we listen and always see things from a tenant's perspective to help enhance our service offer.
- Technology will be utilised to monitor temperature and humidity in problematic council homes Reactive approach.

### Reactive approach

## Appendix 2

- Tenants will be supported and encouraged to report any problems to us as soon as possible after noticing any potential damp or mould issue. When we receive a report, a trained member of the team will attend the property **within 7 days to** determine the cause and seek to resolve the immediate issue, by removing any visible mould. In some cases, they may need to further diagnose the problem to determine the root cause. Sometimes finding out what's causing damp and mould isn't always straightforward and could be due to a combination of factors, that we will then address. Any repairs that are required to be carried out will be dealt with in accordance with our Repairs and Maintenance Policy.
- Where damp is a result of condensation, we will work with tenants to take appropriate measures to prevent the damp and mould occurring. This might include advice about how to control moisture levels or increase ventilation or heating, so that moisture levels are controlled within acceptable limits.
- When a particularly severe or recurring damp or mould issue is identified we will undertake a comprehensive risk assessment which may result in a range of actions to support the tenant depending on their circumstances, including providing and funding dehumidifiers through our compensation policy, the installation of positive pressure, mechanical or passive ventilation systems, dry lining walls or applying mould resistant coverings, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.
- We will keep tenants informed of any property inspections, diagnosis of issues and the timetabling of work. This includes explaining why work might be needed and what work will be required. If any changes to the programme of works are needed, we will keep the tenant informed. Where work is not required, tenants will be informed, and we will explain the reason why no further work is needed
- For more complex cases, and especially where more intrusive building work is required and/or there is a serious health risk to the tenant or a member of their household, we may require them to move out of their home either on a temporary or permanent basis. We will consider the individual circumstances of the tenant. We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out at the property to ensure it is suitable for the tenant in line with our Decant Policy.

### Access to Property

- Our tenancy (and leasehold) agreements require tenants to allow us (including appointed contractors) access to their home to carry out works. If we are unable to

## Appendix 2

gain access and the integrity of the property, its fabric and/or the safety of the tenant or those in the vicinity of the property is compromised, we will take appropriate action. For example, this may include but is not limited to obtaining an injunction for access.

### **Compensation.**

- In line with our Compensation Policy, we will pay compensation as a result of our failure to deliver the service we have committed to. This includes where distress and inconvenience has been caused. Also, where furniture or belongings have been damaged, damages will be resolved through insurance claims. Each case will be considered on its own merits, considering the individual circumstances of the tenant and their household.

### **Supporting our tenants.**

- We will give tenants advice on how to prevent damp and what they can do to remove mould. However, we recognise that not every tenant will be in a position to do this. We will provide appropriate support in such cases in relation to the specific circumstances and the individual tenant's needs.
- We know that some tenants cannot afford to heat their homes adequately due to their income levels. We will work with tenants to ensure that they are receiving the income to which they are entitled.
- Where homes are overcrowded humidity will tend to be higher, and this increases the likelihood of condensation. We will work with the tenant and explore solutions which may include the tenant moving to a more suitable home if this is available and appropriate.

### **Staff Training.**

- We will ensure that all front-line staff (whether in house or our contractors) will have the required skills to recognise damp and the potential for mould, and that our Repairs and Maintenance Supervisors, applied trades and Capital Surveyors have specialist training and equipment to accurately diagnose causation and ensure appropriate remedial works are completed efficiently and effectively.

### **Responding to complaints and learning lessons.**

- We aim to resolve complaints as quickly as possible without tenants needing to resort to disrepair claims and legal action. Where legal action is taken, we will follow

## Appendix 2

the Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Conditions Claims so that we may resolve the dispute outside of court to help ensure issues are resolved quicker for tenants

- We will learn lessons from damp and mould cases, update our technical approach and how we communicate with tenants, in order to continually improve

**Executive****23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026****Quarter 3 - Housing Improvement Plan Update**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bill Hartnett
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Directors	Simon Parry & Judith Willis
Report Author	Job Title: Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services, Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services Contact email: Simon.parry@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Judith.willis@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Community & 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 is asked to RESOLVE that: -**

- 1) 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, is noted.**

**2. BACKGROUND****Regulator of Social Housing**

- 2.1 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act received royal assent in July 2023 and amended the original delivery of regulations under Section 193 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. The Social Housing (Regulation) Act amended the original Consumer Standards, with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) consulting on the revised standards between July and October 2023. The new Consumer Standards were published in February 2024 together with the RSH's first Consumer Standards Code of Practice.
- 2.2 In April 2024, the RSH was given new powers, following the introduction of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, to proactively inspect all social housing landlords (with over 1,000 homes) as part of a continuing effort to drive up standards within the social housing

**Executive****23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

sector. This in effect sees the return of regulation for local authority social housing landlords for the first time in several years of deregulation.

- 2.3 An inspection of Redditch Borough Council's landlord services was published on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2025 with a C3 grading. The Regulatory Judgement recognised that Redditch Borough Council needed significant improvement within Repairs and Maintenance with particular reference to the large number of overdue repairs (circa 3,000), lack of root cause analysis and strategic oversight, inconsistent data, lack of visibility and promotion of the repairs policy on the Council's website.
- 2.4 Fire safety was another area where significant improvement was required with nearly 3,000 overdue remedial actions from Fire Risk Assessments. The lack of opportunities for tenants to influence and scrutinise housing services and having no tenant engagement strategy nor formal tenant groups was also identified in the inspection.
- 2.5 Other notable weaknesses identified were only 20% of housing stock had a condition survey undertaken in the last five years with 25% having no recorded condition survey. Whilst all risk assessments are complete for Water Safety at the time of the inspection, there were over 150 overdue actions.
- 2.6 Complaint handling was generally slow in achieving response times, as set out by the Housing Ombudsman, although it was acknowledged there had been early improvements in achieving better performance. Performance Information publicised to customers was not easily accessible or well communicated to tenants.
- 2.7 At a meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025, the Executive Committee approved the Housing Improvement Plan, and the following report provides an update on progress to date.

### **3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

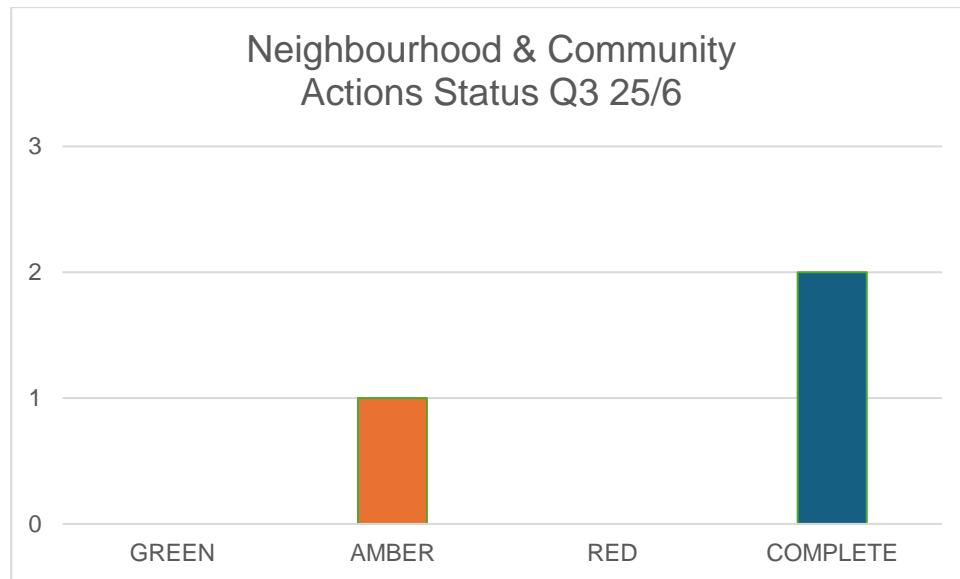
- 3.1 The Housing Improvement Plan was approved by Executive on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025 and is built on the areas within the Consumer Standards where the Council has not previously met the desired outcomes. The actions cover Safety and Quality, Transparency, Influence and Accountability and Neighbourhood and Community.
- 3.2 The Housing Improvement Plan update for Quarter 3 2025/26 is included at Appendix 1. A summary of progress against each of the Consumer Standards is represented below graphically using a RAG (Red, Amber Green) rating where Green, is identified tasks that are on

**Executive****23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

target, Amber, where the task is near to target and Red where it is off target. All Completed tasks are annotated accordingly.

