Public Document Pack



Council

Mon 29 Jun
2026
7.00 pm

Oakenshaw Community Centre,
Castleditch Lane,
Redditch B98 7YB

Redditch Borough Council
Working together for our communities

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

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

You are able to see and hear the livestream of the meeting from the Committee Pages of the website, alongside the agenda for the meeting.

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

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Members of the public who have registered to speak at the meeting may attend in person or remotely via Microsoft Teams.

Notes:

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

Redditch Borough Council
Working together for our communities

Council

Monday, 29th June, 2026
7.00 pm
Oakenshaw Community Centre

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:	Susan Eacock (Mayor)	Wanda King
	James Aston (Deputy Mayor)	Nicola Lloyd
	Joe Baker	David Meredith
	Juliet Barker Smith	Gemma Monaco
	Roger Bennett	Ashley Monk
	William Boyd	Nic Pioli
	Brandon Clayton	Rita Rogers
	Matthew Dormer	Gary Slim
	James Fardoe	Jen Snape
	Simon Farmer	Jane Spilsbury
	Andrew Fry	Monica Stringfellow
	Bill Hartnett	Craig Warhurst
	Sharon Harvey	Ian Woodall
	Joanna Kane	

1. Welcome

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest

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

4. Minutes (Pages 5 - 32)

5. Announcements

To consider Announcements under Procedure Rule 10:

a) Mayor's Announcements

b) The Leader's Announcements

c) Chief Executive's Announcements.

6. Questions on Notice (Procedure Rule 9)

Questions on Notice will be published in a supplementary pack for this meeting.

Council

Monday, 29th June, 2026

7. Motions on Notice (Procedure Rule 11) (Pages 33 - 34)

8. Request for the Appointment of Charter Trustees in the Structural Order for the new Unitary Authority (Pages 35 - 44)

9. Redditch Borough Local Plan - Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation, Local Plan Timetable and Scoping Consultation (Pages 45 - 98)

10. Change to Outside Body Appointment

West Mercia Police and Crime Panel

Members are asked to note that following the Annual Council meeting the Council was advised that the authority's representative on the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel needs to be a Labour Group member, in accordance with the political balance for the panel.

Therefore, Council is invited to agree appointments to the following positions on the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel from the Labour Group to replace the Members appointed at the Annual Council meeting.

- Lead Member
- Substitute Member

11. Change to Committee Appointment - Planning Committee

Council is asked to note a change to the Conservative Group's nomination to the Planning Committee.

Councillor Brandon Clayton is nominated to replace Councillor Matthew Dormer on the Planning Committee.

12. Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Annual Report 2025/26 (Pages 99 - 128)

13. Regulatory Committees (Pages 129 – 153)

Recommendation from the Licensing Committee meeting held on 4th June 2026

14. Executive Committee

Minutes 2nd March 2026 Executive Committee (Pages 155 – 160)

Members are asked to note that the recommendations arising from this meeting of the Executive Committee were considered at the Council meeting held immediately after the Executive Committee meeting on 2nd March 2026.

Council

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Minutes 17th March 2026 Executive Committee meeting (Pages 161 – 186)

14 .1 Empty Homes Strategy (Pages 187 - 212)

14 .2 Climate Change Strategy 2026 to 2031 (Pages 213 - 218)

14 .3 Renters Right Act 2025 (Pages 219 - 232)

14 .4 Introduction of Enforcement of littering from Vehicles (Pages 233 - 244)

14 .5 Redditch Council Plan Update Report (Pages 245 - 280)

14 .6 Quarter 3 2025/26 Finance and Performance Monitoring Report (Pages 281 - 318)

Minutes 21st April 2026 Executive Committee (Pages 319 – 334)

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

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

14 .7 HRA Business Plan Update to Enhance the Delivery of the Housing Improvement Plan (Pages 335 - 382)

NOTE: The appendix to the report for this item has only been made available to Members and relevant Officers. Should Members wish to discuss the content of this appendix in any detail, a decision will be required to exclude the public and press from the meeting on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged, as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of Section 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

(Paragraph 3: Subject to the "public interest" test, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the

authority holding that information).)

Minutes 9th June 2026 Executive Committee (Pages 383 – 403)

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

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

14 .8 Shareholders Committee Annual Report 2025/26 (Pages 405 - 416)

14 .9 Shared Homelessness Strategy 2026 - 2031 (Pages 417 - 466)

14 .10 Enforcement and Civil Penalties Notice Policy (Pages 467 - 556)

14 .11 Housing Tenant Engagement Policy (Pages 557 - 562)

14 .12 Construction of Redditch Innovation Centre (Pages 563 - 574)

NOTE: The appendix to the report for this item has only been made available to Members and relevant Officers. Should Members wish to discuss the content of this appendix in any detail, a decision will be required to exclude the public and press from the meeting on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged, as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of Section 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

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

15. Urgent Business - Record of Decisions

To note any decisions taken in accordance with the Council's Urgency Procedure Rules.

(None to date).

Council

Monday, 29th June, 2026

16. Urgent Business - general (if any)

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

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

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Redditch Borough Council
Working together for our communities

Council

Tuesday, 26th May, 2026

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Susan Eacock (Mayor), Councillor James Aston (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Joe Baker, Juliet Barker Smith, Roger Bennett, William Boyd, Brandon Clayton, Matthew Dormer, James Fardoe, Simon Farmer, Andrew Fry, Sharon Harvey, Joanna Kane, Wanda King, Nicola Lloyd, David Meredith, Ashley Monk, Nic Pioli, Rita Rogers, Gary Slim, Jen Snape, Jane Spilsbury, Monica Stringfellow, Craig Warhurst and Ian Woodall

Officers:

Claire Felton, Claire Green, John Leach and Guy Revans

Democratic Services Officers:

Jess Bayley-Hill

1. WELCOME

The outgoing Mayor welcomed all those present to the meeting.

2. MAYOR'S OPENING REMARKS

The outgoing Mayor, Councillor Joanna Kane, thanked Members for the opportunity to serve as Mayor of the Borough of Redditch during the 2025/26 municipal year.

Council was advised that during the year, the Mayor had raised £4,417 for her Mayoral charity, the Primrose Hospice. She thanked her consort and chaplain for their support as well as the other Mayors and Chairmen of neighbouring authority areas who she had met during the year.

The outgoing Mayor noted that there had been a number of highlights to her year as Mayor:

- The Holocaust Memorial Event held in January 2026 when the community had come together to commemorate victims of genocide across the world.
- The Astwood Bank Carnival.
- Switching on the Redditch Christmas lights at an event that had also been attended by Gareth Gates.

Chair

- Visiting the Sea Cadets and observing the valuable life skills developed and contributions made by young people in these roles.
- Meeting the Queen at a Buckingham Palace Garden Party held in 2026.
- Welcoming visitors from Gruchet-Le-Valasse, one of Redditch's twin towns.
- Hosting representatives from the Kerala community who made a valuable contribution to Redditch society, including through employment in various medical occupations.

3. ELECTION OF THE MAYOR FOR 2026/27

A nomination for the position of Mayor of the Borough of Redditch for the 2026/27 municipal year was received on behalf of Councillor Gary Slim. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Jen Snape.

A further nomination for the position of Mayor of the Borough of Redditch for the 2026/27 municipal year was received on behalf of Councillor Susan Eacock. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Nic Pioli and seconded by Councillor Nicola Lloyd.

On being put to the vote Councillor Susan Eacock was elected Mayor of the Borough for the forthcoming year. She signed the statutory declaration of acceptance of office and then was invested with the Chain of Office. Councillor Eacock thanked the outgoing Mayor and, on behalf of the Council, expressed gratitude for the work she had carried out as an ambassador for the town.

RESOLVED that

1) Councillor Susan Eacock be elected Mayor of the Borough of Redditch to serve until the next Annual Meeting of the Council; and

2) the Council formally express, and record, its gratitude to Councillor Joanna Kane for her excellent service to the town as Mayor in the 2025/26 municipal year.

4. ELECTION OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR FOR 2026/27

A nomination for the position of Deputy Mayor for the 2026/27 municipal year was received on behalf of Councillor Andrew Fry. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Jane Spilsbury and seconded by Councillor Sharon Harvey.

A further nomination for the position of Deputy Mayor for the 2026/27 municipal year was received on behalf of Councillor James

Aston. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Nic Pioli and seconded by Councillor Nicola Lloyd.

On being put to the vote, Councillor James Aston was elected Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Redditch for the forthcoming year. He signed the statutory declaration of acceptance of office and was then invested with the Deputy Mayor's Badge of Office.

RESOLVED that

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

5. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Bill Hartnett and Gemma Monaco.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

7. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 2nd March 2026 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Mayor.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) <u>The Mayor's Announcements</u>

The Mayor advised Members that she would be supporting the following charities during her mayoral year:

- The Homeless Foundation
- Isaac's Food Bank
- Pete Martin's Knife Awareness Group
- Redditch Nightstop
- Touchstones Child Bereavement Support

b) <u>The Leader's Announcements</u>

The Leader welcomed the Councillors who had been elected at the local elections held in May 2026. In addition, the Leader

thanked former Members who had either stood down or had not been returned to office at the local elections.

During consideration of this item, Council was advised that it had been agreed that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16 and powers available under Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, given that the local election results created exceptional circumstances effecting the political composition of the Council and in turn the position of the executive Leader, that a Motion to Council had been accepted as urgent business. Members were informed that in the event that this Motion was carried, it would automatically result in there being a subsequent item to elect a new Leader of the Council.

On this basis, the following urgent Motion was submitted for Members' consideration at the meeting:

"*The Council consider and determine a resolution to remove the Leader from office following the recent local elections*."

This Motion was proposed by Councillor Matthew Dormer and seconded by Councillor Craig Warhurst.

In discussing the Motion, the following points were considered:

- The outcomes of the local elections held in May 2026.
- The need for stable leadership during a period of transition arising from Local Government Reorganisation.
- The need for Members to work proactively to protect the authority's assets prior to the completion of Local Government Reorganisation in Worcestershire.
- The importance of the role of Leader of the Council.

On being put to the vote the Motion was carried.

Consequently, Councillor Sharon Harvey was removed as Leader of the Council.

A nomination was subsequently received for Councillor Matthew Dormer to be appointed as Leader of the Council. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Craig Warhurst and seconded by Councillor Brandon Clayton.

On being put to the vote, the nomination was carried.

c) The Chief Executive's Announcements

The Chief Executive confirmed that he had no announcements to make on this occasion.

RESOLVED that

1) Councillor Sharon Harvey be removed as Leader of the Council with immediate effect; and

2) Councillor Matthew Dormer be appointed as Leader of the Council.

9. LEADER'S APPOINTMENTS

The Leader advised that he was making the following appointments to the Executive Committee:

Leader of the Council – Councillor Matthew Dormer

Responsibility for regeneration, economic development, strategic partnerships, Town Deal and Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre (DMIC), corporate leadership, external relations, overall strategic leadership of the authority, strategic health, Regulatory Services, leisure and recreation (including parks) and planning.

Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance – Councillor Craig Warhurst

Responsibility for finance, governance, performance, constitutional matters, audit and efficiency and transformation programme.

Portfolio Holder Environment and Local Services – Councillor Brandon Clayton

Responsibility for Environmental Services, waste and street scene, Operational Services, Parking and Neighbourhood Management (including Environmental Services).

Portfolio Holder Climate and Biodiversity - Councillor Gemma Monaco

Responsibility for climate change, biodiversity, sustainability initiatives and green infrastructure.

Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities – Councillor Ashley Monk

Responsibility for housing, homelessness, Tenant Services, Family Hubs, community safety and safeguarding.

Executive Committee member without Portfolio – Councillor Wanda King.

10. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, PANELS ETC AND THEIR CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS (INCLUDING THE POLITICAL BALANCE)

The political balance arising following the local elections held in May 2026 was tabled for Members' consideration, as attached at Appendix 1 to the minutes.

During consideration of this item, Members considered the proposed allocation of Chair and Vice Chair positions on the Committees forming part of the political balance. Nominations received from political group leaders to the Committees were tabled at the meeting for Members' consideration (Appendix 2).

There were a number of positions for which multiple nominations had been received and these were voted on separately in the following manner:

Chair of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee

Nominations for the position of Chair of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee were received on behalf of Councillors David Meredith and Jane Spilsbury respectively.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Meredith's appointment as Chair of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year was carried.

Chair of the Licensing Committee

Nominations for the position of Chair of the Licensing Committee were received on behalf of Councillors Nic Pioli and Gary Slim respectively.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Pioli's appointment as Chair of the Licensing Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year was carried.

Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Nominations for the position of Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were received on behalf of Councillors Sharon Harvey and Nicola Lloyd respectively.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Lloyd's appointment as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year was carried.

Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee – Redditch Borough Council Representatives

Members noted that Redditch Borough Council had been allocated two seats on the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee. Members were informed that under the terms of the agreement between partner authorities for the shared service, one of these members had to be the relevant Portfolio Holder, which was Councillor Matthew Dormer.

Two nominations had been received for the other seat on this Committee, on behalf of Councillors Sharon Harvey and Nic Pioli.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Nic Pioli was appointed to serve alongside Councillor Matthew Dormer on the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year.

Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel

In addition, Members noted that no nominations had been received prior to the meeting from group leaders for the position of Vice Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel. During the meeting, it was proposed that Councillor Jane Spilsbury should be appointed as Vice Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel for the 2026/27 municipal year and as there were no other nominations for this position, the nomination was carried.

RESOLVED that

1) the Political balance of the Committees of the Council be agreed as set out at Appendix 1;

2) appointments by political group leaders to the places on each Committee etc, as detailed in Appendix 2, be noted;

3) subject to the amendments detailed in the preamble above, the Council appoint Chairs and Vice-Chairs to the Committees and other bodies as set out in Appendix 2;

4) appointments to Working Groups and other bodies listed in Appendix 2 be agreed; and

5) the terms of reference for the Committees be confirmed.

11. OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENTS 2026/27

A list of nominations (as detailed at Appendix 3 to the minutes) that had been received from group leaders for appointments to outside bodies for the 2026/27 municipal year, was tabled at the meeting.

Officers highlighted that there were a number of positions where multiple nominations had been received from group leaders and these nominations were voted on separately in the following manner:

WM Temps Partnership Board

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Matthew Dormer and Joanna Kane respectively to be appointed to the Board. In addition, nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Nicola Lloyd and Bill Hartnett to be appointed as their respective substitutes.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillor Matthew Dormer to the WM Temps Partnership Board for the 2026/27 municipal year and of Councillor Nicola Lloyd as his substitute were carried.

Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Brandon Clayton and Monica Stringfellow respectively to be appointed to the Board. In addition, nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Nicola Lloyd and Juliet Barker Smith to be appointed as their respective substitutes.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillor Brandon Clayton to the Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board for the 2026/27 municipal year and of Councillor Nicola Lloyd as his substitute were carried.

West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Audit Risk and Assurance Committee

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Roger Bennett and Joanna Kane respectively to be appointed to the Committee. In addition, nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Nicola Lloyd and Jane Spilsbury to be appointed as their respective substitutes.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillor Roger Bennett to the WMCA Audit Risk and Assurance Committee for the

2026/27 municipal year and of Councillor Nicola Lloyd as his substitute were carried.

WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Nicola Lloyd and Andrew Fry respectively to be appointed to the Committee. In addition, nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Roger Bennett and Ian Woodall to be appointed as their respective substitutes.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillor Nicola Lloyd to the WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year and of Councillor Roger Bennett as her substitute were carried.

WMCA Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Nic Pioli and Bill Hartnett respectively to be appointed to the Committee. In addition, nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Simon Farmer and James Fardoe to be appointed as their respective substitutes.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillor Nic Pioli to the WMCA Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year and of Councillor Simon Farmer as his substitute were carried.

Citizens Advice Bureau – Bromsgrove and Redditch

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Brandon Clayton and Sharon Harvey respectively to be appointed to the Bromsgrove and Redditch branch of the Citizens Advice Bureau. In addition, nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Nic Pioli and Jane Spilsbury, the latter of which was confirmed as a nomination at the meeting, to be appointed as their respective substitutes.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillor Brandon Clayton to the Citizens Advice Bureau – Bromsgrove and Redditch for the 2026/27 municipal year and of Councillor Nic Pioli as his substitute were carried.

PATROL - Traffic Penalty Tribunal

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Matthew Dormer and William Boyd respectively to be appointed to the PATROL Traffic Penalty Tribunal. In addition, nominations were

received on behalf of Councillors Roger Bennett and Bill Hartnett to be appointed as their respective substitutes.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillor Matthew Dormer to the PATROL Traffic Penalty Tribunal for the 2026/27 municipal year and of Councillor Roger Bennett as his substitute were carried.

Redditch One World Link Executive Committee

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Brandon Clayton, Sharon Harvey, Nicola Lloyd and Joanna Kane respectively to be appointed to the Redditch One World Link Executive Committee.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillors Brandon Clayton and Nicola Lloyd to the Redditch One World Link Executive Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year were carried.

Where Next Association

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Matthew Dormer, Nicola Lloyd, Gary Slim and Ian Woodall to be appointed to the Where Next Association.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillors Matthew Dormer and Nicola Lloyd to the Where Next Association for the 2026/27 municipal year were carried.

Worcestershire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors James Aston and Monica Stringfellow to be appointed to the Worcestershire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership.

On being put to the vote, the appointment of Councillor James Aston to the Worcestershire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership for the 2026/27 municipal year was carried.

Change to Nominations

In addition to the votes on these appointments, during consideration of this item it was confirmed that Councillor Brandon Clayton's nomination to the Redditch Highways and Transportation Forum Members Discussion Group was being withdrawn. Therefore, as there was no competition for the positions, it was agreed that Councillors Andrew Fry and David Meredith be appointed to serve

on the Redditch Highways and Transportation Forum during the 2026/27 municipal year.

RESOLVED that

Subject to the amendments detailed in the preamble above, the nominations to the Outside Bodies for the 2026/27 municipal year, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the minutes, be approved.

12. CONSTITUTION REVIEW (INCLUDING SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS)

A report detailing proposed updates to the content of the Council's constitution was considered at the meeting.

Members noted that the Scheme of Delegations was reviewed every year at the Annual Council meeting. This review ensured that the content of the Scheme of Delegations was kept up to date and reflected changes in Officers' job titles and national legislation. There were additional changes that Members suggested might be required at a later date.

The Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Procedure Rules had both been reviewed following legislative changes. The content was considered to be more robust than previously and the proposed amendments had both been considered at a meeting of the Constitutional Review Working Party held earlier in the calendar year.

A further recommendation, in addition to those included in the main agenda, had been published in a supplementary pack for the meeting pertaining to the work of the Audit Governance and Standards Committee. The suggested changes to the Committee Terms of Reference for the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee as well as to the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee's Procedure Rules to clarify the Committee's role in the consideration of the annual strategy and the Treasury Management Strategy. It was suggested that these changes would enhance governance arrangements at the authority.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Matthew Dormer and seconded by Councillor Craig Warhurst.

RESOLVED that

1) The current version of the Scheme of Delegations be agreed;

2) The updated Contract Procedure Rules be approved;

3) The updated Financial Procedure Rules be approved;

4) An update to the Scheme of Members' Allowances 2026/27, to incorporate reference to Members' eligibility to join the Local Government Pension Scheme be approved; and

5) the Committee Terms of Reference and Procedure Rules for the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee be updated to reflect the Committee's role in consideration of the annual strategy and Treasury Management Strategy.

13. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

The Mayor confirmed that four urgent decisions had been taken since the previous meeting of Council on the following subjects:

- Approval of a new kitchen supplier for the Council's housing stock after the previous supplier went into administration.
- The Arrow Valley Solar Project.
- The Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) Round 4.
- The appointment of a permanent Section 151 Officer for the Council.

14. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)

Members noted that urgent business had been discussed during consideration of Minute Item No. 8.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.15 pm

Appendix 1 - Political Balance Calculation May 2026

Committee	Lab 13 48.15% of total	Ref 7 25.93% of total	Con 4 14.81% of total	Ind Alliance 2 7.41% of total	Independent (Non-aligned) Cllr Monk 1 3.70% of total	Total
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	4 *4.33*	2 *2.33* ***Take 1 additional seat**	1 *1.33*	1 *0.67*	0 *0.33*	9 **9 members on Committee** ***9***
Licensing Committee	5 *5.30*	3 *2.85*	2 *1.63*	1 *0.82*	0 *0.41*	11 **11 members on Cttee** ***11***
Planning Committee	4 *4.33*	2 *2.33* ***Take 1 additional seat**	1 *1.33*	1 *0.67*	0 *0.33*	9 **9 members on Cttee** ***9***
Audit, Gov'ce & Stands Committee	4 *4.33* ***Take 1 additional seat**	2 *2.33*	1 *1.33*	1 *0.67*	0 *0.33*	9 **9 members on Cttee** ***9***
Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel	2 *2.41*	1 *1.30*	1 *0.74*	0 *0.37*	0 *0.19* ***Take 1 seat**	5 **5 Members on the Committee** ***5***
(Joint) Appointments Committee	2 *2.41* ***Take 1 additional seat**	1 *1.30*	1 *0.74*	0 *0.37*	0 *0.19*	5 **5 Members on Committee** ***5***
Electoral Matters Committee	2 *2.41* ***Take 1 additional seat**	1 *1.30*	1 *0.74*	0 *0.37*	0 *0.19*	5 **5 Members on Committee** ***5***
Allocated Total Prior to Balancing	23	12	8	4	0	47
Entitlement	26	14	8	4	2	54
Mathematical calculation	*25.52*	*13.74*	*7.85*	*3.93*	*1.96*	53
Final Balanced Total	**26**	**14**	**8**	**4**	**1**	**53**

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+Appendix 2 - Nominations and Appointments to Committees that Form Part of the Political Balance

(*Where multiple nominations for positions or roles as Chairs and Vice Chairs have been received these have been highlighted in the tables below and will need to be voted on separately*)

Committee / Sub-Committee etc.	Size (Members)	Labour	Reform UK	Conservative	The Independent Alliance	Non-aligned Cllr Monk
Audit, Governance and Standards Committee	**9**	5 Cllrs Spilsbury (Ch) Kane, Rogers, Snape and Woodall	2 Cllrs Meredith (Ch) Bennett (V Ch)	1 Vacant	1 Cllr Baker	-
Licensing Committee (Note the sub-committees are now selected from the committee membership)	**11**	5 Cllr Slim (Ch) Cllrs Barker Smith, Kane, Harvey and Stringfellow	3 Cllrs Pioli (Ch), Farmer (V Ch) and Bennett	2 Cllr Clayton and Dormer	1 Cllr King	-

Annual Council

26th May 2026

Committee / Sub-Committee etc.	Size (Members)	Labour	Reform UK	Conservative	The Independent Alliance	Non-aligned Cllr Monk
Planning Committee (A pool of named substitutes would be welcomed for this Committee from both groups)	**9**	4 Cllrs Fry Boyd Hartnett and Woodall Named substitutes: Cllrs Barker Smith, Fardoe, Kane, Rogers and Stringfellow,	3 Cllrs Bennett (Ch) and Farmer (V Ch) Lloyd Named Substitutes: Cllrs Aston, Eacock, Meredith and Pioli	1 Cllr Dormer Named substitutes: Cllr Monaco	1 Cllr King Named substitute: Cllr Baker	-
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	**9**	4 Cllrs Harvey (Ch) Kane, Rogers and Spilsbury	3 Cllrs Lloyd (Ch) Bennett (V Ch) and Meredith	1 Vacant	1 Cllr Baker	-
Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel	**5**	2 Cllrs Fry and Spilsbury	1 Cllr Lloyd (Ch)	1 Vacant	-	1 Vacant

Committee / Sub-Committee etc.	Size (Members)	Labour	Reform UK	Conservative	The Independent Alliance	Non-aligned Cllr Monk
Joint Appointments Committee (*Under the terms of reference for the Committee, the Leader takes it in turns with the Leader of Bromsgrove District Council to Chair meetings of this Committee*)	**5**	3 Cllrs Harvey, Kane and Spilsbury	1 Cllr Pioli	1 Cllr Dormer	-	-
Electoral Matters Committee	**5**	3 Cllrs Boyd, Fardoe and Snape	1 Cllr Eacock (V Ch)	1 Cllr Dormer (Ch)	-	-

Annual Council

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Committees that do not form part of the political balance

Committee / Sub-Committee etc.	Size (Members)	Labour	Reform UK	Conservative	The Independent Alliance	Non-aligned Cllr Monk
Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee (*The relevant Portfolio Holder is required under the Service Level Agreement for WRS to be appointed to the Board*)	**2 (+ 2 subs)**	Cllr Harvey Sub: Cllr Spilsbury	Cllr Pioli Sub: Cllr Meredith	Cllr Dormer		

Agenda Item 4

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Annual Council

26th May 2026

APPENDIX 3 TO THE MINUTES

APPENDIX 1 (*TO THE OUTSIDE BODIES REPORT*) - BOROUGH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES – NOMINATIONS FOR 2026/2027

STRATEGIC APPOINTMENTS TO NOTE:

(Where there is competition for places on particular outside bodies this has been highlighted in the document and any such appointments will need to be voted on separately)

Organisation	Appointee 2025/26	Appointment Requirements	Nomination 2026/27
Local Government Association	**Councillor Harvey**	1 Representative (usually Leader) Term: 1 Year No liability issues identified.	**Councillor Dormer**
West Mercia Police and Crime Panel	**Councillor Stringfellow** **Sub: Councillor Munro**	1 representative (Relevant Portfolio Holder) and 1 substitute. Term: 1 Year Quorum 6 out of 17 (including at least 3 members from the Worcestershire authorities and 3 from the non-Worcestershire authorities) No liability issues identified.	**Councillor Dormer** **Sub: Clayton**
Assembly of the District Councils' Network	**Councillor Harvey**	1 representative Term: 1 Year To represent the Council on the Assembly of this body which is a voice for District Councils within the Local Government Association. The Assembly of the DCN comprises the Leaders of the Member Authorities or equivalent. No liability issues identified.	**Councillor Dormer**
West Midlands Employers (WME) Shareholder Board	**Councillor Begum**	1 representative (preferably the Leader)	**Councillor Dormer**

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Organisation	Appointee 2025/26	Appointment Requirements	Nomination 2026/27
		Preferred Term: 2 years To represent the Council at meetings of the WME Shareholders Committee. There are 6 scheduled meetings per year plus an induction session to attend.	
WMTemps Partnership Board	**Councillor Spilsbury** **Sub:** **Councillor Hartnett**	1 Councillor per authority. There will be two meetings a year which will take place during the day.	**Councillor Dormer** **Sub: Councillor Lloyd** **OR** **Councillor Kane** **Sub: Councillor Hartnett**
Corporate Parenting Board *(Worcestershire County Council)*	**Councillor Spilsbury**	1 Representative – Children and Young People's Champion. Term: 1 Year (Monthly meetings – approx. 2 hrs each time – generally Friday mornings – 9.30a.m. start) No liability issues identified.	**Councillor Clayton**
Redditch BID Limited *(Company no 11964088)*	**Councillor Harvey**	1 Representative to act as a director of the company. Term: 1 Year No liability issues identified	**Councillor Dormer**
Redditch Town's Fund Board	**Councillor Hartnett**	1 Representative Term: 1 Year No liability issues identified.	**Councillor Dormer**
North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership	**Councillor Stringfellow**	1 representative (relevant Portfolio Holder) and 1 named substitute	**Councillor Monk**

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Organisation	Appointee 2025/26	Appointment Requirements	Nomination 2026/27
	Sub: Councillor Begum	Term: 1 Year Each district Council has a place on the Partnership Board as an Invitee to Participate. No liability issues identified.	**Sub: Councillor Lloyd**
Waste Management Board *(Lead Officer – Guy Revans)*	**Councillor Harvey** **Sub: Councillor Munro**	1 representative (relevant Portfolio Holder) Term: 1 Year Note: Meets Friday mornings - 4 times per year No liability issues identified	**Councillor Clayton** **Sub: Councillor Dormer**
Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board	**Councillor Begum** **Sub: Councillor Stringfellow**	1 representative and 1 substitute Term: 1 Year	**Councillor Clayton** **Sub: Councillor Lloyd** **OR** **Councillor Stringfellow** **Sub: Councillor Barker Smith**
West Midlands Combined Authority Board	**Councillor Harvey** **Sub: Councillor Spilsbury**	1 Representative (Leader by Office) and 1 substitute Term: 1 Year	**Councillor Dormer** **Sub: Councillor Warhurst**
West Midlands Combined Authority Housing and Land Delivery Board	**Councillor Hartnett** **Sub: councillor Snape**	1 Representative (Must be relevant Portfolio Holder, function to include Housing and/or Land Use) Term: 1 Year	**Councillor Dormer** **Sub: Councillor Monk**
West Midlands Combined Authority – Audit Risk and Assurance Committee	**Councillor Woodall** **Sub: Councillor Fardoe**	Worcestershire Non-constituent Authorities 1 Representative and 1 substitute. Must be members of the majority group	**Councillor Bennett** **Sub: Councillor Lloyd** **OR** **Councillor Kane**

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Annual Council

26th May 2026

Organisation	Appointee 2025/26	Appointment Requirements	Nomination 2026/27
			Sub: Councillor Spilsbury
West Midlands Combined Authority – Economic Growth Board	**Councillor Harvey**	1 Representative – Leader Non-constituent Authorities Term: 1 Year	**Councillor Dormer**
West Midlands Combined Authority – Overview and Scrutiny Committee	**Councillor Boyd** **Sub: councillor Mathur**	Worcestershire Non-constituent Authorities 1 representative and 1 substitute. Must be members of the majority group and ideally members of O&S	**Councillor Lloyd** **Sub: Councillor Bennett** **OR** **Councillor Fry** **Sub: Councillor Woodall**
West Midlands Combined Authority - Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee	**Councillor Fardoe** **Sub: Councillor Boyd**	Worcestershire Non-constituent Authorities 1 representative and 1 substitute.	**Councillor Pioli** **Sub: Councillor Farmer** **OR** **Councillor Hartnett** **Sub: Councillor Fardoe**
Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	**Councillor Sharon Harvey** **Sub: Councillor Karen May (Bromsgrove District Council)**	1 representative and 1 substitute	**Councillor Dormer** **Sub: Councillor Warhurst**
Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Partnership Assembly	**Councillor Spilsbury** **Sub: Councillor Stringfellow**	1 representative (Ideally Relevant Portfolio) and one named substitute Term: 1 Year	**Councillor Dormer** **Sub: Councillor Clayton**

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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26th May 2026