**Neighbourhood and Community**

3.3 The following table sets out progress for the 3 actions within the HIP under this Consumer Standard.



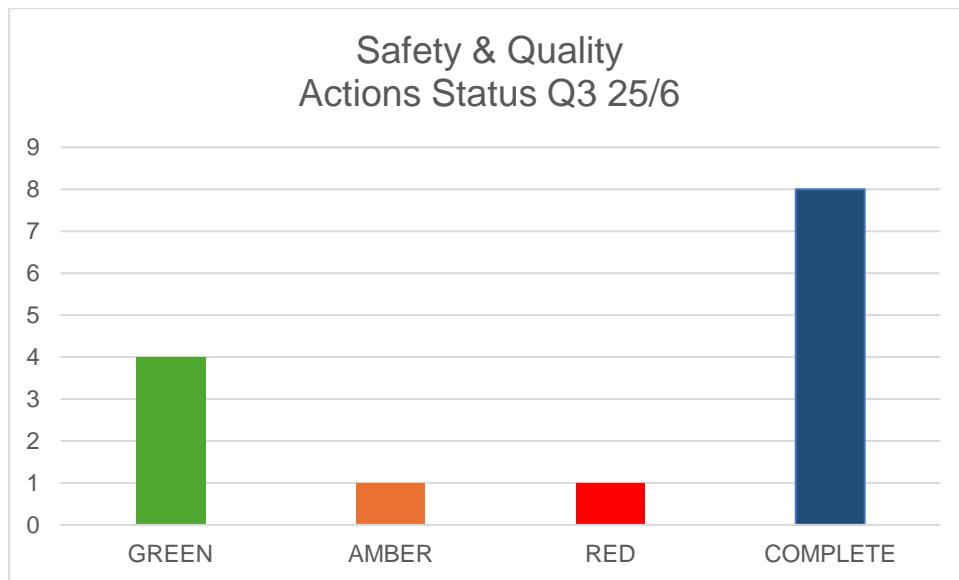
3.4 ***NC3 – Establish a procedure to keep tenants informed of the progress of their ASB cases.***

Work is progressing to ensure staff are trained. Processes within our systems are updated including the implementation of a final visit when a case is closed. As part of the review of processes we are looking to purchase and implement the ASB Module within our Housing Management Software to provide greater consistency and performance monitoring of cases.

Executive

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**Safety and Quality**

3.5 The following table sets out progress for the 14 actions within the HIP under this Consumer Standard.



3.6 The following are those actions within the HIP denoted as AMBER or RED.

3.7 ***SQ5 - Implement Total Mobile for Repairs and Maintenance.***

In the last quarter the Council has procured a new project manager to assist the team in the configuration and development prior to implementation of the Total Mobile (TM) system. During this period there have been integration issues between the Housing Management System and TM which we are collaborating with both providers to resolve.

3.8 ***SQ9 - Undertake an independent review of the mitigation in place and the delivery programme for fire safety.***

Within the last quarter a procurement framework and a service provider have been identified in the next quarter the scope and timeframe for the review will be completed, working towards mobilisation.

**Safety and Quality Serious Failings**

3.9 Within the Regulatory Judgement serious failings under Safety and Quality included circa 3,000 overdue repairs and maintenance jobs. This number has at the end of Quarter 3 reduced to 1,047 with 300

**Executive****23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

currently in progress. The reduction has been very limited this quarter as the winter period has seen an increase in newly arising repairs which has placed additional pressure on the repairs team to complete jobs. In total, 85% of the overdue jobs are Priority 3 - Non urgent jobs. These are predominantly larger jobs covering items such as fencing (258 jobs) and roofing which require additional capacity through contractors to complete.

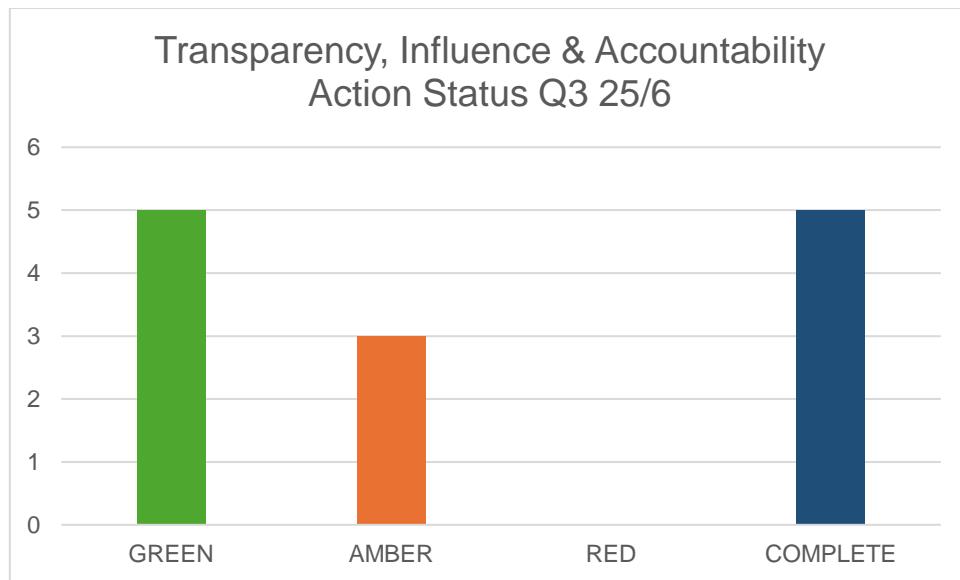
3.10 Fire Remedial Actions also had circa 3,000 items overdue. At the end of Quarter 3 there were 2,475 overdue actions. These actions are broken down into the 3 categories of High Medium and Low Risk. Further work is being undertaken to review the outstanding actions and data cleansing to ensure effective and timely programmes are in place to accelerate the reduction in outstanding numbers. From the High category 91% of actions are fire door/compartmentation, 8% are mechanical and electrical works and 1% is with Repairs and Maintenance. The budget for 2025/26 for fire door/compartmentation works is £1.5 million and a proposal in budget setting for 2026/27 will seek an increase to £2.5m to accelerate the programme.

2025/6	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
High	788	695	677	
Medium	1,765	1593	1,539	
Low	363	291	259	
	<b>2,916</b>	<b>2,579</b>	<b>2,475</b>	

### **Transparency, Influence and Accountability**

3.11 The following table sets out progress for the 13 actions within the HIP under this Consumer Standard.

Executive

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

The following are those actions within the HIP denoted as AMBER and RED.

### 3.12 TIA3 Implement a Tenants Portal within Cx

The latest version of Civica Cx will launch on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026 after which the demonstration of the portal can be loaded and evaluated to assess if this resolves security issues that have been previously identified. We will then be able to commence configuration in preparation for go live in April 2026.

### 3.13 TIA4 - Review the range of opportunities available for tenants to influence and scrutinise strategies, policies and services and implement improvements identified in accordance with best practice.

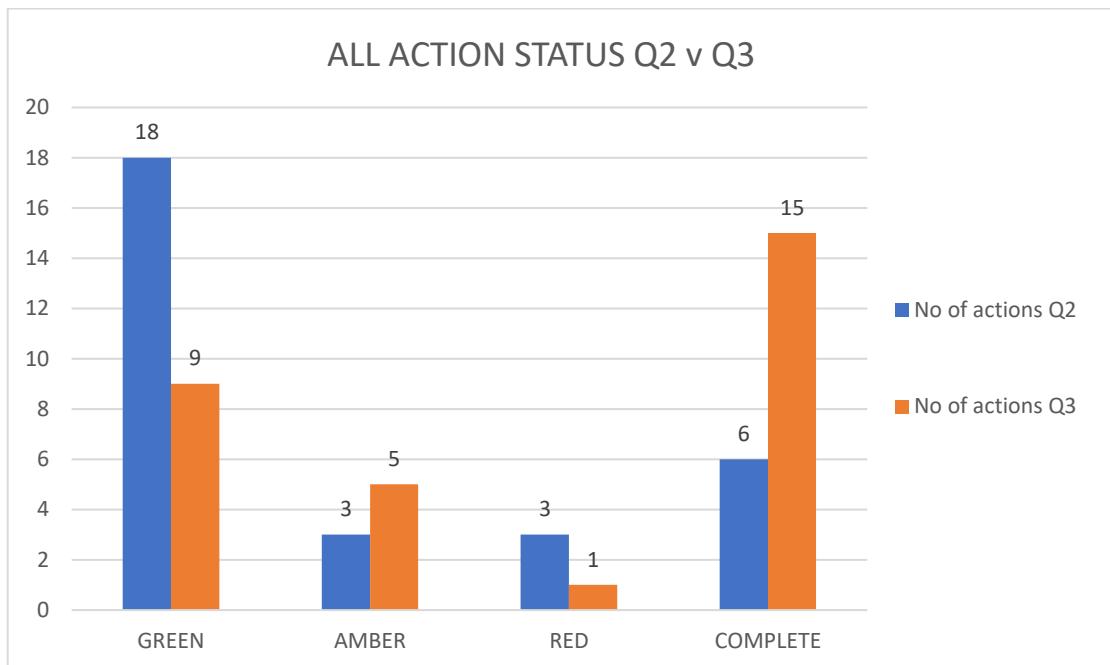
Draft proposals for the range of formal and informal opportunities that tenants can interact and influence Housing Services has been produced with further benchmarking with peers required to refine these options. The job description for the Senior Tenant Engagement Officer is being evaluated which will be followed by recruitment into post in early 2026. As such the capacity to finalise and implement the opportunities for tenants to co-design and scrutinise housing service delivery is anticipated to conclude in March 2026.