LOCAL APPOINTMENTS

Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee *(Worcestershire County Council)*	**Councillor Fry**	1 representative (Must be a member of the Redditch Overview and Scrutiny Committee) Term: 1 year. Comprises 8 County Councillors and 6 District Councillors who scrutinise the local NHS and are consulted by the NHS on any proposed substantial changes to local health services.	**Councillor Spilsbury**
Redditch Highways & Transportation Forum Members Discussion Group *(Worcestershire County Council)*	**Councillor Fry** **Councillor Clayton**	Up to 2 Representatives Term: 1 Year Role is that of non-voting observers only. No liability issues identified.	**Councillor Clayton** **Councillor Meredith** **Councillor Fry**
Worcestershire Local Access Forum *(Worcestershire County Council)*	**Wyre Forest Councillor Drew**	1 representative from north Worcestershire District Councils. Term: 1 year (Note: Would be beneficial if the representative had a keen interest in countryside access and recreation issues.) No liability issues identified.	**Councillor Karen May (Bromsgrove District Council)**
Citizens Advice Bromsgrove and Redditch	**Councillor Rogers**	1 representative and 1 substitute. Term: 2 years Appointments will be trustees of the CAB which is a charitable company limited by guarantee.	**Councillor Clayton** **Sub: Councillor Pioli** **OR** **Councillor Harvey**
Redditch Co-operative Homes	**Councillors Slim, Snape, Warhurst and Wren**	4 Representatives Term: 1 year	**Councillors Bennett, Hartnett, Snape and Warhurst**

		Liability appears to be limited providing there are no breaches of duty or trust.	
Redditch One World Link Executive Committee	**Councillors Barker Smith and Begum**	2 Representatives Nominations should not include the Mayor who is a Member ex-officio*. Term: 1 year Liability appears to be limited, provided there are no breaches of duty or trust.	**Councillors Clayton and Lloyd** **OR** **Councillors Harvey and Kane**
PATROL Traffic Penalty Tribunal *(Civil Parking Enforcement)*	**Councillor Hartnett** **Deputy: Councillor Mathur**	1 Representative plus 1 Deputy. Term: 1 Year No liabilities identified / unlikely to be any liabilities.	**Councillor Dormer** **Deputy: Councillor Bennett** **OR** **Councillors Boyd** **Deputy: Councillor Hartnett**
'Where Next' Association	**Councillors Slim and Woodall**	2 Representatives – *2 places variation previously agreed* Term: 1 Year Liability appears to be limited.	**Councillor Dormer** **Councillor Lloyd** **OR** **Councillor Slim** **Councillor Woodall**
Worcestershire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership	**Councillor Harvey**	1 Representative Term: 1 year Nature of representation: to represent the Borough Council.	**Councillor Aston** **OR** **Councillor Stringfellow**
Tardebigge Relief in Need and Sickness Charity	**Councillor Mathur** **Councillor Baker**	2 Representatives. Term: 2 years.	**Councillor Baker** **Councillor Monk**

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Redditch Borough Council 29th June 2026
Motions on Notice

1. Motion Civility, Respect and Safety in Public Life

The following Motion on Notice has been submitted by Councillor Jane Spilsbury and seconded by Councillor Sharon Harvey.

“This Council notes:

• The murder of Jo Cox MP on 16 June 2016 and the 10th anniversary of her death in 2026.

• The murder of Sir David Amess MP on 15 October 2021 whilst carrying out a constituency surgery on behalf of his constituents.

• The continuing abuse, intimidation and threats directed towards elected representatives at all levels of government.

• Research showing that a significant number of councillors have experienced abuse, intimidation or harassment whilst carrying out their public duties.

This Council further notes:

• That democracy is strengthened when people with differing political views can engage in robust but respectful debate.

• That, as Jo Cox said in her maiden speech, "we have far more in common than that which divides us."

• That public service should never place an individual at risk of abuse, intimidation or violence.

• That elected representatives from all political parties, and those with no political affiliation, deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

• That abuse, intimidation and threats have no place in local government, national politics or wider public life.

This Council resolves:

• To mark the lives and public service of Jo Cox MP and Sir David Amess MP through a minute's silence and reflection at this meeting.

• To reaffirm its commitment to respectful political discourse and democratic engagement.

• To stand united against abuse, intimidation and violence directed towards all elected representatives, regardless of political party or personal beliefs.

• To encourage all those involved in public debate, both online and offline, to engage respectfully and constructively with those holding different views.”

2. Honorary Freemen of the Borough – Jordan Adams and Cian Adams

The following Motion on Notice has been submitted by Councillor Matthew Dormer and seconded by Councillor Nic Pioli

“Members will be aware of the extraordinary achievements of Redditch residents Jordan Adams and Cian Adams in undertaking and completing a series of endurance challenges to raise awareness of frontotemporal dementia (FTD).

Their efforts have attracted local, regional and national attention, bringing significant recognition to the Borough of Redditch whilst raising awareness of a devastating condition that has affected their own family and many others.

Jordan and Cian have through their efforts made an extraordinary contribution in terms of charitable fund raising. In addition, their campaign has raised awareness and had a positive impact in supporting individuals and families affected by dementia.

Jordan and Cian have provided inspiration to residents through their determination, resilience, selflessness and commitment to helping others. The recent homecoming celebrations and widespread community support demonstrated the pride and affection with which they have been received by the people of Redditch.

In light of the achievements set out above, Members are asked to RESOLVE as follows: -

1. That the service given by Cian and Jordan to the Borough is formally recognised and placed on record.

2. That the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer take the necessary steps to bring forward the required report and arrangements for a Special Meeting of the Council to be held in August 2026 to consider the formal conferment of the title of Honorary Freemen of the Borough on Jordan Adams and Cian Adams in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions”

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

29 June 2026

Request for the Establishment of Charter Trustees for Redditch

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Craig Warhurst, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services
Report Author	Melissa Bassett Job Title: Senior Electoral Services Officer Contact email: melissa.bassett@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 587014	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		All
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council RESOLVE that: -

1) **A request be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government for provision to be included in the relevant Structural Changes Order for the establishment of Charter Trustees for the unparished areas of the current Borough of Redditch from the re-organisation date; and**

2) **Authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Monitoring Officer, to agree the wording of the request and to take any necessary steps to progress the proposal through the Local Government Reorganisation process.**

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Local Government Reorganisation is expected to result in the abolition of Redditch Borough Council and the transfer of local government functions to a new unitary authority from the reorganisation date,

subject to the final decision of Government and the making of the necessary legislation.

2.2 The detailed arrangements for the transition to the new authority will be set out in a Structural Changes Order. The Order will establish the new local government structure, provide for the abolition of the predecessor Councils and set out the principal transitional and implementation arrangements.

2.3 Redditch was granted a Charter conferring Borough status on 15 May 1980. This entitled the Chairman of the Council to use the title of Mayor and established a civic tradition which has continued since that date.

2.4 When Redditch Borough Council is abolished, the Council's civic role and the office of Mayor will not automatically continue in their present form. Unless specific provision is made, the Borough's historic and ceremonial property would ordinarily transfer as part of the wider transfer of property associated with Local Government Reorganisation.

2.5 Charter Trustees provide an established mechanism through which historic civic rights, traditions and ceremonial property can be preserved where a Borough Council is abolished and no parish or town council is in place to inherit them.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 Charter Trustees may be established through an order made as part of Local Government Reorganisation. Their purpose is to preserve the historic rights, privileges and traditions associated with an area where the existing Council is being abolished.

3.2 For Redditch, the establishment of Charter Trustees would provide continuity for the mayoralty and enable the Borough's charters, civic insignia, chains of office, regalia, plate and other property of a historic or ceremonial nature to be held and safeguarded for the local area.

3.3 Charter Trustees would not replace the local government functions currently exercised by Redditch Borough Council and would not operate as a further tier of local government. Their responsibilities would be limited principally to civic and ceremonial matters and the preservation of the Borough's historic rights and traditions.

Membership and operation

3.4 Charter Trustees are not normally appointed in the same way as appointments to outside bodies. Under the Charter Trustees Regulations 2009, the Charter Trustees would ordinarily be the councillors of the new unitary authority who are elected for electoral areas falling within the Charter Trustee area.

3.5 For Redditch, this means that membership of the Charter Trustees would be expected to consist of those councillors elected to the new unitary authority for the unparished Redditch area covered by the Charter Trustees. It would not normally include councillors elected for areas outside the Charter Trustee area, for example councillors representing other parts of the new unitary authority.

3.6 The Regulations do, however, allow for additional Charter Trustees to be appointed in certain circumstances. This may include cases where the number of Charter Trustees for the area would otherwise be fewer than five, or where up to three additional Charter Trustees are considered desirable. Any additional Charter Trustee must be a councillor of the relevant council, which would be the new unitary authority.

3.7 The Charter Trustees would be required to establish appropriate administrative and governance arrangements, including arrangements for meetings, standing orders, financial administration, record keeping and the custody and use of civic property.

Civic and Ceremonial Property

3.8 The Charter Trustees Regulations 2009 provide for charters, insignia, plate and other property of a historic or ceremonial nature relating to the charter trustee area to vest in the Charter Trustees on the reorganisation date.

3.9 Further work will be required to identify and record the property which may be appropriate for transfer. This is expected to include the Borough Charter, mayoral and deputy mayoral chains, civic insignia and other items used in connection with the mayoralty and the Borough's civic traditions.

3.10 An inventory of relevant civic and ceremonial property will need to be prepared as part of the transition process. Legal advice may also be required where there is any uncertainty about whether a particular item falls within the definition of historic or ceremonial property.

3.11 The Charter Trustees would represent the unparished area of the current Borough of Redditch. Feckenham Parish would not form part of the charter trustee area because it already has a parish council.

3.12 The precise boundary of the charter trustee area would need to be defined in the Structural Changes Order, normally by reference to the relevant electoral areas or other geographical descriptions applying at the time the Order is made.

3.13 If all or part of the charter trustee area subsequently becomes parished through a Community Governance Review, the effect on the Charter Trustees would be governed by the relevant legislation. Where the whole charter trustee area becomes comprised within one or more parishes, the Charter Trustees would be dissolved and their property, rights and liabilities would transfer in accordance with the applicable statutory arrangements.

Structural Changes Order

3.14 The establishment of Charter Trustees would need to be provided for through the Structural Changes Order or other associated legislation made as part of the Local Government Reorganisation process.

3.15 It is therefore proposed that the Council submits a formal request to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government at the appropriate stage, asking that provision for the Redditch Charter Trustees be included within the relevant Order.

3.16 The request should be made early enough to allow the proposed arrangements, geographical area and treatment of civic property to be considered during the preparation of the Order and before the reorganisation date.

3.17 Further reports may be required during the transition period to address the detailed operating arrangements, budget, civic programme, administrative support and transfer of property to the Charter Trustees.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The submission of a request for Charter Trustees is not expected to result in significant immediate expenditure. There will, however, be officer resource implications associated with identifying civic and ceremonial property, supporting the development of the Structural

Changes Order and establishing the necessary governance arrangements.

4.2 In the financial year in which the Charter Trustees are established, they may request funding from the new unitary authority for the discharge of their functions, within the amount anticipated for that purpose under the relevant structural change financial arrangements.

4.3 From the financial year following their establishment, Charter Trustees are treated as a local precepting authority for council tax purposes and may issue a precept to the billing authority to fund the discharge of their functions. Any precept would apply only to properties within the charter trustee area. The Charter Trustees would determine their annual budget and precept, with the new unitary authority acting as billing authority and collecting the charge through council tax bills for the charter trustee area.

4.4 Financial Services will need to be involved in the development of the detailed arrangements, including the treatment of any existing civic budgets, the funding required in the first year and the process for calculating and issuing any future precept.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Charter Trustees Regulations 2009 set out the principal arrangements applying to Charter Trustees established through Local Government Reorganisation. These include provision relating to the transfer and holding of historic and ceremonial property, membership, the appointment of additional trustees, the election of a Mayor and Deputy Mayor, meetings, financial administration and other procedural matters.

5.2 The Regulations provide that relevant charters, insignia, plate and other historic and ceremonial property relating to the charter trustee area vest in the Charter Trustees on the reorganisation date.

5.3 The Charter Trustees would consist principally of members of the new unitary authority elected for electoral areas within the charter trustee area. The statutory arrangements also allow for additional Charter Trustees to be appointed in specified circumstances.

5.4 The proposed Charter Trustees can only be established through the relevant statutory process. A resolution of Redditch Borough Council

would amount to a request for provision to be included in the Structural Changes Order and would not, by itself, establish the Charter Trustees.

5.5 Further legal advice will be required during the preparation of the Order and the transfer process, particularly in relation to the property to be transferred, the preservation of charter rights and the detailed governance arrangements.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

6.1 The proposal arises directly from Local Government Reorganisation and the expected abolition of Redditch Borough Council. Establishing Charter Trustees would provide continuity for the Borough's historic civic identity following the transfer to a larger unitary authority.

6.2 The detailed arrangements for the Charter Trustees would need to be developed alongside the wider Local Government Reorganisation transition programme and in consultation with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, the implementation body and, following its establishment, the shadow authority.

6.3 The proposal would not determine the wider neighbourhood governance arrangements of the new unitary authority and would not prevent a future Community Governance Review from considering parish or town council arrangements for Redditch.

Relevant Council Priority

6.4 Work on local governance arrangements supports all the Council's current priorities.

Climate Change Implications

6.5 There are no direct climate change implications arising from the proposals detailed in this report.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.6 No direct equalities implications have been identified at this stage.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 The principal risk is that, if no provision is made before the reorganisation date, the office of Mayor and Redditch's civic and ceremonial traditions may not continue in their current local form.

7.2 There is also a risk that historic and ceremonial property may transfer to the new unitary authority without arrangements being in place for its continued local use and custody. This will be mitigated by making an

early request for Charter Trustees and preparing an inventory of relevant property.

7.3 Financial and administrative risks will be managed by developing a proportionate operating model and bringing forward further proposals once the future structure, membership and support requirements are clearer.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background Papers

- *The Charter Trustees Regulations 2009*
- *The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007*
- *Report: Local Government Reorganisation: Future Local Governance in Redditch, Electoral Matters Committee, 21 October 2025*

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL **29 June 2026**

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Craig Warhurst, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance	
Assistant Director	Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services	
Financial Services	Deb Goodall, Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services	
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings – Principal Solicitor - Governance	16/06/26

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council

29th June 2026

Redditch Borough Local Plan – Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation, Local Plan Timetable and Scoping Consultation

Relevant Cabinet Member		Councillor Matt Dormer
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Ruth Bamford
Report Author Mike Dunphy	Job Title: Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager email: m.dunphy@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 81325	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		1. Economy, Regeneration & Prosperity 2. Green, Clean & Safe 3. 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

Council is asked to RESOLVE that

1. The Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation, attached at Appendix A, be approved.

2.The Local Plan timetable attached at Appendix B, be approved.

3. The Local Plan Scoping Report at Appendix C, be approved

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Nationally there has been a change and there is a new system for plan making in the UK. For Redditch Borough Council this means that a new plan needs to be prepared under the new system. The previous progress made on the Redditch Borough Local Plan (that was being prepared under the old system), most notably the information obtained from consultation on the Issues and Options over the Summer of 2025, will be rolled forward into the new plan making system. This work will be used to help inform the decisions taken as the Council prepares a new draft plan.

2.2 Towards the end of last year work with respect to the above national changes in the planning regulations progressed, and in March 2026 the

Government formally introduced the new 30+4 plan making system. This system, in conjunction with changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), are intended to streamline plan-making to allow for quicker adoption of Local Plans, therefore increasing the delivery of housing and economic development across the country.

2.3 The purpose of this report is to outline the initial processes required to begin plan preparation under the new system, allowing the progression of the new Redditch Borough Local Plan to adoption as quickly as possible.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation

3.1 Appendix A contains a Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation (the Notice). As can be seen, this notice contains the information required by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 (the regulations). Publication of this notice is a requirement to begin the 4 month 'scoping' element of the new process before the 30-month process formally begins. This notice is a procedural step and well defined in the regulations. The Notice needs to be agreed before December 2026. The Council has received funding dependant on the Notice being published before the end of June 2026.

Local Plan Timetable

3.2 Appendix B contains a new timetable for the completion of the Redditch Borough Local Plan under the new 30+4 process. This timetable has been reproduced in a simplified table below. The requirement for the publication of a Local Plan timetable and its contents is set out in the regulations.

Local plan event	Start date	End date
1) Publish local plan timetable under regulation 8	29th June 2026	
2) Publish notice of intention to commence local plan preparation under regulation 19(1)	29th June 2026	
3) Publish notice of scoping consultation under regulation 20(1)(b)	3rd July 2026	

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council

29th June 2026

4) Scoping consultation under regulation 20	3rd July – 14th August 2026	
5) Gateway 1: Publish Gateway 1 self-assessment summary under regulation 21(3)	October 2026	
6) Publish summary of scoping consultation under regulation 22	October 2026	
7) Publish notice of local plan content and evidence consultation under regulation 23(1)(a)	June 2027	
8) Consultation on the proposed local plan content and evidence (not less than six weeks) under regulation 23	June 2027	July/August 2027
9) Publish summary of consultation on the proposed local plan content and evidence under regulation 24	October 2027	
10) Gateway 2: observations and advice will be sought under section 15CA(3) of the Act in accordance with regulation 26	October 2027	
11) Publish Gateway 2 observations and advice in accordance with section 15CA(5) of the Act and regulation 26(5)	November/December 2027	
12) Publish notice of proposed local plan consultation under regulation 27(1)(a)	March 2028	
13) Consultation on the proposed local plan (not less than eight weeks) under regulation 27	March 2028	April/May 2028
14) Publish summary of consultation on the proposed local plan under regulation 30	August/September 2028	
15) Gateway 3: observations and advice will be sought under section 15CA(3) of the Act in accordance with regulation 31	August/September 2028	
16) Publish Gateway 3 observations and advice in accordance with section 15CA(5) of the Act and regulation 31(5)	September/October 2028	
17) Submit the proposed local plan for independent examination under section 15D(1) of the Act	October 2028	

18) Publish the examiner's recommendations and reasons in accordance with section 15D(13) of the Act and regulation 37.	TBC
19) Adoption of the local plan under section 15EA of the Act	April 2029

3.3 As can be seen from the timetable above, the intention is to publish the notice and the timetable formally after the Council meeting, this provides for a robust timetable to be set, shows the Council's commitment to plan making in line with the governments aspirations, and will also allow for £108k of additional funding to be secured. The Scoping consultation will follow a few days later with consultation commencing on the 3rd July. The details of this report has previously been presented to the Planning Advisory Panel.

Scoping Consultation

3.4 The proposed Scoping report can be seen at Appendix C. As opposed to the detailed guidance and regulations on the notice and the timetable, the requirements of exactly what a scoping consultation is are not set out explicitly. The guidance is repeated below:

"This consultation stage provides the local community and other key stakeholders with the opportunity to have their say at the very start of the plan-making process. You must ask for views on:

- *what to include in the local plan*
- *how to approach future local plan engagement*
- *any other matters that you want to consult on*

You must run your scoping consultation after you have given notice of intention to commence plan-making. This consultation should last for at least 21 days and must finish before you publish your Gateway 1 self-assessment summary. You should use the feedback from the scoping consultation to inform your community engagement strategy.
For this consultation, you must invite representations from the:

- *general consultation bodies you consider appropriate*
- *specific consultation bodies you consider may have an interest in the preparation of the local plan*

You do not have to invite anyone else, but anyone can make representations at this stage."

3.5 The limited regulations only require the scoping document to addresses the following issues:

- What the Council should include in a Local Plan,
- How you would like the Council to consult you during the preparation of the Local Plan.

As such as can be seen at appendix C, the scoping document does not contain or set a spatial strategy or contain details on any future policy or site allocations. The scoping document makes it clear, that people who have already responded to the issues and options do not need to repeat their comments unless they have more to add, previous comments will still be taken into account in the preparation of the plan under the new system. It will also be stressed that there will be further opportunities to comment on detailed policies and possible site allocations as the new plan progresses, as per the stages outlined below.

3.6 As can be seen from above, the purpose of the scoping document is to seek stakeholder views at the outset of the plan-making process. This includes, but is not limited to, local residents, parish councils, infrastructure providers, statutory agencies, local businesses, developers and agents. As the Council has already sought the views via the issues and options local plan consultation, the scoping document will be drafted to ensure the views relevant to the scope of the plan that have already been expressed are reflected in the document.

3.7 It is proposed that the Scoping consultation will be undertaken between 3rd July – 14th August. The Council website will host all of the relevant information, as well as the documents being placed in key places such as the libraries. A comms strategy is also being developed to make sure the information is shared widely. Responses will be able to be received via the survey on the Councils website and also via email and letters

Future Local Plan Stages

3.8 The 'plan content and evidence' stage (local plan event number 8 in the table above) of the system has been widely interpreted by the planning profession as being the first significant draft of the Local Plan. The timetable indicates that the Council will consult on the draft plan in the summer of 2027. This will allow for all the responses from the previous issues and options consultation, the additional evidence such

as the revised Green Belt review to be fed into this draft plan, and help develop a draft infrastructure plan to be published alongside it as part of the consultation. Following this consultation there will be a gateway assessment carried out by an assessor appointed by the planning inspectorate, which will consider issues the plan may be facing at this stage, and if necessary, suggest ways in which any issues may be overcome.

3.9 The 'proposed local plan' stage (event 13 in the table above) is in effect the submission plan which the Council would like to present to the inspector. This stage has been timetabled for Spring 2028. This is to allow for enough time to respond to the previous stages, and also for a third gateway check on the plan to be carried out by the planning inspectorate prior to formal submission.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Local Plan process has a budget of £823k, financed as follows:

4.2 An initial £885k has been identified in reserves from 2026/27 onwards to fund the evidence base development, Examination in Public costs and any associated legal fees.

4.3 Funding of £70k has been awarded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to progress the Green Belt Assessment. An additional £108k has been awarded by MHCLG to help progress the Local Plan. To release the £108k the following requirements must be met by the Council:

- Publish a Notice of Intention to commence Local Plan preparation by 30th June 2026; and
- Publish Gateway 1 self-assessment by 31st October 2026.

4.4 The total available budget is £823k is proposed to be spent as per the table below.

Evidence base costs RBC	£660k
Legal Fees	£125k
Examination costs	£100k
MHCLG Green Belt Review	£70k
MHCLG Plan Making	£108k

Total Local Plan Spend	£1,063,000

4.5 Staffing resource comes from existing posts within the establishment supplemented by three additional posts There is currently one vacancy within the establishment, and additional posts, are currently in the process being recruited to.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The new plan making system is now set out in the following regulations The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

6.1 In June 2025, MHCLG wrote to Chief Executives of the Worcestershire Councils with an update on Local Government Reorganisation. Included within that letter is the following statement:

'The Government also recognises that developing proposals could distract councils from their essential day-to-day activities. However, residents and businesses depend on councils to deliver crucial services and to continue the efforts needed to establish successful new unitary councils. This is particularly important for advancing local plans to allocate land for new homes. As mentioned in the invitation letters, the Government expects local planning councils to work towards adopting an up-to-date local plan as soon as possible. Local Government Reorganisation should not hinder this vital work, nor should the introduction of the new legal framework for local plan-making later this year or our strategic planning reforms. Significant financial support has already been provided to eligible councils to aid in plan-making, and we encourage councils to utilise additional support available through the Local Government Association's Planning Advisory Service.'

6.2 The position expressed above remains unchanged, plan-making must continue irrespective of the Local Government Reorganisation work.

Relevant Council Priority

6.3 The Redditch Borough Local Plan is relevant to the following Council priorities:

1. Economy, Regeneration & Prosperity

2. Green, Clean & Safe

3. Community & Housing

Climate Change Implications

6.4 The Redditch Borough Local Plan will have significant implications for climate change, shaping the location and nature of new housing, employment, and infrastructure development.

Community Impact Implications

6.6 The approval of the Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation and Local Plan Timetable will provide the communities across Redditch Borough with a valuable update on how the Redditch Borough Local Plan will be progressed. The final adopted local plan will have policies and allocations which address high quality design, provide for safer communities and help to address wider health and wellbeing by providing communities facilities and accessible open space.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.7 The consultation process is open to all to comment.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 The Redditch Borough Local Plan progress is being monitored via the Council's Corporate Risk Register.

7.2 The risk of not progressing a new Local Plan has been discussed at length in many forums. Whilst the Council does not have to begin plan-making under the new system until December 2026, there is no need to delay the initial processes under the new system until then. MHCLG has made it very clear that it expects plan-making to continue at pace and will not be afraid to intervene if plan-making does not progress.

7.3 Plan-making is strongly encouraged without delay. It suggests that the Council is committed to plan-making. Whilst simply progressing the earlier stages of plan-making does not give the control an adopted Local Plan gives, progressing a Local Plan as identified by this report does help to provide evidence that the plan is progressing and shows a pathway to adopting a plan. This is useful information to use in other settings such as development management.

7.4 In addition, should the notice and timetable publication and the scoping consultation not take place as described in this report, then the additional funding secured will have to be returned to the Government.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix A Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation
Appendix B Local Plan Timetable
Appendix C Local Plan Scoping Report.

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Matt Dormer	16.06.26
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Guy Revans /Ruth Bamford	16.06.26
Financial Services	James Walton	16.06.26
Legal Services	Claire Felton	16.06.26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)		

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1 Redditch Borough Local Plan – Notice of intention to commence local plan preparation

Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 – Part 4, Regulation 19

1.1 Redditch Borough Council hereby gives notice on 29th June 2026 of its intention to commence local plan preparation on the 'Redditch Borough Local Plan' (the title by which the local planning authority will refer to the local plan) in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026.

1.2 This notice provides the public and other stakeholders advance notice of plan-making and details so that they understand when and how they can get involved in preparing the Local Plan.

1.3 The Redditch Borough Local Plan will be produced as a new style local plan under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. The Plan will be prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, which came into force on 25th March 2026, and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). In addition, the Plan will respond to the changes to the planning system through the proposed updates to the NPPF, published for consultation in December 2025.

1.4 In light of preparing the Local Plan under the new plan-making system, the Plan will be prepared and adopted within 30 months once it passes through Gateway 1. In line with the Regulations, the Council will allow a minimum of 4 months from the date of this Notice before formally commencing the 30-month plan preparation process and pass through Gateway 1. It is anticipated that formal commencement of the 30-month plan preparation process will begin in October 2026.

1.5 The Redditch Borough Local Plan will only cover local plan matters. It will not cover minerals and waste as Worcestershire County Council is responsible for the preparation of planning policy for minerals and waste development in Worcestershire.

1.6 The work to-date on the emerging Redditch Borough Local Plan, including the work and comments received from the Issues and Options consultation between 22nd May and 3rd July 2025, will feed into the preparation of the Plan under the new plan-making system. Although the Council has carried out a regulation 18 statutory consultation under the legacy plan-making system, the legal requirements of the new system requires the Council to follow the requirements of the new system from start to finish. This does not mean that we cannot use the work already undertaken in the legacy plan-making system.

1.7 The geographical area of the Redditch Borough Local Plan will cover the entirety of the administrative area of Redditch Borough Council only (ONS Code – E07000236), as shown in Figure 1 below. The Council is not proposing to prepare a joint local plan with another local planning authority.

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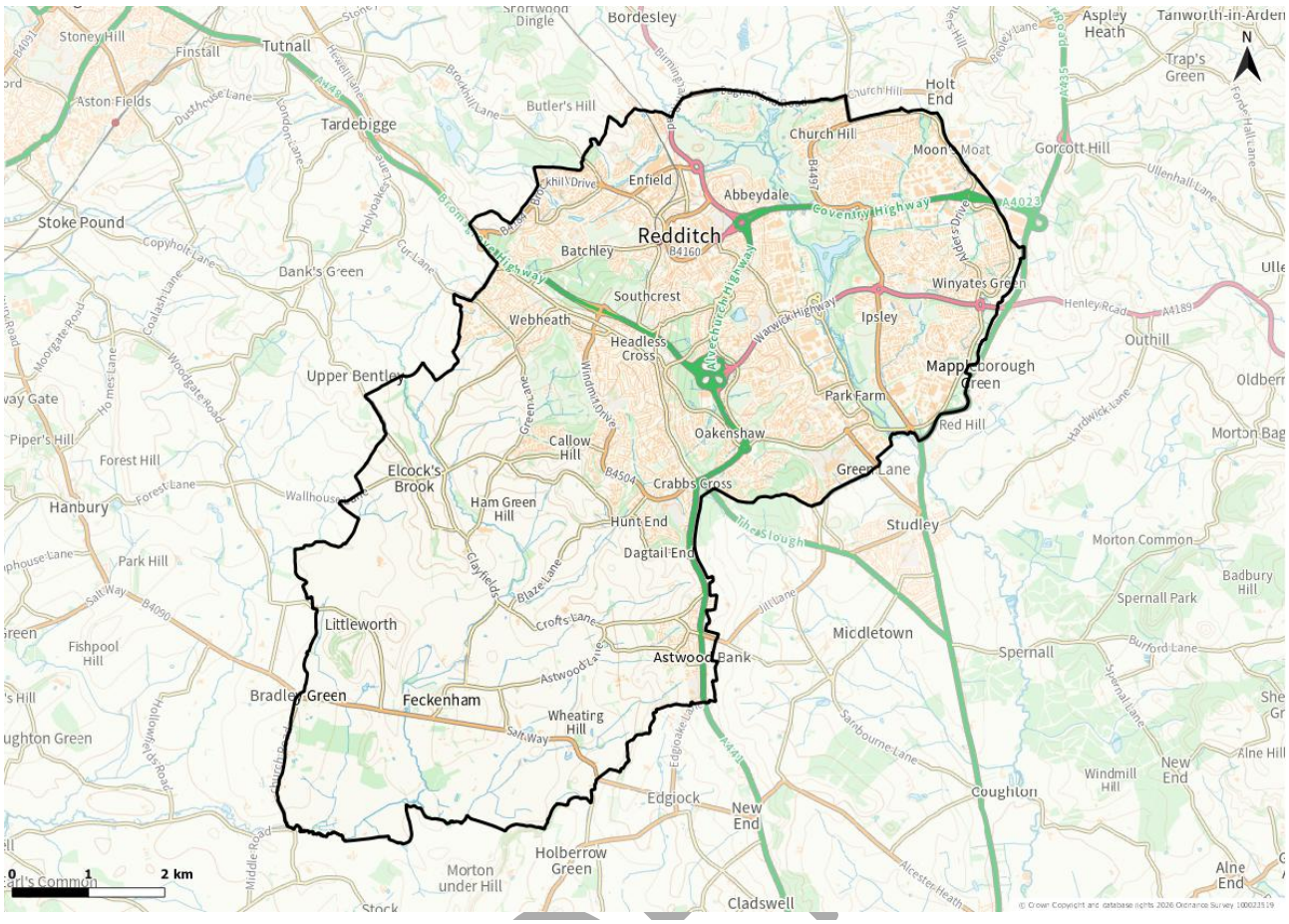


Figure 1: Redditch Borough Council Boundary

1.8 The published Local Plan timetable for the preparation of the Local Plan can be found on our website, which includes details of where to inspect it at the Council's Customer Services Centre at 5 George Walk, Kingfisher Shopping Centre/Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square* and in Borough libraries during respective opening hours – INSERT WEBLINK.