### 3.14 TIA5 – Recruit to two new posts of Complaints and Quality Officer

Following review, a Senior Complaints Officer has been recruited into commencing in December 2025, and the post of Complaints Officer is to be recruited into during Q4.

**Executive****23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026****3.15 Status Report Overall**

The graph below illustrates the number of actions within each of the red, amber and green categories together with the number of complete actions. Furthermore, the graph illustrates the number of actions for Quarter 2 when compared to Quarter 3.

**Governance Arrangements**

- 3.16 To ensure that the Housing Improvement Plan is managed and monitored effectively, governance arrangements were approved by Executive Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025.
- 3.17 There are separate meetings for the Housing Delivery Group, Housing Improvement Board, and Housing Strategic Oversight Board with all meetings diarised.

**Provider Improvement Meetings**

- 3.18 Following the Regulatory Judgement, as part of the RSH powers under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, there is a Provider Improvement Process. This is a formal mechanism by which the RSH can issue a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Notice, where the RSH has identified concerns through the inspection process and or through data.

**Executive****23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

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- 3.19 Regular monthly meetings are being held with representatives of RSH that commenced in August 2025 to provide assurance that the concerns raised are being actioned in a timely manner. Through this meeting and the Housing Strategic Board, a revised HIP is being developed that will be further embedded within the Consumer Standards and the required outcomes of those standards and is envisaged to be used in 26/7 subject to approval.

### **Customer Engagement**

- 3.20 The 2024/25 Housing Annual Report was issued to all tenants and leaseholders at the end of July/early August 2025 to provide an update on the Regulatory Judgement and the Council's performance across the last financial year. Within this, the Council requested expressions of interest for involvement in the different aspects of tenant scrutiny.
- 3.21 Across the authority's governance meetings the Council has set a standard agenda item for communications so that the Council can prepare suitable and timely communications to update on progress, milestones, or performance against the HIP.
- 3.22 Work is progressing with the next roll out of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures tenant perception survey which is targeted for 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026 launch and will close on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026. For those tenants where we have a mobile number they will be invited to undertake the survey via a text message, it can also be completed on line through our website and for those properties where we do not have a phone number they will receive a letter advising of the various methods by which the survey can be completed together with how they can update their contact details that the Council holds.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Housing Revenue Account will fund the additional costs in line with the requirements of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 and the outcomes of the Regulatory Judgement.
- 4.2 Where there is any financial pressure to conduct improvements to Council housing and or acceleration of programmes of work, these will be included in the budget setting report for the financial year 2026/27.

### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The report sets out the requirements of legislation which the Council is required by law to adhere to. There is a need for compliance with

**Executive****23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

Section 193 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 as amended by the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.

5.2 Inspections are conducted under Section 201 to Section 203A of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

## **6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

### **Local Government Reorganisation**

6.1 There are no direct implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

### **Relevant Council Priority**

6.2 Community and Housing

- Build more Council homes.
- Ensure the Council's housing stock is clean and safe to live in
- Reduce the housing waiting list.
- Reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation.
- Improve time taken for repairs to be completed.

### **Climate Change Implications**

6.3 The responsive, cyclical and planned maintenance of the Council's properties seeks to ensure that Council Housing properties are well maintained, warm and safe. Included within the programme of works are projects to increase the thermal efficiency of properties. Within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme there are budgets established to improve the energy efficiency rating of properties with an Energy Performance Certificate of D or below.

### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

6.4 The contents of this report impact on all the Council's Housing Tenants.

## **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 The following represent the key risks identified.

Risk	Description	Risk Mitigation
Failure to address improvements identified in	The Council cannot demonstrate the assurance required by the Regulator to make the improvements	Housing Improvement Plan with regular review through Housing Departmental Meetings (DMT), Portfolio for Housing, and quarterly

**Executive****23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

the Regulatory Judgement	identified in the Regulatory Judgement	reporting of progress to the Executive Committee.
Failure to meet the Consumer Standards	The Council fails to meet the Consumer Standards which could lead to a self-referral and subsequent actions	Housing Improvement Plan progress monitoring and annual self-assessment.
Reputational Damage	Confidence in the Council's Housing Service declines affecting stakeholder relationships	Acknowledge the judgement publicly and promptly. Demonstrate a clear commitment to improve and provide transparency on progress against the improvement plan through proactive media and social media management

## **8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Housing Improvement Plan

### **Background Papers**

Housing Regulator Consumer Standards - [Regulatory standards for landlords - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-standards-for-landlords)

## Housing Improvement Plan – Q3 2025/6 Update

<u>Consumer Standard</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Consumer Standard outcome</u>	Action	Lead Officer	Target Date	RAG Rating	Comments	
Neighbourhood and Community	NC1	ASB and Hate Incidents 1.3	Provide ASB performance data via the Quarterly Performance Reports to Executive Committee and to tenants via the website and annual report,	Judith Willis	Jul-25	GREEN	Included in report to Executive 2nd September and thereafter quarterly. Included in Annual Report. A Housing ASB 'Report It' page is on our website and includes a link to the ASB and Hate Crime Tenant Satisfaction Measures quarterly performance measures.	Complete
Neighbourhood and Community	NC2	ASB and Hate Incidents 1.3	Review data recording of Hate Incidents	Judith Willis	Sep-25	GREEN	Work is in progress to improve Hate Crime report. Corporately it is reported through a North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership reporting tool. Guidance has been issued to officers to pull off these cases appropriately on the Housing system. Officers are also booked on Victim Support - I am ME! - Hate Crime Conference 17th October 2025. These members of staff will be hate crime champions and will support the team with a greater understanding of hate crime.	Complete
Neighbourhood and Community	NC3	ASB and Hate Incidents 1.3	Establish a procedure to keep tenants informed of the progress of their ASB cases	Judith Willis	Sep-25 (Revised Jan-26)	AMBER	<p>Officers are required to update tenants in a regular and timely manner. We continue to look at ways to ensure the frequency and method of communications tenants require are agreed at the first meeting following ASB being reported. Work is in progress to provide ongoing training to NTO's regarding effective communication, positive case closure and implementing a final visit at the case closure to ensure the survey is complete.</p> <p>On reviewing the current process using Cases and Tasks in CX, we note there are limitations, hence we will be</p>	

## Housing Improvement Plan – Q3 2025/6 Update

							<i>purchasing the ASB Module specifically designed to manage ASB in CX. This specialist software can further enhance the service we provide our tenants when they report ASB. Additionally, we will also then be better able to capture more detail on whether we are keeping tenants better informed, in the manner of their choosing, and embed the case closure survey with an aim to get one completed every time a case is closed.</i>	
Safety & Quality	SQ1	<i>Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvements 1.4</i>	Communicate to customers the priority codes and Repairs Policy together with performance against these	Simon Parry	Jul-25	GREEN	Priority Codes included in the Annual Report posted out July 30th and a separate page on the website has been developed and is live	Complete
Safety & Quality	SQ2	<i>Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvements 1.4</i>	Mobilise the Caretaker Service to undertake regular cleaning, testing and inspection of Communal Areas	Simon Parry	Aug-25	GREEN	Works commenced in early July to deep clean communal areas. The team is making a positive impact, which is being noticed by our customers. A programme has been developed and working efficiently although we are recruiting into the 2 remaining posts.	Complete
Safety & Quality	SQ3	<i>Health and Safety 1.3</i>	Finalise a plan for the completion for all outstanding remedial actions for Fire, EICR, and Legionella in appropriate timescales	Simon Parry	Sep-25 (Revised Nov-25)	GREEN	Fire - Plan identifies financial implications dependant on timescale for completion. Legionella – Final actions are with a specialist external contractor to complete. EICR – Where Remedial Actions are identified these are being passed to the contractor for completion. We are also reviewing the need for specialist software to report on certification received to provide a dashboard for actions.	Complete
Safety & Quality	SQ4	<i>Health and Safety 1.3</i>	Mobilise a fire door inspection programme	Simon Parry	Sep-25	GREEN	Surveys have commenced with 35 Blocks inspected, target for completion of all surveys in November 2025.	