2 Finding out more

2.1 You can find out more about the emerging Local Plan on our website at – INSERT WEBLINK.

2.2 The Notice to Commence is available for inspection at the Council's Customer Services Centre at 5 George Walk, Kingfisher Shopping Centre during office hours until the necessary works at the Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square are complete*. It will then be made available for inspection during office hours at the Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square. Additionally, the Notice to Commence is available for inspection at libraries across the Borough (Redditch Library and Woodrow Library) during their respective opening hours. Details and opening times of the libraries can be found online at – https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/libraries/find-library?field_district=647&field_type_of_library=All

**The specific date of the movement of the notice of intention to commence local plan preparation from 5 George Walk to the Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square will be subject to the completion of necessary works at the Town Hall*

2.3 If you have any questions or would like further information, you can contact the Council's Strategic Planning team in the following ways:

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By email: Redditchplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

By telephone: 01527 64252

By post: Strategic Planning, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH.

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Redditch Borough Council – Draft Local Plan Timetable

1 Introduction

1.1 The Local Plan timetable sets out the anticipated key milestone dates for the preparation and adoption of the new Redditch Borough Local Plan to be prepared by Redditch Borough Council. The timetable outlines the opportunities for public and stakeholder engagement. The Local Plan timetable has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

1.2 The Local Plan timetable came into effect on 29th June 2026 and replaces the Council's Local Development Scheme published in February 2025. The Council published its notice of intention to commence local plan preparation in accordance with regulation 19(1) of the above regulations on 29th June 2026, details of which is available on our website – INSERT WEBLINK.

1.3 The Redditch Borough Local Plan will only cover local plan matters. It will not cover minerals and waste as Worcestershire County Council is responsible for the preparation of planning policy for minerals and waste development in Worcestershire.

1.4 The work to-date on the emerging Redditch Borough Local Plan, including the work and comments received from the Issues and Options consultation between 22nd May and 3rd July 2025, will feed into the preparation of the Plan under the new plan-making system. Although the Council has carried out a regulation 18 statutory consultation under the legacy plan-making system, the legal requirements of the new system requires the Council to follow the requirements of the new system from start to finish. This does not mean that we cannot use the work already undertaken on the legacy plan-making system.

2 Scope of the Redditch Borough Local Plan

2.1 The Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 (2011–2030) was formally adopted by Redditch Borough Council in January 2017. This follows an independent examination in public and receipt of the Inspector's Report into the examination of the Plan, concluding that the Plan was judged to have been found 'sound'.

2.2 The Council is now in the process of reviewing and replacing the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 (2011–2030) which will set out a vision and strategy for where new housing, employment and other development alongside supporting infrastructure will take place up to the end of the plan period (2044). The Plan will also contain local policies that are not covered by the national decision-making policies to be contained in the forthcoming National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Together, these policies will be used to determine planning applications, guiding what can be built, where, and how. The scope and content of the Local Plan will be reviewed following the scoping consultation and the subsequent local plan content and evidence base consultation.

2.3 The emerging Redditch Borough Local Plan will be produced as a new style local plan under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. The Plan will be prepared in accordance with the

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Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, which came into force on 25th March 2026, and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). In addition, the Plan will respond to the changes to the planning system through the proposed updates to the NPPF, published for consultation in December 2025. In light of preparing the Local Plan under the new plan-making system, the Plan will be prepared and adopted within 30 months once it passes through Gateway 1.

2.4 The geographical area of the Redditch Borough Local Plan will cover the entirety of the administrative area of Redditch Borough Council only (ONS Code – E07000236), as detailed in the notice of intention to commence local plan preparation – INSERT WEBLINK. The Council is not proposing to prepare a joint local plan with another local planning authority.

2.5 When the Council confirms whether it will be preparing any supplementary plans, these will be included in an update to the Local Plan timetable. For each supplementary plan, the subject matter and geographical area, site or sites that each of those supplementary plans is to relate to will be confirmed.

2.6 The Council must ensure that for every part of its area, the development plan includes requirements with respect to design that relates to development, or development of a particular description, which the authority considers should be met for planning permission for the development to be granted. The Council will ensure that the development plan includes requirements with respect to design to meet section 15F of the Act.

3 Timetable for the preparation of the new Redditch Borough Local Plan

3.1 An overview of the new plan-making process is provided in Figure 1 below.

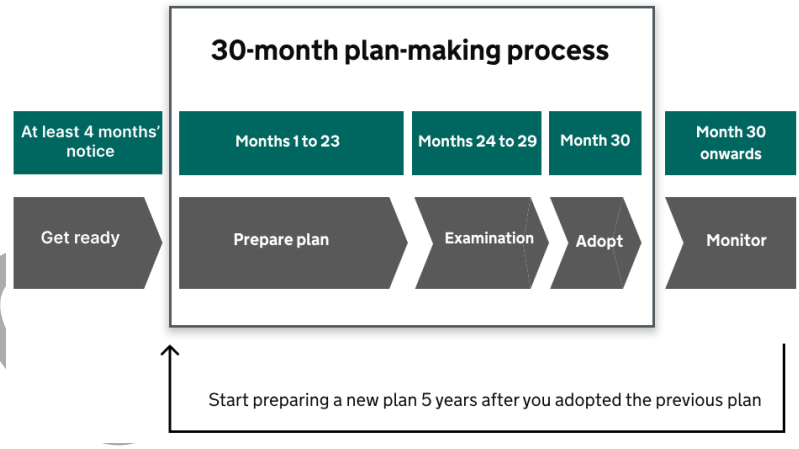


Figure 1: Illustration of the main stages and timings in the 30-month process (Source: GOV.UK https://www.gov.uk/guidance/30-month-local-plan-process-an-overview)

3.2 The first stage is to publish the local plan timetable and notice of commencement of plan-making. The notice is a minimum 4 months' notice before formally preparing the Local Plan and the start of the 30-month period to adopt the Local Plan. The commencement of the 30-month period starts when the Council passes through Gateway 1 (publication of the self-assessment summary).

3.3 The new local plan-making system allows for three consultations; a scoping consultation (before the 30-month formal process begins); proposed local plan content and evidence

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consultation; and finally, the proposed local plan consultation (prior to submission of the proposed local plan for independent examination).

3.4 The anticipated key milestone dates for the preparation and adoption of the Redditch Borough Local Plan are shown in Table 1 below. The timetable will be updated as soon as is reasonably practicable once the relevant event has occurred or consultation has commenced.

Table 1: Local Plan timetable for the Redditch Borough Local Plan

Local plan event	Start date	End date
1) Publish local plan timetable under regulation 8	29th June 2026	
2) Publish notice of intention to commence local plan preparation under regulation 19(1)	29th June 2026	
3) Publish notice of scoping consultation under regulation 20(1)(b)	3rd July 2026	
4) Scoping consultation under regulation 20	3rd July – 14th August 2026	
5) Gateway 1: Publish Gateway 1 self-assessment summary under regulation 21(3)	October 2026	
6) Publish summary of scoping consultation under regulation 22	October 2026	
7) Publish notice of local plan content and evidence consultation under regulation 23(1)(a)	June 2027	
8) Consultation on the proposed local plan content and evidence (not less than six weeks) under regulation 23	June 2027	July/August 2027
9) Publish summary of consultation on the proposed local plan content and evidence under regulation 24	October 2027	
10) Gateway 2: observations and advice will be sought under section 15CA(3) of the Act in accordance with regulation 26	October 2027	
11) Publish Gateway 2 observations and advice in accordance with section 15CA(5) of the Act and regulation 26(5)	November/December 2027	
12) Publish notice of proposed local plan consultation under regulation 27(1)(a)	March 2028	
13) Consultation on the proposed local plan (not less than eight weeks) under regulation 27	March 2028	April/May 2028
14) Publish summary of consultation on the proposed local plan under regulation 30	August/September 2028	
15) Gateway 3: observations and advice will be sought under section 15CA(3) of the Act in accordance with regulation 31	August/September 2028	
16) Publish Gateway 3 observations and advice in accordance with section 15CA(5) of the Act and regulation 31(5)	September/October 2028	

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17) Submit the proposed local plan for independent examination under section 15D(1) of the Act	October 2028
18) Publish the examiner's recommendations and reasons in accordance with section 15D(13) of the Act and regulation 37.	TBC
19) Adoption of the local plan under section 15EA of the Act	April 2029

*Reference to a specific regulation means the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026

**Reference to "the Act" means the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)

4 Monitoring and updating of the Local Plan timetable

4.1 The Council will review the Local Plan timetable monthly from the date it came into effect and update it as necessary and as soon as is reasonably practicable when any changes are required.

4.2 The Council will also update the Local Plan timetable, as necessary and as soon as is reasonably practicable, including if any of the following events happen:

- Any further consultations that the Council decides to hold or if further observations and advice will be sought at Gateway 3 as necessary.
- Any key examination related events as necessary (main modifications consultation or pause of examination).
- If the Local Plan is withdrawn under section 15E of the Act or revoked under section 15G of the Act.
- Details of any supplementary plans that the Council decides to prepare.

4.3 A schedule of the amendments to the Local Plan timetable are recorded in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Schedule of amendments to the Local Plan timetable

Amendment No.	Date	Schedule of amendments

5 Finding out more

5.1 You can find out more about the emerging Local Plan on our website at – INSERT WEBLINK.

5.2 The Local Plan timetable is available for inspection at the Council's Customer Services Centre at 5 George Walk, Kingfisher Shopping Centre during office hours until the necessary works at the Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square are complete*. It will then be made available for inspection during office hours at the Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square. Additionally, the Local Plan timetable is available for inspection at libraries across the Borough (Redditch Library and Woodrow Library) during their respective opening hours. Details and opening times of the

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libraries can be found online at – https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/libraries/find-library?field_district=647&field_type_of_library=All

**The specific date of the movement of the Local Plan timetable from 5 George Walk to the Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square will be subject to the completion of necessary works at the Town Hall*

5.3 If you have any questions or would like further information, you can contact the Council's Strategic Planning team in the following ways:

By email: Redditchplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

By telephone: 01527 64252

By post: Strategic Planning, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH.

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Redditch Borough Local Plan – Scoping Document (July 2026)

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Foreword

Early last summer we undertook a six-week consultation period to listen to you and gather your views on the Issues and Options across Redditch. The consultation document set out what we thought the issues were in Redditch Borough and what we would need to put into a Local Plan to address them. The purpose of the consultation was to check in with residents, businesses, statutory consultees and other stakeholders to ensure we were on the right lines with our thought process. We received some useful comments from you, which were invaluable which will inform our Local Plan as it evolves through the plan-making process.

Since that time, rather than progress the Local Plan, we need to revisit some of the work we've undertaken to ensure we can align ourselves with the Government's new plan-making process. We have to ask specific questions of you in order to proceed through the new system, which has formed the focus of this document.

Whilst this document covers some of the same matters that we consulted on last year, it is imperative that we robustly align to the new system and to meet the timetabled requirements of the new system. The comments you took time to send us last year are still pertinent but you may wish to comment again in case you feel that your thoughts or any issues have changed over the past 12 months.

Thank you for joining us on this stage of our local plan-making journey and we invite you to read on further and welcome your input on the questions within this document, which will help us to fully comply with our transition from the old plan-making process into the new.

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Section 1 - Introduction, overview of plan-making to date and how to respond

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Redditch Borough Council is in the process of reviewing and replacing the adopted Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 (2011–2030, adopted January 2017). The Council has held one consultation to date relating to the new Redditch Borough Local Plan. An Issues and Options consultation along with a Call for Sites exercise was undertaken between 22nd May and 3rd July 2025.

1.1.2 The forthcoming Redditch Borough Local Plan will be developed as a new-style local plan in line with the Levelling-up Regeneration Act 2023. It will be prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, which came into effect on 25th March 2026, and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). The Local Plan will also reflect the forthcoming proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). As the Plan is being produced under the new plan-making system, it will be prepared and adopted within 30 months once it passes through Gateway 1.

1.1.3 It is recognised that the Council has undertaken a Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation under the legacy plan-making system. The work to date, including the responses received, will influence the preparation of the Local Plan under the new plan-making system. The requirements of the new system requires the Council to follow the new regulations from start to finish. However, this does not preclude the use of work already completed under the previous, legacy plan-making system. Responses to this consultation should be limited to the purposes of this scoping consultation and the questions set out in this document. This consultation does not address site-specific matters.

1.1.4 The scoping consultation marks the first consultation in preparing the Local Plan under the new plan-making system. At this stage, the Council is required to invite representations on matters relevant to the preparation of the Local Plan, including what the Plan should contain, and the methods by which stakeholders should be engaged in its development. The scoping consultation is open for comments from Friday 3rd July to 5pm on Friday 14th August 2026 (consultation responses received after the deadline will not be considered).

1.1.5 The scoping consultation follows the publication of the Local Plan timetable and the notice of intention to commence local plan preparation on 29th June 2026, both of which are available to view on the Council's website – INSERT WEBLINK.

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1.2 Purpose of a local plan and why we need a new local plan

1.2.1 The Local Plan's purpose is to establish a clear, plan-based framework to guide how land is used and developed in Redditch Borough over a typical period of 15–20 years. Its main objectives are as follows:

- Sets the vision and strategy for development
- Allocates land for development
- Helps guide decision-making
- Promotes sustainable development and sets the approach to protecting and enhancing the environment
- Provides certainty for communities and developers
- Enables infrastructure delivery and coordination

1.2.2 The Redditch Borough Local Plan will only cover local plan matters. It will not plan for minerals and waste. Worcestershire County Council is responsible for the preparation of planning policy for minerals and waste development in Worcestershire.

1.2.3 The adopted Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 is nearing the end of its plan period (2030). Since we adopted the Local Plan, the NPPF has stipulated that local plans should be reviewed at least once every five years. The review should take into account changing circumstances affecting the area and relevant changes in national policy. If the area's local housing need figure has changed significantly it is expected that the relevant strategic policies in the local plan will need updating (NPPF, paragraph 34). Given the Council's Plan is nearing the end of its plan period and significant changes in national policy, including the revised standard method for calculating local housing need, a review of the adopted Local Plan is not appropriate. It is also a requirement that Plans look ahead for a minimum of 15 years from adoption, therefore we need to consider development requirements beyond the 2030 Plan period. Therefore, the Council is preparing a new Local Plan rather than just reviewing the adopted Local Plan.

1.3 Overview of new plan-making system

1.3.1 A key Government ambition is to accelerate the adoption of local plans to achieve universal national plan coverage, ensuring they play a positive role in delivering the Government's "Plan for Change" target of building 1.5 million new homes in England by the end of the current Parliament.

1.3.2 In March 2026, the Government introduced new plan-making regulations – the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 – to implement the reforms set out in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. These regulations are intended to create a faster, more streamlined, and increasingly digital plan-making system. Under the regulations, local planning authorities are required to adopt a local plan within 30 months of passing through Gateway 1 (publication of the self-assessment summary).

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1.3.3 An overview of the new-plan making process is provided in Figures 1 and 2 below.



Figure 1: Illustration of the main stages and timings in the 30-month process (Source: GOV.UK https://www.gov.uk/guidance/30-month-local-plan-process-an-overview)

Publish local plan timetable	The timetable must be kept up-to-date and set out the anticipated and actual dates for key plan-making stages.
Publish notice of intention to commence local plan preparation	Publication of notice which commences a minimum 4-month notice period so that stakeholders are aware plan-making is beginning.
Scoping consultation	Inviting feedback from stakeholders on how to engage with them and what the plan should contain.
Gateway 1: self-assessment of readiness	Publication of a document setting out details of how you have got ready for plan-making, marking formal commencement of plan-making for the purposes of the 30-month timeframe.
Consultation: proposed local plan content and evidence	Minimum 6-week consultation on the proposed local plan content and evidence, including a draft vision.
Gateway 2	Seeking observations and advice from PINS to support the early resolution of potential soundness issues and progress towards the 'prescribed requirements'.
Consultation: proposed local plan	Minimum 8-week consultation on the proposed local plan and its supporting documents.
Gateway 3	Testing if the proposed local plan has met the 'prescribed requirements' and can proceed to examination.
Examination	Examination of the local plan against the tests of soundness, to be set out in national policy.
Adoption	Publication of the local plan and adoption statement.