## Housing Improvement Plan – Q3 2025/6 Update

Safety & Quality	SQ5	Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvements 1.4	Implement Total Mobile for Repairs and Maintenance	Simon Parry	Sep-25 (Revised Jan-26)	RED	R&M Module complete, final testing being completed on Contractor and Gas Modules.	
Safety & Quality	SQ6	Stock Quality 1.1	Develop a 5-year rolling programme to ensure Stock Condition Surveys (SCS) are undertaken to all Housing Stock	Simon Parry	Sep-25	GREEN	SCS have commenced in August with 121 carried out to date from the 1,378 requested. Surveys are programmed with a target of 100 surveys/month; however, no access is proving to be an issue despite pre-arranged appointments. Target for completion March 2026.	Complete
Safety & Quality	SQ7	Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvements 1.4	Review all outstanding/overdue repairs and put in place necessary capacity to complete in a timely manner	Simon Parry	Oct-25	GREEN	Root cause analysis undertaken and identified a range of reasons for the backlog including user and system error, process issues regarding contractor notification and duplication of jobs. From 3,000 overdue jobs (April 2025), as at 2/10/25, there were 1,052 overdue jobs. c85% are priority 3 non-urgent jobs.	Complete
Safety & Quality	SQ8	Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvements 1.4	Use Repairs Performance Data to identify trends and root causes for improvements to be made and regularly monitor and manage performance	Simon Parry	Nov-25	GREEN	With the Power Bi reports we are now able to better understand our data and identify trends or issues, work is ongoing with the Business Improvement Team. Our performance for September is much improved, P1 - non-overdue. P2 - 192 Overdue. P3 - 1026 Overdue. Fencing and roofing contributes to most of the overdue work. A new fencing contractor is on board and delivering with a tender for additional roofing capacity in progress. Work is also in progress in line with SQ10 to review priority codes in line with our peers.	Complete
Safety & Quality	SQ9	Health and Safety 1.3	Undertake an independent review of the mitigation in place and the delivery programme for fire safety	Simon Parry	Dec-25 (Revised Mar-26)	AMBER	Identification of the scope and therefore providers for this is in progress.	

## Housing Improvement Plan – Q3 2025/6 Update

Safety & Quality	SQ10	Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvements 1.4	Review the Repairs Policy in conjunction with Tenants	Simon Parry	Dec-25	GREEN	A new, revised and updated Repairs and Maintenance policy has been written considering all new regulations currently in force. The Policy is to be considered by Executive in February 2026.	Complete
Safety & Quality	SQ11	Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvements 1.4	Develop a working group with tenants to seek further feedback on improvements required to deliver a more effective Repairs service	Simon Parry	Dec-25	GREEN	Following expressions of interest as part of the Annual Report which every household will receive, we will develop this further.	
Safety & Quality	SQ12	Decency 1.2	Ensure the Housing Capital Programme reflects the volume and scope of works to meet the Decent Homes standard across all Housing stock	Simon Parry	Jan-26	GREEN	The proposed Capital Programme has been compiled based on stock condition data and properties where components are due to become non decent.	Complete
Safety & Quality	SQ13	Decency 1.2	Undertake a review of the Housing Asset Management Strategy and the Housing Capital Programme developed for 2023-2027 in line with stock condition information	Simon Parry	Jan-26	GREEN	A revised Capital Programme is included within the Budget Setting for the Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2-26/7 and beyond. Work is in progress to update the Asset Management Strategy in line with Regulatory changes.	
Safety & Quality	SQ14	Health and Safety 1.3	Utilise the feedback from the TSM Tenant Perception Survey to improve on the results from the 24/5 survey on 'Feeling Safe'	Simon Parry	Jun-26	GREEN	The TSM results highlighted R&M issues around wait times and appointments, information sharing, condition of properties, communal area conditions and handling of ASB cases. The review of last years surveys has highlighted a number of actions which are reflected in our 'You said, We did' response to the TSM results.	
Transparency, Influence and accountability	TIA1	Fairness and Respect 1.1	Ensure that tenant profile data is collected more widely across all customers so that services can be more reflective of tenants needs, including	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Jul-25	GREEN	Script being used at point of contact. Wider review to be undertaken when no contact is received from customers. A new dashboard has been developed to allow better tracking of the proportion of information we hold for our customers.	Complete

## Housing Improvement Plan – Q3 2025/6 Update

			establishing an 'Every Contact Counts' philosophy.					
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	TIA2	Information about landlord service 1.4	Develop and publish the Annual Housing Report for 24/5	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Jul-25	GREEN	Annual Report circulated on 30th July 2025	
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	TIA3	Information about landlord services 1.4	Implement a Tenants Portal within Cx	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	April 26	AMBER	We are working closely with our Software provider to implement this however we have identified 3 security issues, two are to be resolved with the release of the next version of the software in January 2026 however the final issue remains outstanding.	
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	TIA4	Engagement with tenants 1.3	Review the range of opportunities available for tenants to influence and scrutinise strategies, policies and services and implement improvements identified in accordance with best practice	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Sep-25 (Revised Mar-26)	AMBER	Budget approval received for a Tenant Engagement & Participation Officer and resources budget. Draft range of options produced, further benchmarking with peers required.	
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	TIA5	Complaints 1.6	Recruit to two new posts of Complaints and Quality Officer	Judith Willis	Nov-25 (revised April 26)	AMBER	The Senior Complaints Officer has been recruited in this quarter, and an officer post is to be advertised within the next month. The other post has been refocussed as a Tenant Engagement and Participation post to work alongside the Senior Post.	
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	TIA6	Performance Information 1.5	Housing Performance Dashboard completed, and performance reports provided to Executive and tenants.	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Jan-26	GREEN	Quarterly performance reported to Executive Committee commenced in June 2025. A Power Bi is being developed with the Business Improvement Team.  Performance reporting contained within the Tenants Annual Report – published on 30 July 2025.	Complete
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	TIA7	Performance Information 1.5	Establish a communications strategy to regularly update	Judith Willis	Jan-26	GREEN	A communications strategy has been developed. Within the Governance structure around the Housing	Complete

## Housing Improvement Plan – Q3 2025/6 Update

			tenants on services and performance				Improvement Plan a standard agenda item is communications as an opportunity to capture and or promote progress across the plan or specific milestones/actions.	
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	TIA8	Complaints 1.6	Undertake further engagement with tenants and learn from our peers how they have sought to improve complaint handling satisfaction	Judith Willis	Jan-26	GREEN	Ongoing engagement with Peers to understand their opportunities and processes for increasing complaint satisfaction.	
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	TIA9	Complaints 1.6	Improve how promptly complaints are addressed	Judith Willis	Dec-25	GREEN	Quarterly performance data shows improvements with data shared as part of the regular reporting to Executive as well as through Senior Housing management team meetings	Complete
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	TIA10	Fairness and Respect 1.1	Ensure a programme of training is delivered to ensure tenants are treated with fairness and respect	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Mar-26	GREEN	In progress and is included as part of CIH qualification that Officers hold or are scheduled to enrol.	
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	TIA11	Fairness and Respect 1.1	Develop a programme for embedding the Council's corporate culture work programme within Housing Services	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Mar-26	GREEN	Appraisals and 121s are undertaken using the 4P's identified from the workforce plan. Associated training plans are being developed to support this.	
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	TIA12	Engagement with tenants 1.3	Continue work with TPAS to develop a robust tenant engagement offer with future reporting to Executive Committee setting out key actions and required resources.	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Nov-26	GREEN	September 2025 identified funding for training for tenants together with establishment of a Tenant Engagement and Participation post. Training plan for new tenants involved in scrutiny being finalised and options for engagement being drafted for inclusion in a future report.	
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	TIA13	Diverse Needs 1.2	Implement the Customer Profile Action Plan, with milestones established	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Jan-27	GREEN	Tracking of volume of customer profile information to be devised and analysis to be undertaken to influence the action plan.	

**Quarter 3 2025/6 Housing Performance**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bill Hartnett
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Simon Parry and Judith Willis
Report Author	Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services and Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services Contact email: simon.parry@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk, Judith.willis@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
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 Council's Quarter 3 2025/6 Housing Performance in respect of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (Landlord) are noted.**

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) has established the 'Tenant Satisfaction Measures' (TSM) which places a responsibility on all social housing landlords, in England, to return performance information, so that each provider can be assessed for how well they are providing good quality homes and services. The TSM sets out 22 measures covering 5 themes:
  1. Keeping properties in good repair
  2. Maintaining building safety
  3. Respectful and helpful engagement
  4. Effective handling of complaints
  5. Responsible neighbourhood management
- 2.2 Of the 22 measures, they are split between those that the landlord is required to measure directly (10) and those that are measured by tenant perception surveys (12).

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2.3 This report provides an update on the current position regarding all 10 of the landlord measures across Housing Services, together with other supplementary measures critical for service delivery in meeting the outcomes from the RSH. This includes services provided by both Housing Property Services and Housing Services through the management and maintenance of Redditch Borough Council's housing stock.

### **Operational Issues**

3.1 The following sets out the performance for quarter 3 of 2025/26 with commentary where performance has not been on target or where updates on progress are being made. **Appendix 1** summarises the performance data.