Figure 2: Overview of the new local plan-making process (Source: GOV.UK https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-making-regulations-explainer/plan-making-regulations-explainer)

1.3.4 Before the formal 30-month process begins, there is a preparatory getting ready phase. This lasts for a minimum of four months and requires local planning authorities to publish a local plan timetable, publish a notice of intention to commence local plan preparation and carry out a scoping consultation (further details

of which are provided in section 1.7). Authorities then prepare and publish their Gateway 1 self-assessment summary.

1.3.5 The publication of the Gateway 1 self-assessment summary marks the start of the formal 30-month period during which the local plan is prepared, independently examined and ultimately adopted. Within the new plan-making framework, there are two further consultation stages: the proposed local plan content and evidence consultation, followed by the proposed local plan consultation which takes place prior to submission for independent examination.

1.3.6 The new system also includes two further Gateway stages, during which the local plan is reviewed during the preparation of the plan by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. At Gateway 2, following the proposed local plan content and evidence consultation, observations and advice is sought to ensure the plan is progressing appropriately. At Gateway 3, following the proposed local plan consultation and prior to independent examination, observations and advice is sought to confirm the plan is ready for submission for independent examination. If at examination the local plan is found to be “sound” and recommended for adoption, the local planning authority may proceed to adopt it.

1.4 Overview of plan-making to date

1.4.1 As part of our review of the adopted Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4, we undertook an Issues and Options consultation and Call for Sites exercise between 22nd May and 3rd July 2025. The purpose of the Issues and Options consultation was to gather comments on the draft issues and options for the Local Plan to address. Views were sought on a range of topics including:

- Vision and key issues for Redditch
- Possible growth options
- Housing
- Economy and employment land
- Town centre and local centres
- Infrastructure
- Natural and historic environments
- Climate change
- Design coding

1.4.2 At the same time, we put out a Call for Sites request for developers and landowners to submit potential development sites, for a variety of uses, to us that they wish to be considered for allocation in the emerging Local Plan.

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1.4.3 The responses received to the consultation are vital and will help shape the Local Plan at later stages.

1.5 Overview of Spatial Development Strategies

1.5.1 The English Devolution White Paper, published in December 2024, sets out the Government's intention to reinstate mandatory strategic planning through the preparation of sub-regional Spatial Development Strategies (SDSs) across England. The Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 includes provisions placing a duty on strategic planning authorities – such as strategic planning boards, combined authorities, combined county authorities, upper-tier county councils, and unitary authorities – to prepare a SDS for their area. For clarity, Redditch Borough Council is not a strategic planning authority.

1.5.2 SDSs are high-level spatial plans looking at least 20 years ahead. They will set the framework for local plans and may apportion housing need and other uses to individual local planning authorities in the sub-region, distribute housing across broad locations, specify infrastructure provision (e.g. transport, utilities and social infrastructure) of strategic importance for supporting development, mitigating/adapting to climate change and promoting the economic, social and environmental well-being of that area. SDSs can also identify the general extent of Green Belt boundaries and identify broad locations for nature conservation and habitat enhancement. It is not a large-scale local plan; it cannot be site-specific or allocate sites. The site-specific role is for local plans which must be in general conformity with the SDS.

1.5.3 Secondary legislation is needed to bring the strategic planning system into operation and is expected to be laid before Parliament ahead of the summer recess. This will trigger the formal duty to prepare a SDS.

1.5.4 SDS geographies will not be formally determined until the relevant secondary legislation has been laid before Parliament. Between 12th February and 26th March 2026, the Government consulted on potential areas for preparing SDSs. No specific SDS geography was proposed for Worcestershire; instead, the consultation invited suggestions on the appropriate geography. Consequently, the geography and timescale for the SDS affecting Redditch borough remains unclear at this time. However, this uncertainty must not hinder progress on preparing the Local Plan.

1.6 Overview of anticipated forthcoming changes to the NPPF

1.6.1 On 16th December 2025, the Government published a consultation on a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Building on earlier reforms and wider changes to the planning system, the proposals represent a more substantial and definitive update to national planning policy. The Government intends to introduce national decision-making policies, resulting in a more rules-based approach within

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the Framework. These proposed changes aim to make planning policy clearer and easier to apply, support the preparation of faster and more streamlined local plans, and provide stronger direction for decision-making to facilitate appropriate housing and employment development.

1.6.2 The revised NPPF proposes substantial structural changes, introducing separate sets of policies for plan-making and decision-making. The objectives are to ensure that national planning policy is clear, accessible, and easy to understand; to establish a consistent suite of national policies that are not duplicated or varied in local plans, thereby speeding up plan preparation and avoiding differing standards across the country; and to create a more rules-based and certain policy framework to support timely and consistent decision-making.

1.6.3 The NPPF retains individual chapters covering specific topics (see section 5 for further detail). It also introduces substantive reforms aimed at delivering more homes in appropriate locations and strengthening support for commercial development. These include a permanent presumption in favour of suitably located development, a focus on building homes around rail stations, encouraging greater urban and suburban densification, supporting small and medium-sized sites, boosting local and regional economies, and protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

1.6.4 The final revised NPPF is expected be published in the summer (2026).

1.7 Purpose of the scoping consultation and how to respond

1.7.1 The purpose of the scoping consultation is to allow consultation bodies, the public and other stakeholders the opportunity to have their say as to what the Local Plan should contain and what the consultation and engagement strategy should be as we progress the Local Plan through future consultations to adoption, in accordance with Regulation 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026.

1.7.2 At this scoping stage, we are seeking views on the key priorities and challenges facing the Borough; the vision for the Local Plan; the potential scope of locally specific topic-based policies; the evidence base needed to support the Plan; and the proposed consultation and engagement strategy. The following sections explore these matters in more detail. **Some of the sections include questions, highlighted in green boxes, to help guide your responses and enable the Council to gather meaningful feedback as the Local Plan progresses. Please respond only to the questions provided. Any submissions to the consultation that don't relate directly to the scoping consultation or questions asked will not be considered.**

1.7.3 The scoping consultation is concerned with establishing the scope and parameters of the Local Plan, rather than considering specific proposals such as the identification of

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development sites or the drafting of planning policies. Opportunities to comment on these matters will be provided through future consultation stages.

1.7.4 Responses, including the request to be notified at a specified time*, must be submitted in writing by **5pm on Friday 14th August 2026** in one of the following ways:

- Online – Smart Survey link from our website
- By email – Redditchplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
- By post – Strategic Planning, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH.

Consultation responses received after the deadline will not be considered.

*Responses may be accompanied by a request to be notified at a specified address when one or more of the following steps occur:

Table 1: Stages where stakeholders can be notified if requested

i.	Consultation on proposed Local Plan content and evidence (Regulation 23).
ii.	Publication of observations or advice received on the Local Plan from a person appointed by the Secretary of State (Section 15CA of the Act).
iii.	Consultation on the proposed Local Plan submission documents (Regulation 27).
iv.	Submission of the proposed Local Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination (Section 15D of the Act).
v.	Publication of the date, time, and place of the examination hearing and the name of the examiner (Regulation 35).
vi.	Decision of the examiner that the examination is to be paused for further work to be carried out (Sections 15D and 15DA of the Act).
vii.	Publication of the document and any evidence which is sent to the examiner (Section 15DA of the Act).
viii.	Publication of the recommendations and reasons of the examiner received (Section 15D or Section 15DA of the Act).

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ix.	Adoption or approval of the Local Plan (Part 2 of the Act).

If you have requested to be notified when one or more of the above steps occur, or you previously signed up to be included on our consultation database and no longer wish to be notified, please contact the Strategic Planning team by email at Redditchplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk.

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Section 2 - Borough profile

2.1 Borough overview

2.1.1 Redditch Borough is located in North Worcestershire, around 15 miles south of Birmingham. The Borough consists of Redditch town itself in the north, alongside the villages of Astwood Bank and Feckenham as well as several hamlets. The Borough covers an area of 5,435 hectares (13,430 acres). Redditch town contains approximately 93% of the population and accounts for 57% of the Borough's land including Arrow Valley Country Park which splits the town. Redditch town is surrounded by the West Midlands Green Belt, and the Borough is situated towards the southern edge of the wider Green Belt boundary. Approximately 33% of the land within the Borough is designated Green Belt, which extends from the south of the town to the B4090. The ~10% of the Borough south of the B4090 is designated as Open Countryside. The borough is spanned by multiple dual carriageways as well as bus and rail connections into Birmingham City Centre.

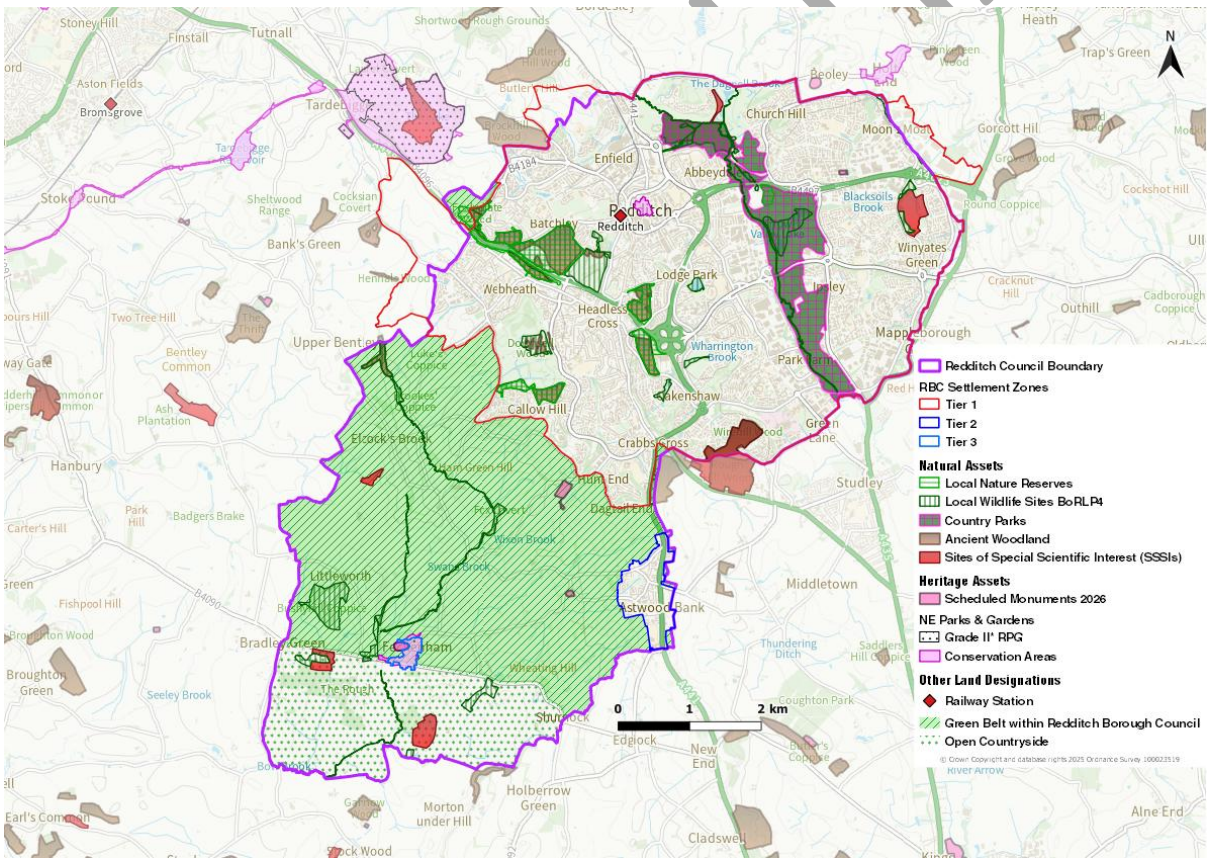


Figure 3: Redditch Borough overview map showing settlements and a selection of planning constraints

2.2 Social characteristics

2.2.1 Between the last two censuses (held in 2011 and 2021), the population of Redditch increased by 3.4%, from around 84,200 in 2011 to around 87,000 in 2021[1]. The number

[1] Nomis - 2021 Census Area Profile - Redditch Local Authority

of residents as of the latest ONS population estimates is 87,847 people[2]. As of the 2021 census[3], 62.2% of people are aged between 16 and 64, compared to 61.8% for the West Midlands and 62.8% nationally. 18.6% of residents are aged 65 and over, in line with both the national (18.6%) and West Midlands (18.8%) figures.

Describe health as bad or very bad - 4.1 - Census 2021

Life expectancy Male - 79.8 Female - 83.8 - Public Health Profile 2022

15,242 students – Census 2021

Index of Multiple Deprivation

2.2.2 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)[4] provides a means of assessing Redditch Borough's relative deprivation across several domains (Health, Living Environment, Employment, Income, Education, Crime and barriers to services) in comparison to other Authorities in England. The IMD assigns scores and ranks to Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) census divisions. A rank of 1 indicates the most deprived areas and a rank of 10 the least deprived. When the scores of LSOAs within Redditch are combined, the Borough is shown to rank in the middle of England's 296 Local Authority Divisions at rank 148, suggesting an average level of deprivation across the combined domains.

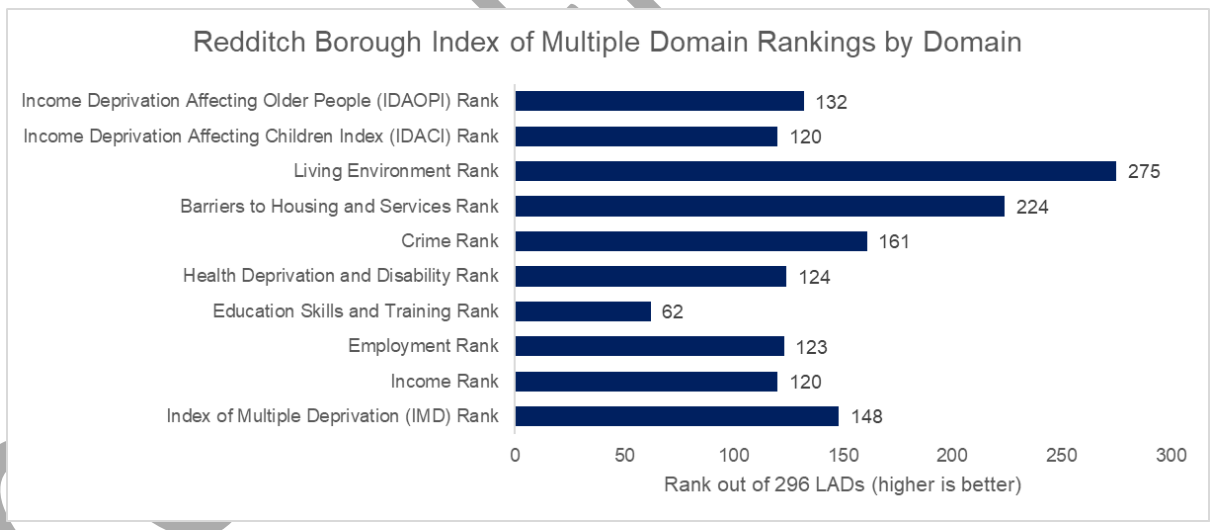


Figure 4: Redditch Borough Index of Multiple Deprivation Ranks

2.2.3 Whilst the overall rank shown in figure 4 is useful for showing how Redditch Borough compares to other Local Authorities, the decile individual LSOAs fall in to can show the relative affluence of areas across the Borough. As shown in figure 5, Redditch contains 4 LSOAs within the most deprived decile, and 10 within the least deprived nationally. Whilst the majority of Redditch's LSOAs rank above 5, the IMD map highlights pockets of relative deprivation spread around Redditch town.

[2] Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics
[3] Age - Census Maps, ONS
[4] English indices of deprivation 2025: statistical release - GOV.UK

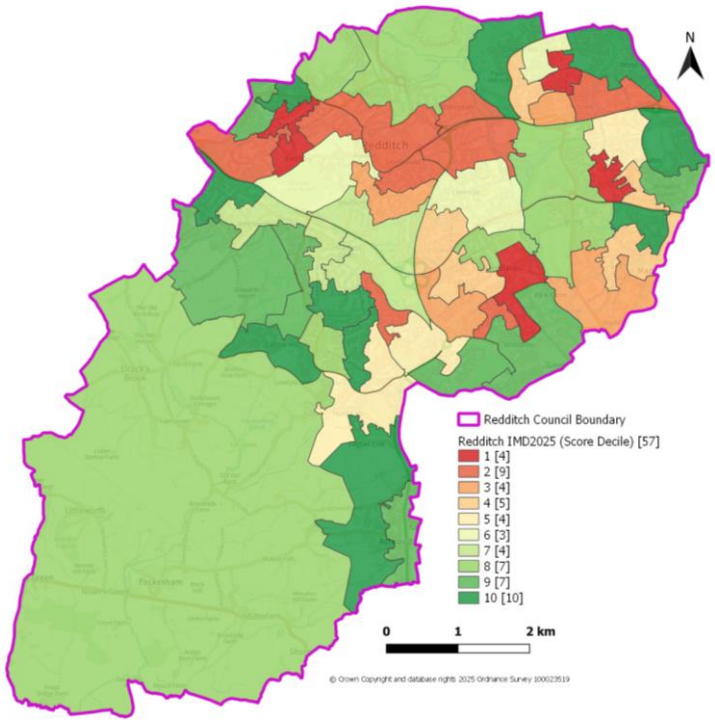


Figure 5: Spatial overview of Redditch Borough Index of Multiple Deprivation Ranks by census LSOA.

2.3 Economic characteristics

2.3.1 As of the latest census, 62.2% of residents aged between 16 and over are economically active (excluding full-time students), comprising 59.2% in employment and 2.7 short term unemployed. 21.7% are retired 4% long-term sick or disabled, 4.3% are looking after home or family, 3.5% are students and 2.7% are otherwise economically inactive. Of those in employment 72.9% work full-time (31 or more hours)[5].

2.3.2 Median annual earnings of people who work within the Borough is £30,780[6] compared with the median annual earnings for residents of Redditch Borough, which is £29,113[7], a difference of 5.4%. This would suggest that the Borough's resident population earn lower salaries than the national median (£32,890), and the West Midlands (£31,345).

Travel

2.3.3 As of census 2021, of those 16 and over in employment, 23.1% work mainly from home, 42.6% travel less than 10km, 19.8% travel between 10km and 30km and 2.8% travel greater than 30km. The most common method of travel to work is by car with 57.4% driving and 5.8% as a passenger, 0.6% travel by train and 3.1% by bus. 6.3% walk to work and 1.4% cycle[8].

[5] Nomis - 2021 Census Area Profile - Redditch Local Authority
[6] Nomis - Query Tool - annual survey of hours and earnings - workplace analysis
[7] Nomis - Query Tool - annual survey of hours and earnings - resident analysis
[8] Nomis - 2021 Census Area Profile - Redditch Local Authority

Housing

2.3.4 The latest census (2021)[9] records 36,378 households within Redditch Borough, of which 30.9% are owned outright, 34.3% mortgaged, loan or shared ownership, 20.2% social rent and 14.6% private rent. The average house price in Redditch Borough was £243,000 as of March 2026, slightly lower than the average for the West Midlands (246,000). First-time buyers in the Borough paid £207,000 on average in March 2026. The average monthly rent stood at £900, lower than the average for the West Midlands average of £964.The dwelling type mix of existing stock is 31.4% semi-detached with an average price of £252,000, 31.4% are detached with an average price of £395,000, 25.8% terraced at an average price of £202,000, and 13% are flats or tenements at an average price of £114,000. Of the remaining 2.3%, 1.4% are part of a converted or shared house, including bedsits.

2.4 Environmental characteristics

Natural Environment and Landscape

2.4.1 The Borough is split into the urban area of Redditch in the north, accounting for 50% of the area and 93% of the population; and the rural area to the south with 7% of the population. The rural area consists predominantly of Green Belt land, but also open countryside.

2.4.2 A feature of Redditch's post-war character is that Redditch town itself has a significant amount of open space with 732.18 hectares across the Borough. There are two areas of designated parkland, including the regionally significant Arrow Valley Country Park (364 hectares) which runs through the centre of the town, and Morton Stanley Park (38 hectares).

2.4.3 Redditch Borough features 6 Sites of Special Scientific Importance (SSSIs), 24 Local Wildlife Sites and over 87 hectares of land designated as Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). There are 25 designated parks, including the Arrow Valley Country Park and Morton Stanley Park.

Historic Environment

2.4.4 Redditch was formerly a market town until 1964 when it was designated as a New Town; a status it maintained up until 1985. During this period the Redditch Development Corporation led the significant growth of Redditch, predominantly to the east of the town. As identified at the start of this document, Redditch's twentieth century development has become one of the towns defining features.

2.4.5 Redditch Borough contains 2 conservation areas, 164 listed buildings (153 Grade II, 10 Grade II* and 1 Grade I) and 8 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and over 500 other heritage assets, including locally listed heritage assets. The two Conservation Areas are Feckenham Conservation Area and Church Green Conservation Area. The former is known for its traditional cottages, narrow lanes, and green spaces that reflect its medieval origins, while the latter is centred around St. Stephen's Church, located in the Town Centre.

[9] Nomis - 2021 Census Area Profile - Redditch Local Authority

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Section 3 - Key priorities/challenges

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 This section identifies key priorities and challenges to inform the content of the Redditch Borough Local Plan.

3.1.2 The current Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 (BORLP) priorities and challenges are based around seven key themes, which were identified through the evidence base which supports the current plan. These are provided as an example of key priorities and challenges.

3.2 Adopted Local Plan Challenges

3.2.1 The current Local Plan adopted in 2017 identified the challenges listed below:

3.2.2 Sustainable places to live which meet our needs:

- Population projections indicate significant new demand for housing over the Plan period due to natural growth and migration
- Land availability is scarce, particularly Previously Developed Land
- Cooperate with our neighbours to locate a significant amount of Redditch's unmet requirements in adjoining Districts

3.2.3 Creating and sustaining a green environment:

- Redditch is located within a highly sensitive landscape with the town's growth now nearing its natural limits
- Redditch has a lot of distinctive green features which define Redditch as unique such as open spaces and Green Infrastructure network which needs to be protected
- Locating growth in places to limit out-commuting, make best use of existing highway infrastructure and promote sustainable transport options

3.2.4 Creating a Borough where businesses can thrive:

- Dealing with high rates of vacancy and B1 office units not fit for purpose
- Need to focus on catering for internal employer demand for business types

3.2.5 Improving the vitality and viability of Redditch Town Centre and District Centres:

- There are areas in Redditch Town Centre that are in decline and need regeneration

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- Some District Centres suffer from safety, safety perception issues and other issues relating to the poor quality of the physical environment

3.2.6 Protecting and enhancing Redditch's historic environment:

- Redditch has a rich needle-making heritage and historic buildings of local importance to protect

3.2.7 Creating safe and attractive places to live and work:

- Some areas of Redditch suffer from a poor perception of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- The implementation of improved design or designing out crime can help reverse this perception

3.2.8 Promoting Redditch's community well-being:

- Health of Redditch residents needs to be improved

3.3 Key priorities and challenges from the Redditch Issues and Options consultation

3.3.1 The Redditch Issues and Options consultation in summer 2025 identified a more up-to-date range of issues for Redditch.

3.3.2 **Housing:**

- Meeting demand for Redditch's growing population
- Sustainable locations for new development and regenerating older housing stock
- Redeveloping brownfield sites
- Boundary extension options for expansion within the Borough
- Shortage of affordable housing and family housing
- Shortage of elderly accommodation/retirement villages to meet demand from Redditch's ageing population
- Reduce the council housing waiting list by creating more social housing

3.3.3 **Economy:**

- Regeneration of the Town Centre and District Centres
- Dealing with high vacancy rates in the Town Centre
- Creating more leisure and cultural events to grow the visitor economy
- Attracting investment and growing the economy

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- Responding to employment needs in the Borough
- Ensuring the Local Plan is aligned with relevant strategies such as the emerging National Industrial Strategy
- Encouraging investment in emerging technology and green industries
- Working with businesses, education providers and the forthcoming Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre to provide the right size and location of employment land

3.3.4 **Infrastructure:**

- Improving public transport, walking and cycling which will improve overall health of the Borough
- Improve access around the Borough to attractions and green space

3.3.5 **Natural Environment:**

- Promote healthy lifestyles
- Recognising environmental issues such as flooding and wildlife
- Ensuring sustainability across the district
- Making the most of heritage assets and improving the visitor experience

3.3.6 **Climate Change:**

- Reducing carbon emissions through new technology
- Measures to adapt to aspects of climate change e.g. coping with increased rainfall
- Energy efficiency in new developments

3.4 New priorities and challenges

3.4.1 The adopted Priorities and Challenges have been updated to reflect the Issues and Options consultation objectives. This provides a list of priorities and challenges that is considered up-to-date.

3.4.2 **Housing**

- Accommodating housing growth in sustainable locations, including the potential for local centre/estate regeneration and potential cross-boundary allocations
- Making effective use of previously developed land (PDL)
- Addressing shortages in affordable and specialist housing, including accommodation for older people

3.4.3 **Economy**

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- Allocating sufficient land to attract inward investment and support business growth to retain companies in the Borough as they grow
- Aligning the Local Plan with national and regional economic strategies, including making provision for key sectors such as advanced manufacturing

3.4.4 **Town Centre and Local Centres**

- Revitalising Redditch Town Centre and Local Centres through clear regeneration policies. Align Local Plan policies with other town centre initiatives
- Policies promoting a more mixed-use town centre, including leisure, community and residential uses
- Addressing underused spaces and overall environmental quality

3.4.5 **Infrastructure**

- Improving public transport (especially bus services) and active travel (walking and cycling)
- Enhancing access to key destinations, including employment areas, town centres and green spaces through the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Improvement Plan (LCWIP)
- Ensuring new development is adequately served by new or upgraded infrastructure

3.4.6 **Design**

- Ensure high-quality design throughout new housing development, the town centre and local centres through design coding
- Designing safer places by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour through good urban design

3.4.7 **Environment**

- Protecting and enhancing the Borough's green spaces. Improving access to green spaces and integrating them into healthy, attractive communities
- Conserving and promoting historic assets and local heritage, including Redditch's post-war identity where appropriate
- Enhancing biodiversity and responding to environmental constraints such as flood risk and ecological sensitivity

3.4.8 **Health**

- Promoting healthier lifestyles through access to green space and community facilities

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Question 1: Are these Priorities correct, please let us know if there is anything we have missed?

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Section 4 - Vision and objectives

4.1 What is a Local Plan vision?

4.1.1 The vision for Redditch will underpin the Local Plan describing how Redditch should grow, change and what it will look like by 2044. Additionally, it has a role to address the challenges above and will play a leading role in delivering some of the Council's wider priorities, whilst offering a supporting and guiding role for others. The Council Plan 2025-28 identifies the following aspirations for Redditch Borough:

- A happy and safe place to live, work and grow up through the provision of decent homes, crime prevention, reducing anti-social behaviour and improving community engagement.
- A welcoming place for everyone, with something to offer all - children, young people, older people and families. A place where people take pride in our communities and heritage.
- A prosperous place where businesses thrive, so that everyone can achieve their hopes and aspirations for the future.
- A green and healthy place, preserving our open spaces and working in partnership to address health indicators such as levels of obesity, drug and alcohol addiction.

4.2 Feedback on the comments received from the Issues and Options consultation relating to the Local Plan vision.

4.2.1 The Issues and Options consultation identified an emerging vision for the Local Plan, as set out below:

"*Redditch to become a greener, safer place with pride in its heritage. Redditch will have more decent, energy efficient homes and employment space to allow businesses to thrive and create highly skilled jobs. Redditch will draw upon its post-war heritage to adapt to the challenge of climate change with new active travel routes, enhanced green infrastructure/natural environment and energy efficient development.*"

4.2.2 Residents and other stakeholders were asked if they had a vision for the future of Redditch. There was strong support for a more sustainable and greener Redditch which included the protection and enhancement of existing green spaces and parks and a more environmentally sustainable town. There was a desire for an infrastructure led approach to growth, with improvements to transport, connectivity and local services. Town Centre Regeneration was seen as a priority delivering more affordable and well-designed housing and reinforcing Redditch's distinctive New Town character. Community wellbeing, inclusivity and local pride were key priorities, alongside the need for greater economic opportunity.

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4.2.3 It is therefore our understanding that the majority of respondents supported a vision for Redditch that prioritises infrastructure-led growth, environmental protection, town centre regeneration, improved connectivity, and the delivery of affordable, well-designed homes, while safeguarding the Borough's distinctive New Town character and supporting strong, inclusive communities.

4.3 Developing a vision for Redditch Borough

4.3.1 The aim of developing a specific vision for the Redditch Borough Local Plan aligns with the latest National guidance for Local Plan vision statements. Specifically:

a. A Local Plan vision should 'set out key aims and objectives for your area over the next 15 years or longer'.

b. 'be ambitious but also reflect what the local plan can realistically achieve through its policies'.

c. The vision must identify no more than 10 measurable outcomes to help monitor progress towards the stated objectives.

Potential aims & objectives

4.3.2 The following suggestions for aims and objectives are based upon the feedback received from the Issues and Options consultation. We are interested in your views on these and any additional objectives you think the Borough should aim to achieve. We are also interested in your views on measurable outcomes for the Plan.

Provide the infrastructure required to support Redditch and its future growth

Ensure that all new development in Redditch is phased and aligned with the timely provision of infrastructure, including transport, education, healthcare, utilities and community facilities.

Prioritise brownfield first and urban regeneration

Maximise the use of previously developed land, vacant units and underused spaces, particularly within the urban area and Town Centre, before considering release of undeveloped land.

Promote a Greener, more environmentally resilient Redditch

Protect, enhance and expand Redditch's network of green corridors, parks and open spaces, delivering measurable biodiversity improvements and embedding climate resilience in all development.

Improve sustainability and connectivity

Strengthening public transport and deliver safe and attractive walking and cycling networks.

Deliver affordable and appropriate housing

Deliver the right mix of homes (size, type and tenure), with a strong focus on affordability and provision for different life stages, including older persons and accessible/lifetime homes.

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Revitalising Redditch Town Centre

Transform Redditch Town Centre into a vibrant, mixed-use destination that supports retail, leisure, cultural, residential and employment uses.

Reinforcing Redditch's New Town Identity

Protect and enhance Redditch's distinctive New Town structure, including neighbourhoods with local centres and create a strong sense of place and community identity.