**3.2 RP – Keeping Properties in good repair**

**RP01: Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard**

3.3 Following the review of the asset management database identified last quarter, work has been ongoing to survey for example roofs that were identified, as well as carrying out the replacement of elements such as kitchens and bathrooms and upgrades to central heating systems. This has resulted in That previous reporting was inaccurate. The current non-decency percentage, i.e. those properties that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard, is **10.95%**. (Q2 11.90%)

**Stock Condition Data**

3.4 Stock condition surveys commenced in August 2025 with a target in 2025/26 to complete 1,340 surveys. In Quarter 2, 121 surveys have been completed with additional resources allocated to target 100 surveys per week over the remainder of the fiscal year. At Quarter 3 the proportion of stock condition surveys completed within the last 5-year period is **25.95%** (Q2 20.68%).

**RP02.1: Repairs completed within target timescale – Proportion of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale**

**RP02.2: Repairs completed within target timescale – Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale**

3.5 **RPO2.1** covers all Priority 2 (Urgent 5 working days) and Priority 3 (Routine 20 working days)

- 3.6 **RP02.2** covers all Priority 1 repairs (Emergency 24 Hours). Emergency repairs are those that need to be carried out to avoid serious danger to the health and safety of the occupants or where a failure to carry out the repair could cause extensive damage to buildings and property.
- 3.7 Work is ongoing to assess the shortfall in performance against the priority codes and to ensure that accurate and timely closure of jobs is completed on the system.

### **BS- Maintaining Building Safety**

#### **BS01: Gas safety checks**

- 3.8 The key statutory requirement is that the Council adhere to the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 as amended. It is a legal requirement for the Council to perform a gas safety check every twelve months on each Council house and to maintain the associated paperwork.
- 3.9 All current gas safety checks are in place for both the Council's domestic boilers and communal boilers. Work to improve the quality and efficiency of boilers continues with boilers replaced on both a reactive basis (where beyond economical repair) or planned replacement due to age and efficiency.
- 3.10 There are 181 (Q2 204) properties that have their gas supply capped. These properties comprise of current voids and customers who do not want or cannot afford gas. There are 152 properties that have been capped greater than 3 months and these are identified and shared with the Neighbourhood and Tenancy team to provide opportunity for tenancy visits to ensure there is support for the household.

#### **BS02: Fire safety checks**

- 3.11 The key statutory requirement is the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO) which requires the Council to undertake regular assessments of all communal areas within the Council's housing stock, by a competent person. This assessment of a building is to ensure that it is at least maintained, as designed, to protect the integrity of fire safety features such as compartmentation and escape routes.
- 3.12 There is a rolling programme of inspection for the Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) with designated properties being part of an annual risk assessment (Sheltered Accommodation) with the remainder (General Needs) being undertaken on a 3-year cycle. The FRAs are undertaken by external consultants Ridge and Partners LLP.

3.13 The delays experienced in delivering the programme of FRAs have been rectified in Quarter 3 and all blocks are now compliant with an in-date FRA.

3.14 The outstanding remedial works from the FRAs are included in the table below.

Table 3: Fire Remedial Actions

	No. of high-risk actions - Serious	No. of medium risk actions – Minor	No. of low-risk actions – Best Practice
Overdue FRA remedial actions (< 3 months)	0	12	9
Overdue FRA remedial actions (3-6 months)	0	8	6
Overdue FRA remedial actions (6-12 months)	10	439	98
Overdue FRA remedial actions (12+ months).	667	1080	146
<b>Totals</b>	<b>677 (695)</b>	<b>1539 (1593)</b>	<b>259 (291)</b>

3.15 The overall number of outstanding actions continues to fall, **comparative data from Q2 is included above in brackets above**. The serious items in Table 3 cover many sites, examples of which, are works to fire doors and fire stopping, which equates to approximately 90% of outstanding serious actions. Works are in progress across a range of these issues; the budget for 2025/26 for these works is £1.5 million and a proposal in budget setting for 2026/27 will be for an increase to £2.5m to accelerate the programme.

To address the risks identified, Housing Property Services initiated a fire door inspection programme in September 2025. These inspections confirm that existing doors are fire doors, though built to the standards applicable at the time of installation, and have highlighted issues such as missing door closers. Our Health and Safety Coordinator is conducting risk assessments for affected properties and blocks, which will be integrated with the current door replacement programme to

determine the timing of works and whether interim ironmongery replacements are necessary. In line with Fire Risk Assessment guidance, all flat entrance doors must provide adequate fire resistance, have correct ironmongery, and operate properly, with upgrades as needed to achieve FD30S standard, including a self-closing device capable of closing the door from any angle.

3.16 While all flats currently have fire doors, these surveys will establish their condition and inform the replacement programme, ensuring risks are mitigated in the interim. The central document tracking this data is continuously updated as tasks are completed and allocated across Housing Services teams. Additionally, the Council's new caretaking service provides assurance that communal areas remain free of flammable objects and ensures timely reporting of issues. Housing Property Services also maintains emergency lighting and fire alarm systems and confirms that flats are equipped with appropriate smoke alarms to protect tenants in the event of a fire.

#### **BS03: Asbestos safety checks**

3.17 The key statutory requirement is the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR2012) which requires the Council to undertake an asbestos survey to confirm locations of asbestos containing materials within communal areas. Regulation 4 of the above legislation (CAR) places a specific obligation upon 'duty holders' (owners and/or those responsible for maintenance) to manage asbestos within non-domestic premises (including common parts of domestic dwellings).

3.18 This requires identification of the location and condition of asbestos containing materials (ACMs), a corresponding risk assessment and written management plan to prevent harm to anyone who occupies or works upon the building. Although the regulations do not extend to domestic properties, Housing Property Services do have a duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Working Regulations 1999 to ensure the safety of the workforce and contractors when working within Council properties.

3.19 All blocks have had asbestos surveys undertaken to the communal areas which categorised the presence and condition of any asbestos present. A programme of removal has been completed to remove poor quality asbestos from communal areas. Where ACM were left, an annual reinspection regime has been put in place to ensure there has been no deterioration and therefore identified intervention to control the risk. This has since resulted in the removal of further asbestos thereby reducing the number of blocks required for reinspection.

**BS04: Water safety checks**

- 3.20 Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, housing providers must assess and control the risk of exposure to legionella bacteria in water systems.
- 3.21 The RSH set out **BS04 – Water Safety Checks** – Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out.
- 3.22 All risk assessments are in place with the renewal of these being undertaken in January 2026. Across the 51 sites 95% of remedial works have been completed and we are awaiting the results of the outstanding actions that have been undertaken by a contractor including laboratory testing of water samples. Monthly checks are undertaken by the Council's contractor to monitor water temperature, and the authority's in-house Gas Team carry out a weekly flush of the systems.

**BS05: Lift safety checks**

- 3.23 Responsibilities for the inspection and maintenance of lifts are covered by the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER), and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER). These regulations require that any equipment, including lifts, provided for tenants must be safe for use, properly maintained, and suitable for the environment. These works were part of the responsibilities previously undertaken by the Property Services and have since transferred to Housing Services for operational compliance.
- 3.24 The Council's insurer completes the necessary checks on these lifts and reports any issues that need remedial works. The insurer has now got access to all lifts as key safes have been installed which has contributed to compliance for this quarter.

**Electrical**

- 3.25 Under the British Standard, BS 7671, Requirements for Electrical Installations (also known as the IET Wiring Regulations) the Council is required to undertake regular assessments, Electrical Inspection Condition Report (EICR), by a competent person.
- 3.26 The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 are being amended to include social rented housing. As such it will become a legal responsibility, rather than best practice previously, to ensure from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2025, that new tenancies have a compliant EICR and from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2026 that all existing tenancies, granted before 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025, are also compliant. All void

properties and mutual exchange properties receive a new electrical test at the point of letting and are therefore compliant in this respect. At the end of Quarter 3 95.66% of properties have an EICR within the last 5 years.

- 3.27 To enhance the Council's opportunities for access, the Council has developed, in conjunction with the Council's in house and external Legal Teams, a similar 'warrant' type approach that is utilised by the Gas Team to provide entry to fulfil compliance responsibilities.
- 3.28 The Council has experienced resource issues through this quarter with the Electrical Compliance Manager leaving in September and being unable to recruit into this position either on a permanent or temporary basis. This has led to a gap in collating electrical remedial actions through this quarter. In the interim as corrective actions are identified through the contractor carrying out the inspection and testing these are then instructed to the Contractor to complete works.

### **Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms**

- 3.29 The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022 requires landlords to provide smoke alarms to be fitted to each storey of premises used as living accommodation. Similarly, where a room contains a solid fuel burning combustion appliance, then a carbon monoxide alarm is to be fitted. Work is ongoing to complete these works to all outstanding properties. Housing Property Services are cross referencing these outstanding properties with other works such as access for gas servicing as well as co-ordinating information with Neighbourhood and Tenancy officers and tenancy audits to gain access.

### **Complaints**

- 3.30 40 complaints were received across October (17), November (16), and December (7), an increase on Quarter 2 (30) and a significant increase when compared to the same quarter last year (22 received). Of these, 77.5% were for Housing Property Services. Repairs & Maintenance remained the primary driver of complaints, particularly in relation to communication, delays, and contractor performance.

Performance against response timescales was generally strong, with some notable exceptions:

- October experienced several late responses due to complaint complexity, cross-service involvement, and cases initially managed outside the complaints process.
- November achieved 89% on-time responses, with delays mainly linked to investigation requirements and service pressures.

- December recorded only one late response.

3.31 At the end of this Quarter, we successfully recruited a Senior Complaints Officer to further enhance co-ordination and oversight of complaints to improve timeliness and consistency across the quality of responses. Further work will be undertaken to embed learning from complaints and how it changes service delivery.

3.32 Despite the upheld complaints, the quarter received 46 compliments for Housing Property Services, 28 being for Repairs & Maintenance, 17 for Housing Capital and 1 for Aids & Adaptations.

**Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)**

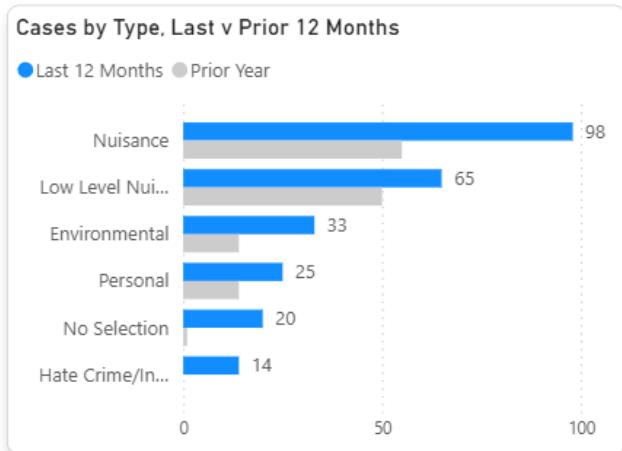
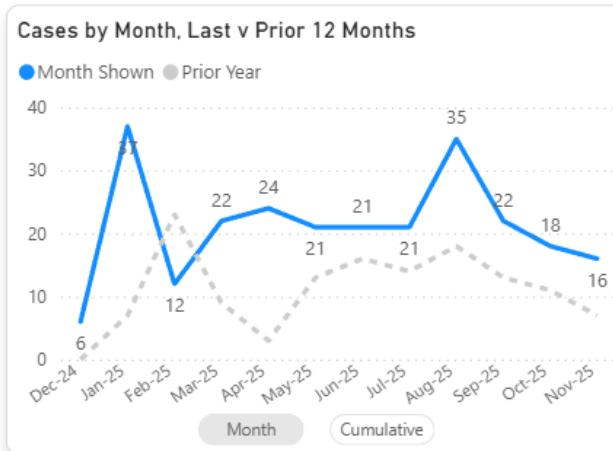
3.33 The service has a dynamic, functional and accessible ASB service for customers, creating strong partnerships including with the local Police. The service has undertaken many significant and highly complex enforcement actions including Civil Injunctions, Closure Orders and Discretionary and Mandatory Possession Orders against tenancy breaches.

3.34 The whole ASB service is committed to utilising the full range of tools and powers at its disposal. The Council works with partner agencies wherever possible to deal robustly and proportionately with all forms of nuisance and ASB that have a direct impact upon the sustainability of tenancies and communities and to ensure that residents of all tenures can enjoy peace, quiet and security in and around their homes, whilst remaining tolerant of the reasonable behaviour of others.

3.35 Each complaint of ASB is handled in accordance with the ASB Policy and relevant procedures, ensuring that risk and vulnerability is continuously and dynamically assessed throughout the management of the case. Where enforcement action becomes necessary, this will always follow a consistent and proportionate process of escalation, with all parties to the case treated with dignity and respect and with due regard to the Equality Act.

3.36 Between 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 and 30<sup>th</sup> December 2025, 55 new ASB cases were started, 56 ASB cases were closed, and the team were managing 65 live ASB cases.

3.37 The cases are broad ranging covering incidents against the person and against the community, such as damage to communal areas, issues with drugs and alcohol misuse and issues with dogs for example. Noise nuisance complaints are also reported frequently to the team. You will note from the graph below that there is still a steady increase in reported cases year on year.



3.38 There are several factors at play that may be increasing these numbers, linked to the continued cost of living crisis and the impact of this on peoples mental and physical health and also their families general wellbeing, the other being that we are improving year on year at ensuring we capture incidents of ASB/Nuisance and Hate Crime accurately.

3.39 With the new structure coming into place in the Neighbourhood and Tenancy Team, anticipating being fully staffed by March 2026, for the first time in around a year, we do expect this trend to continue to rise, as all local areas will be covered by an N&T Officer. To combat this however we anticipate that the increase in numbers in the Tenancy Sustainment Team will provide more prevention support, that should stop many cases from escalating to enforcement.

3.40 There remain some back logs in the judicial system, the Council has seen increasing numbers of cases getting to court. These cases are mainly for civil injunctions, to curb ASB from tenants by restricting how they can behave in their home, toward their neighbours and towards RBC staff. The Council has also been successful with cases to gain back possession of homes when ASB has been perpetrated or when tenants have abandoned their homes.

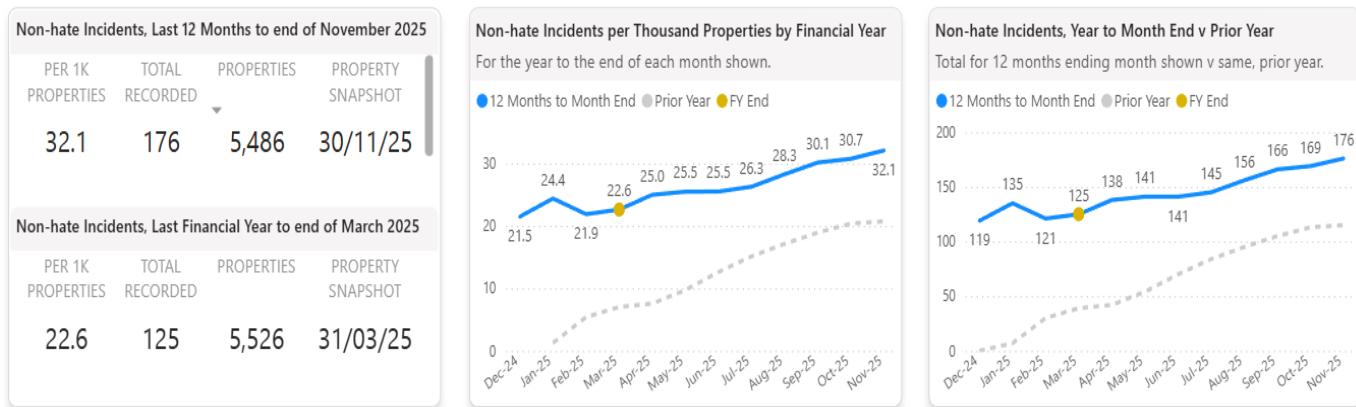
3.41 ASB continues to create the highest level of work within the team. The team continue to attend all appropriate meetings with partner agencies to prevent and enforce ASB cases, including the Police, Mental Health Services, Social Services and other relevant partners.

3.42 One of the issues raised by the regulatory inspection was under reporting Hate Crime. We have addressed this by undertaking further training with the team to identify Hate Crime elements to cases. Last year it was zero, this year, so far, 11 Cases have been identified. In

## Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

October we sent 3 Staff to Worcestershire's Hate Crime Conference/Forum and brought back learning from this event which prompted further understanding on capturing Hate Incidents appropriately.



#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 All work undertaken through the delivery of services highlighted in this report are budgeted through the Capital Programme and the HRA. As part of the development of an improvement plan, where additional budgets are required to improve compliance and performance, these will be included in a separate report.

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The report sets out the requirements of legislation which the Council is required by law to adhere to.

5.2 Compliance is required with Section 193 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 as amended by the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.

5.3 Inspections are carried out under Section 201 to Section 203A of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

#### 6. OTHER – IMPLICATIONS

##### Local Government Reorganisation

6.1 No direct implications for Local Government Reorganisation have been identified in this report.

**Relevant Council Priority**

6.1 This report supports the current Council Plan and the following Council priority:

Community and Housing

- Providing Council Housing that is improved and upgraded through the Housing Capital Investment Programme
- Ensuring the housing stock is clean and safe to live in
- Improve time taken for repairs to be completed
- Maximising funding available to the sector.

**Climate Change Implications**

6.2 The responsive, cyclical and planned maintenance of the Council's properties seeks to ensure that Council Housing properties are well maintained, warm and safe. Included within the programme of works are projects to increase the thermal efficiency of properties.

**Equalities and Diversity Implications**

6.3 Through the delivery of Housing Services, the Council identify the needs of individuals and households to tailor services appropriately.

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 The key risk is failure to ensure properties are well maintained, safe and compliant in accordance with the relevant regulations highlighted through this report. Work is ongoing to ensure compliance and is further evidenced through the Housing Improvement Plan.

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1 – Measures Table

**Executive Committee**

**23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

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**Appendix 1 – Measures Table**

**Keeping Properties in good repair**

	Measure Name	Type	Q4 24/5	Q1 25/6	Q2 25/6	Q3 25/6	Q4 25/6	Target	RAG Rating
RP01	Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	%	4.17%	4.15%	11.90%	10.95%		0.00%	Red
RP02.1	Repairs completed within Target Timescale (Non-Emergency)	%	71.95%	77.88% 61.50%	80.80%	76.93%		100%	Red
RP02.2	Repairs completed within Target timescale – (Emergency)	%	83.6%	83.6% 84.10%	85.00%	83.70%		100%	Amber

**RP01 – Work is ongoing to further reduce the non-decency levels including resurveying of roofs and other elements that have been identified together with replacement where necessary. (3.3)**

**Maintaining Building Safety**

	Measure Name	Type	Q4 24/5	Q1 25/6	Q2 25/6	Q3 25/6	Q4 25/6	Target	RAG Rating
BS01	Gas Safety Checks	%	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	Green
BS02	Fire Safety Checks	%	100%	100%	80%	100%		100%	Green
BS03	Asbestos Safety checks	%	100%	99.50%	100%	100%		100%	Green

## REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

BS04	Water Safety checks	%	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	Green
BS05	Lift Safety Checks	%	100%	87.00%	54.84%	100%		100%	Green
EI01	Electrical Test of Properties	%	90.50%	94.89%	95.17%	95.66%		100%	Amber
EI02	Electrical Test of Communal Areas	%	100%	100%	100%	99.36%*		100%	Amber
EI03	Smoke Alarms	%	97.36%	98.80%	98.91%	99.18%		100%	Amber
EI04	Carbon Monoxide Alarms	%	98.33%	98.89%	98.94%	99.00%		100%	Amber

**EI02 – \*The testing of communal areas has fallen below target are two certificates have yet to be received from the contractor. Whilst work we are assured has been completed these are recorded as out of date for this report.**

### Complaints

	Measure Name	Type	Q4 24/5	Q1 25/6	Q2 25/6	Q3 25/6	Q4 25/6	Target	RAG Rating
CH01.1	Complaints relative to the size of the landlord (Stage 1)	# per 1,000 homes	4.51	3.07	5.25	7.30		Less than 10	Green
CH01.2	Complaints relative to the size of the landlord (Stage 2)	# per 1,000 homes	0.72	0.90	1.27	0.91		Less than 3	Green
CH02.1	Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales (Stage 1)	%	62%	93%	81.00%	88.89%		85%	Green

## REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

CH02.2	Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales (Stage 2)	%	80%	100%	72.00%	80.00%		85%	Red
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**CH02.2 – Within the Quarter 5 Stage 2 Complaints were received with 4 being completed in the timescale.**

### **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)**

	Measure Name	Type	Q4 24/5	Q1 25/6	Q2 25/6	Q3 25/6	Q4 25/6	Target	Trend
NM01.1	Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord	# per 1,000 homes	22.8	27.1	30.4	32.1		35.5*	Amber
NM01.2	Anti-social behaviour cases (involving Hate Crime) relative to the size of the landlord	# per 1,000 homes	0	0	1.1	2.0		0.6**	Red

\*Current data is below the national mean which is potentially due to under reporting. Therefore, it is anticipated that the Council's measurement will increase this year.

\*\*This represents the median level reported for 2023/24 across this TSM for all social housing providers

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# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Monday, 12th January, 2026

## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer (Chair), Councillor Craig Warhurst (Vice-Chair) and Councillors William Boyd, Claire Davies, Rita Rogers and Paul Wren

### Also Present:

Councillor Sharon Harvey – Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Environmental Services  
Councillor Bill Hartnett – Portfolio Holder for Housing (on Microsoft Teams)

### Officers:

Guy Revans, Matthew Bough, Ben Clawson-Chan and Matthew Eccles

### Democratic Services Officers:

Sarah Woodfield

### 57. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sachin Mathur. The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Recreation, Councillor Juliet Barker Smith, has also submitted apologies.

### 58. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest nor of party whip.

### 59. MINUTES

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025 were submitted for Members' consideration.

**RESOLVED that**

Chair

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Monday, 12th January, 2026

**the minutes of the meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.**

## 60. PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no public speakers registered to speak at this meeting.

## 61. BIODIVERSITY DUTY FIRST CONSIDERATION REPORT - PRE-SCRUTINY

The Climate Change Manager presented the Council's Biodiversity Duty Report, required under the Environment Act 2021. The report covered activities up to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026 and was due for publication by the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

The Biodiversity Duty Report included ten sections which included policies, objectives and actions, how other strategies were considered, future actions, Biodiversity Net Gain information, Information about the Authority, Top Achievements, How Policies and Actions Have Helped, Awareness and Education, Monitoring and Evaluation and Highlights and Challenges. The report also outlined measures to enhance biodiversity, such as leaving areas of grass uncut, wildflower planting and public engagement in species monitoring.

Members noted that there was a legislative requirement for the next Biodiversity Duty Report to be produced in five years, regardless of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) outcomes. It was further noted that some actions might require capital investment and that funding opportunities and grants would be explored. Biodiversity actions were linked to climate change resilience and carbon sequestration and monitoring would form part of the forthcoming Climate Change Strategy for the Council.

Following the presentation, comments and discussion by Members was as follows:

- It was queried if more specific data would be included in the Council's Climate Change Strategy. In response the Officers explained that following the Biodiversity First Consideration Report publication, efforts would be concentrated on the monitoring of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) to demonstrate the location and species of trees planted and work would also be undertaken to improve greater ranges of species

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

---

Monday, 12th January, 2026

within the Borough. BNG would also be monitored through Local Plan policies and development management.

- Concerns were raised about the lack of detail in the report, in particular as to citizen science public engagement, in relation to specific details of the species of trees which would be planted, and if the Council should be actively seeking to support the progression of the work. Members were advised that collaborative partnership working would help to improve future data recording. Details of Redditch Borough Council's (RBC) commitments to managing tree health and biodiversity resilience progression would be incorporated in the Council's Tree Management Policy, with it being noted that works would develop over the five-year period. Outcomes of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) would also be a contributing factor affecting future proposals.
- Members queried the use of the word "pesticide" within the report and expressed that view that it might be misleading and suggested changing the wording to "herbicides". Officers agreed to review this and would also respond to the Members to confirm current practices in use by the Council.
- A Member highlighted the success of community-led biodiversity projects and suggested replicating this model across other parks which was agreed would be reviewed for future reporting.
- Members requested feedback on the criteria for achieving Green Flag status and suggested promoting community involvement to improve other parks within the Borough. It was agreed that this would be reviewed by the Parks Team and details would be reported back to the Committee.
- Members sought clarity on the tree replacement strategy following the ash dieback risk. In response the Executive Director explained that a 2:1 replacement ratio would be implemented to replace the trees. However, an update and further details from the Parks Team would also be requested for Members.

The recommendations of the report were endorsed by the Committee as printed.

## **RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) The findings of the Biodiversity Duty First Consideration Report be noted.**
- 2) Members agree to publish the full Biodiversity Duty First Consideration Report to the Council's website.**

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Monday, 12th January, 2026

## 62. HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION GRANT FUNDING 2026/27 TO 2028/29 (INCLUDING ROUGH SLEEPER GRANT) AND DOMESTIC ABUSE GRANT - PRE-SCRUTINY

The Strategic Housing Services Manager reported on the allocation of the 2026/27 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Grant funding. The Grant to the Council for 2026/27 was expected to total £736,335 with £35,697 ring-fenced for domestic abuse grant element. It was noted that temporary accommodation costs could no longer be funded from this grant funding and would need to be met from the Council's General Fund. It was also noted that grant funding was ring-fenced for specific prevention activities and the proposed allocations were outlined within the report.

Following the presentation of the report, Members commented and discussed the report as follows:

- Clarity on the support from St Pauls Housing Led/Housing First Support Service was requested. It was advised that this initiative for rough sleepers began during the covid pandemic. The service provided immediate refuge and additional support to assist with rough sleepers remaining off the streets.
- Following a question, Members were advised that the number of rough sleepers in the Borough was currently estimated at eight to ten. Following the response the Chair expressed the view that the grant funding which had been allocated for rough sleepers was substantial and requested clarity on the specific requirements. In response Officers explained that the rough sleeping allowance was only one element of the grant funding made available. Grant funding also included prevention initiatives and support programmes, which required regular monitoring. Other initiatives included support such as guide pathways, crash pads, severe weather support and housing of ex-offenders where necessary.
- The performance of the Council-funded organisation initiatives was discussed further. It was agreed by the Committee that an annual performance report should be recommended which would enable both scrutiny and the executive to review performance in this area. A current performance report for 2025/26 was also requested and agreed to be presented to the June meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Members also requested data on food bank usage to understand the local need. Members were advised to note

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Monday, 12th January, 2026

that some food bank organisations were independent and not Council run, however, Officers would gather the necessary data and share with Members of the Board.

- Clarification was requested to explain why the Homelessness Prevention Grant funding detailed within the report increased each year, compared to the Domestic Abuse Grant funding which remained static. Officers advised that generally domestic abuse grant funding would be allocated through the new burdens process, however, the Homelessness Prevention Grant also covered elements of domestic abuse.
- Concerns were raised about the potential duplication of community grants and the need for visibility of all Council funding during grant panel meetings. In response Officers advised that the funding was managed for specific services and the applications submitted to receive Council's grant funding required a detailed cost summary, which were assessed for any available funding. The Portfolio Holder addressed the Committee and explained the benefits of the some of the grant funded services for the Council, expressing the view that bed and breakfast funding requirements had substantially decreased due to the availability of the Homeless Prevention Grant funding.
- The Committee also discussed and requested further clarity on the underspending on grants, as identified in the report recommendation 3. Officers explained that due to the late changes in the funding from Government, there had been some underspending. However, this would be reviewed at the end of the financial year to identify requirements for priority service needs, particularly for the rough sleeper strategy. Additionally any extra resources would be reviewed in terms of utilisation within the year in support of existing or new schemes.
- Questions were raised about risks associated with funding changes for temporary accommodation and how these would be mitigated. Members were advised that there were inherent risks associated with temporary accommodation, particularly with the extra costs for bed and breakfast requirements. However, the funding available to the Council for Housing would be utilised to manage the Council's housing stock in order to reduce the reliance on temporary accommodation.

During consideration of this item, a recommendation was proposed by Councillor Warhurst. This recommendation was as follows:

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Monday, 12th January, 2026

“Officers provide an annual update in respect of the Homelessness Prevention Grant initiatives that receive Council funding”.

On being seconded and put to the vote, this recommendation was carried as an additional recommendation to the Executive. The other recommendations as printed in the report were endorsed by the Committee.

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) **Temporary Accommodation Services currently met by Homelessness Prevention Grant are now met from the Temporary Accommodation element of the Revenue Support Grant 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29.**
- 2) **Subject to approval of recommendation 1 above by Council, the initiatives detailed at 4.4 (of the report) be approved to receive the Council’s Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Grant and Domestic Abuse Grant allocations of funding for 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29, subject to satisfactory performance; and should additional funding be announced at a later date by the Government for subsequent years then this would need to be the subject of a further report.**
- 3) **Subject to the agreement of recommendations 1 and 2 above, delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to use any unallocated Grants, or Homelessness Prevention Grant mid-year top up, during each year or make further adjustments and uplifts as necessary to ensure full utilisation of the Grants for 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29 in support of existing or new schemes.**
- 4) **Officers provide an annual update in respect of the Homelessness Prevention Grant initiatives that receive Council funding.**

## 63. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME - SELECTING ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY

The Executive Committee Work Programme was submitted for Members’ consideration.

**RESOLVED that**

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Monday, 12th January, 2026

**the Executive Committee's Work Programme be noted.**

## **64. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was submitted for Members' consideration.

Members were provided with an update that the items relating to the Auxerre House Refurbishment and Regeneration and the Construction of Redditch Innovation Centre had been moved to the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026 Overview and Scrutiny meeting instead of the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026 meeting, due to Executive dates for these reports having moved.

**RESOLVED that**

**the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be noted.**

## **65. TASK GROUPS, SHORT SHARP REVIEWS AND WORKING GROUPS - UPDATE REPORTS**

Updates were provided on the meetings of Task Groups and Working Groups as follows:

a) Budget Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Warhurst

Councillor Warhurst reported that the last meeting which took place on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026 had reviewed the standard finance reports including Housing Revenue Account (HRA) rent setting and Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The Group had not made any recommendations to Executive Committee meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026 and endorsed all the recommendations as printed in the reports.

b) Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Warhurst

Councillor Warhurst reported that at the last meeting, which took place on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2025, the Group discussed the ash dieback and tree planting strategies. Members had requested confirmation of planting dates and species.

c) Post-16 Education Task Group – Chair, Councillor Warhurst

There were no updates provided as the group had completed its work and were awaiting a final meeting to be arranged.

**RESOLVED that**

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Monday, 12th January, 2026

**the Task Groups and Working Groups Update Reports be noted.**

## 66. 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 – Council Representative, Councillor Boyd

Councillor Boyd reported that he attended the most recent meeting of WMCA Overview and Scrutiny, which took place this morning (12<sup>th</sup> January 2026), noting that most items were strategic and not directly relevant to RBC.

- b) West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny – Council Representative, Councillor Fardoe

There were no updates provided at this meeting.

- c) Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) – Council Representative, Councillor Fry

There were no updates provided at this meeting.

**RESOLVED that**

**the External Scrutiny Bodies updates be noted.**

## 67. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

**RESOLVED that**

**Under S.100 (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 (A) of the said Act, as amended:**

**Minute Item No. 68 – Rubicon Leisure Priorities and Progress Update.**

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Monday, 12th January, 2026

## 68. RUBICON LEISURE PRIORITIES AND PROGRESS UPDATE

The Managing Director of Rubicon Leisure provided a presentation on Rubicon's priorities and recent progress to Members. Key points discussed during the presentation included the five priorities and five themes for 2025/26 which were:

Priorities of: Grow our income and be financially sustainable; Invest in our staff, provide support, tools and opportunity to learn and develop; Inspire more people to improve health and well-being; Improve the quality of our offer, experiences and services; Provide opportunities for our communities.

Themes: Our Finances. Our People, Our Customers, Our Communities, Our Development.

During the presentation these priorities and themes were discussed in further detail. After the presentation, Members discussed the following aspects:

- Members were very encouraged by the progress and improvements to the business and wished to thank all the staff involved who had assisted Rubicon Leisure becoming a commercial success.
- Utilisation of financial support from the Council was discussed. It was noted that there were plans for Rubicon to invest in further commercial aspects, however, the key priority remained to ensure sustainability for the future. Whilst Rubicon continued to identify profitable areas, ensuring financial stability in essential functions such as repairs and maintenance was a priority.
- Members noted that some areas of Rubicon's operations had achieved considerable success recently such as ice cream sales during the summer period and the popularity of outdoor swimming at Arrow Valley Lake.
- Clarity on the Net Promotor Score (NPS) was requested, and it was explained to the Committee that this was a key customer satisfaction metrics system which was updated daily and was an effective way to assess future sustainability of the business.
- Progress in Rubicon's delivery of leisure services was discussed and Members queried the gym memberships rate. In response Members noted that income from gym memberships was good and that Rubicon's gym membership was competitively priced. Rubicon was looking to invest in its

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Monday, 12th January, 2026

Health and Wellbeing activities in response to identified growing public interest.

- The Rubicon's health and wellbeing offer was discussed with reference to queries as to how many customers visited from priority health neighbourhood areas within the Borough. In response Members were advised that around eight percent of the population of those neighbourhoods used the Rubicon's health and wellbeing services on offer, including community activities. In terms of affordability, it was explained that Rubicon's food and beverage offer was also competitively priced, as compared to popular chain outlets.
- Data for the use of services outside of the Borough was requested. It was explained that data for the Palace Theatre demonstrated that there were significant sales from customers visiting from outside of the Borough. It was noted that Arrow Valley Lake had been shortlisted as Best Visitor Attraction with recent visitor numbers having tripled in size.
- Areas in which to improve the Rubicon's business were also discussed by the Committee. Key areas included food waste and electrical compliance, environmental policies, HR and Marketing. Incorporating climate change strategies into future plans was also discussed to align with the Council's objectives.
- The use of local farm produce for food and beverage was also discussed. In response it was felt that the company did offer a good range and balance when comparing to the other businesses within the Borough. However, plans corporately to have a wider range of impact for food and beverage would be reviewed in due course.
- Local employment was also discussed with Members being reassured that a good number of staff employed by Rubicon Leisure as well as volunteers resided in the Redditch area.

**RESOLVED that**

**the Rubicon Leisure Priorities and Progress Presentation 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 that included information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

# **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

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Monday, 12th January, 2026

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.04 pm

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