Supporting a Resilient Economy and Job Opportunities

Strengthen Redditch's economy by supporting existing employment areas, encouraging new and emerging sectors and linking economic growth with Town Centre regeneration.

Create healthy, safe and inclusive communities

Promote well-being and inclusion by ensuring there is access to community facilities, leisure and green spaces.

Deliver high-quality, sustainable design within all developments

Ensure all development achieves high standards of design, reflecting local character and incorporating sustainable construction and energy-efficient measures.

4.4 Local Plan period

4.4.1 Based on the current Local Plan timetable, this Plan is to set out the vision for growth and development of the Borough to 2044. New national legislation requires that local plans are reviewed regularly within this period to ensure that the policies within remain relevant and up to date.

Question 2: Is our understanding from the Issues and Options consultation regarding the vision still correct? We would be interested to hear additional themes that the Local Plan vision should contain.

Question 3: What are your views on the proposed aims and objectives, and are there any that should be changed, removed or added?

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Section 5: Local Plan topic-based content

5.1 Potential scope of locally specific topic-based policies

5.1.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans can provide for housing and other development in a sustainable manner. It is also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

5.1.2 The current NPPF (December 2024, amended February 2025) has 17 chapters covering the following topic areas:

- Sustainable development
- Plan-making
- Decision-making
- Housing
- Economy
- Town centres
- Healthy and safe communities
- Transport
- Communications
- Effective use of land
- Design
- Green Belt
- Climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Natural environment
- Historic environment
- Minerals

5.1.3 In December 2025, the Government consulted on a revised NPPF[10], as outlined in Section 1. The final version is expected to be published in summer 2026. A key proposed change is the introduction of national decision-making policies. This more rules-based approach is intended to promote greater consistency and timeliness in planning decisions across local planning authorities in England. The draft Framework includes policies across the following areas:

- Sustainable development
- Climate change
- Housing
- Economy
- Town centres
- Communications
- Energy and water
- Minerals

[10] National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK

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- Effective use of land
- Green Belt
- Design
- Transport
- Healthy communities
- Pollution, public protection and security
- Flood risk and coastal change
- Natural environment
- Historic environment

5.1.4 The draft NPPF makes clear that local plans should not duplicate, substantively restate or modify the content of national decision-making policies, unless directed by other policies in the Framework.

5.1.5 Many of the topic areas proposed to be covered by national decision-making policies in the revised Framework have historically been addressed within local plans. As the draft Framework advises that such policies should not be duplicated, the role and content of local plans may change. However, as the final version of the NPPF has yet to be published, the definitive form and scope of these policies remain uncertain. Redditch Borough Council will review the final NPPF once issued, and this will be reflected in the next local plan content and evidence consultation.

5.1.6 New-style local plans will be more concise and streamlined compared to those prepared under the previous plan-making system. Drawing on a robust evidence base and informed by consultation feedback, the Redditch Borough Local Plan is expected to comprise the following:

- Vision and measurable outcomes.
- Spatial strategy with policies for the amount of development to be provided, land allocations and designations (including land to be protected or enhanced for specific purposes).
- Infrastructure provision and contributions to support the delivery of the Local Plan.
- Other local topic-based policies.

5.1.7 Notwithstanding any forthcoming changes to the NPPF, the Redditch Borough Local Plan may include policies covering the following thematic areas (not exhaustive):

- Housing – e.g. housing requirement, housing allocations, housing size, type and tenure, gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople.
- Economy – e.g. employment land requirement, employment allocations, protection of existing employment areas, rural economy, town centre, local centres.
- Environment and climate change – e.g. natural environment, historic environment, Green Belt, climate change, energy, water, flood risk, air quality.
- Transport – e.g. sustainable development, active travel, highway impact/safety and mitigation, parking standards.

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- Health and wellbeing – e.g. open space, sport and recreational facilities, green infrastructure, services and facilities, health, hot food takeaways.
- Design.
- Site allocation policies.

5.1.8 Following the completion of the scoping consultation, consideration of the feedback received, and publication of the revised NPPF, the Council will review which policies should be included in the Redditch Borough Local Plan. Opportunities to provide comments will be available at the subsequent local plan content and evidence consultation stage, as well as during the proposed local plan consultation.

Question 4: Do you agree with the indicative content of the Redditch Borough Local Plan and is there anything you would change or add?

Question 5: Do you agree with the topic-based policies that the Redditch Borough Local Plan could contain and is there anything you would change or add?

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Section 6: Local Plan evidence base

6.1 Likely evidence base to support the Local Plan

6.1.1 Given the stage Redditch Borough Council is in with the completion of the Issues and Options consultation last summer and commencing preparation of the Local Plan under the new plan-making system, the Council currently has a limited evidence base in place. Some evidence base documents to support the emerging Local Plan may require updating/additional work. Additionally, the Council needs to identify what new evidence is required.

6.1.2 Table 2 below sets out the evidence base compiled to date, the evidence currently being prepared, and evidence that may require updating or new evidence. The evidence prepared to date is available on our website – INSERT WEBLINK. New or revised evidence will be published once finalised or alongside the next consultation stage. As the Local Plan progresses, additional evidence may also need to be prepared or commissioned.

Table 2: Evidence to support the Local Plan

Evidence Documents	Status
Prepared (including evidence prepared that may require updating/additional work)	
Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report	To be reviewed, the Sustainability Appraisal (including SEA) is to be published at each required plan-making stage
Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)	Complete, but requires updating
Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy	Complete, to be updated as necessary
Currently being prepared	
Green Belt and Grey Belt Assessment	Commissioned
New evidence required	
Site Assessment and Site Selection Methodology	To be prepared
Housing Land Supply Evidence	To be commissioned/prepared
Settlement Hierarchy Review	To be prepared
Green Belt Exceptional Circumstances Paper	To be prepared
Landscape Sensitivity Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared

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Strategic Transport Assessment	Ongoing throughout the preparation of the Local Plan
Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)	To be commissioned/prepared
Open Space Study	To be commissioned/prepared
Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Viability Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Infrastructure Delivery Plan	To be commissioned/prepared
Town Centres, Local Centres and Retail Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Water Cycle Strategy	To be commissioned/prepared
Climate Change and Energy Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Health Impact Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Habitats Regulations Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Green Infrastructure, Ecology and Biodiversity Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Heritage Impact Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared

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6.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) requirements

6.2.1 The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended) (Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations) normally applies to local plans. In summary, the SEA assesses the likely significant environmental effects of a local plan alongside reasonable alternatives. Its purpose is to guide and shape plan-making, preventing or reducing adverse environmental impacts and enhancing opportunities for positive outcomes. The process takes place during the preparation of the plan.

6.2.2 Through powers contained in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, a new domestic framework for environmental assessment is being developed. The SEA process will be replaced by Environmental Outcomes Reports. The Government is expected to introduce Environmental Outcomes Reports by the end of 2027. Until Environmental Outcomes Reports are introduced the current SEA regulations apply. The transitional approach from SEAs to Environmental Outcomes Reports is not yet known.

6.2.3 A sustainability appraisal considers the local plan's wider economic and social effects (and can also consider potential environmental impacts) to promote sustainable development. A sustainability appraisal should also meet the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended). A SEA is not required if the sustainability appraisal meets all of the requirements of the aforementioned regulations and considers environmental impacts. Guidance released by the Government in relation to the new plan-making system only makes reference to SEAs and therefore it is our understanding that the requirement to carry out a sustainability appraisal has been removed. More detailed SEA guidance is expected in due course.

6.2.4 Redditch Borough Council has prepared a SEA Screening Statement, which can be viewed on our website (INSERT WEBLINK) and alongside hard-copy versions of this scoping document across the Borough (see section 8). The SEA Screening Statement concludes that the Redditch Borough Local Plan has the potential to have a significant effect on the natural environment and will require a SEA is undertaken. It is anticipated that the scope of the SEA will be consulted on at the proposed local plan content and evidence consultation stage.

Question 6: Do you agree with the evidence base to support the Local Plan (table 2) and is there any other evidence you feel we need to inform our Local Plan?

Question 7: Do you agree that the Redditch Borough Local Plan has the potential to have a significant effect on the natural environment and will require a SEA to be undertaken?

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Section 7: Consultation and engagement strategy

7.1 Consultation principles

7.1.1 The consultation principles will guide future consultation methods. These principles are informed by methods used during the 2025 Issues and Options consultation.

7.1.2 **User-friendly content:** All digital and printed material will use graphics and maps where possible. A clear, concise and 'jargon free' approach will help consultees understanding of proposals as much as possible.

7.1.3 **Well-informed consultation responses:** Using clear communication as a starting point, Council Officers will assist consultees wherever possible through explaining key planning concepts and assisting with the use of digital consultation tools. Council Officers will make clear what are material planning considerations and what are not. The Council believes this will help to ensure that both the Council and consultees get the most out of consultations.

7.1.4 **Detail-led consultation:** The Council will ensure that consultation text and questions focus on site-specific details, as well as identifying high level matters. The purpose of this is to ensure the capacity of key infrastructure such as specific road junctions, individual schools and GP surgeries are fully assessed against development proposals.

7.1.5 **Redditch-wide consultation:** Every Redditch resident should have easy access to consultation events near them where they can discuss development proposals with Council Officers. Consultation events will be held in (a) central locations such as the Kingfisher and the market (b) across as many local centres as possible and (c) in the rural areas of the Borough.

7.1.6 **Preventing digital exclusion:** Government requirements for digital-first consultation will be complemented by a clear focus on assisting those without digital access or who would prefer to respond to consultations on paper. Those who want to use digital consultation methods will be supported through a dedicated consultation inbox, phone line and events.

7.1.7 **Ensure feedback demonstrates how comments have been considered:** Feedback to consultation responses will seek to address consultees comments, suggestions and concerns. Any changes to the plan as a result of consultation will be demonstrated through a clear 'you said, we did' approach in a consultation summary document for each consultation (scoping consultation, proposed local plan content and evidence consultation and the proposed local plan consultation). These summary documents will identify who was invited to make representations, how they

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were invited to make representations, summarise the key issues raised and identify how the Council has taken those representations into account.

7.2 Consultation methods

7.2.1 The below consultation methods reflect the above identified principles. These methods will guide future consultations.

7.2.2 Digital-first consultation

- Emails to consultation bodies and those residents and groups registered on our consultation database
- Council website, with pages guiding consultees to key information and the use of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Social media platforms
- Use of online consultation platforms, questionnaires and surveys e.g. Commonplace
- Use of videos to explain proposals

7.2.3 Physical Materials

- Printed consultation documents available at the Council's offices and libraries across the Borough
- Printed letters, leaflets and posters
- Notices in local papers and local magazines

7.2.4 Events

- 'Drop-in' public consultation sessions in accessible locations across Redditch: in the town centre, in local centres across Redditch and rural areas
- Focus groups (including targeted stakeholder groups such as Parish Councils, Local businesses and employers, community and physical infrastructure providers)
- School and college engagement sessions

7.2.5 Promoting consultations

- Council press releases
- Targeted publicity in specific areas e.g. noticeboards in rural areas
- Utilising local networks to promote consultations – Councillors, parish councils, stakeholders, and internal Council networks to promote consultations

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7.2.6 Improving Accessibility and Participation

- Ensuring consultation documents are clear, concise and user-friendly
- Providing more detailed, optional supplementary questions to enable deeper engagement e.g. on design
- Ensure consultation methods prevent digital exclusion

Question 8: Do you agree with the consultation principles identified? What else would you suggest?

Question 9: Do you agree with the potential consultation methods identified? What else would you suggest?

Question 10: Do you consider there is anything else relevant to consultation that has not been mentioned?

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Section 8: Next steps and further information

8.1 Next steps

8.1.1 Once this consultation closes at 5pm on Friday 14th August 2026, all responses will be reviewed, and a report of the findings will be prepared and published on our website. This feedback, together with responses from the Issues and Options consultation, will inform the preparation of the Local Plan. It will also ensure that future consultations engage with you in the most effective way.

8.1.2 There will be two further opportunities to help shape the Local Plan. The next consultation is the local plan content and evidence consultation which is anticipated to be held in June 2027 for a minimum of 6 weeks. The final consultation is expected to be held in March 2028 for a minimum of 8 weeks which is a consultation on the full draft Plan before it is submitted for independent examination.

8.2 Further information

8.2.1 The Council's website includes all information on the Local Plan; including the Local Plan timetable, notice of intention to commence local plan preparation, scoping consultation details, evidence base, details of the previous Issues and Options consultation, and the privacy notice – INSERT WEBLINK. This will be kept up to date throughout the preparation of the Local Plan, and any updates will be published there.

8.2.2 This scoping document, SEA Screening Statement, Local Plan timetable and notice of intention to commence local plan preparation are available for inspection at the Council's Customer Services Centre at 5 George Walk, Kingfisher Shopping Centre during office hours until the necessary works at the Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square are complete*. They will then be made available for inspection during office hours at the Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square. Additionally, the aforementioned documents are available for inspection at libraries across the Borough (Redditch Library and Woodrow Library) during their respective opening hours. Details and opening times of the libraries can be found online at – https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/libraries/find-library?field_district=647&field_type_of_library=All

**The specific date of the movement of the documents from 5 George Walk to the Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square will be subject to the completion of necessary works at the Town Hall*

8.2.3 Please see Section 1.7 of this document about how to respond to the consultation. If you have any queries, please contact the Strategic Planning team:

By email: Redditchplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

By telephone: 01527 64252

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By post: Strategic Planning, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH.

8.2.4 If you need this information in another language/format please call 01527 548284 or email equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk.

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Redditch Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Annual Report

2025 – 2026



Redditch Borough Council
Working together for our communities

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Chair's Foreword

I am pleased to present the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report for the 2025–2026 municipal year.

Overview and Scrutiny is a vital part of the Council's governance. It provides constructive challenge, helps drive improvement, and supports transparency and accountability in decision-making. As the Council's "critical friend", our role is to test the evidence behind proposals, examine performance, and ensure that the Executive is held to account on the outcomes that matter most to Redditch residents.

During 2025–2026, the Committee has considered a wide range of items, including the pre-scrutiny of key Executive Committee reports across housing, finance, community services and wider strategic delivery. Alongside this, we have undertaken "overview" work on issues of direct local importance, including health inequalities in priority neighbourhoods. The Committee has also supported more in-depth scrutiny through Task Groups—concluding the Fly Tipping and Bulky Waste Task Group in July 2025 and continuing work on the Post-16 Education Task Group, which is expected to report later in the year.

Scrutiny is most effective when it is collaborative, evidence-led and focused on improvement. I would like to thank Members of the Committee and our scrutiny sub-groups for their commitment and detailed work throughout the year, and to place on record my appreciation to the officers who support scrutiny and to the partners and witnesses who have contributed to our reviews. I also welcome the interest shown by residents who engage with the scrutiny process and take time to follow the work of the Council.

This report summarises the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny during the year to date, highlights key themes and outcomes, and sets out the remaining work planned for the rest of the municipal year.

Councillor Matt Dormer
Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Redditch Borough Council

This annual report outlines the work undertaken by Redditch Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the 2025 – 2026 municipal year.

The Role of Overview and Scrutiny

The role of overview and scrutiny is an important one in the Council's governance structure, providing challenge and driving improvement. It is often referred to as the "critical friend" of the Council and can review any issues of concern or interest to local residents.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a number of roles within the Council. These include:

- Holding the Executive Committee to account by scrutinising their decisions, either by:
  - 'calling-in' decisions after they have been made by the Executive Committee, requesting that the original decision is reviewed (only used in exceptional circumstances as there has to be a substantial legal/procedural reason before this procedure can be activated);
  - pre-scrutinising items prior to a decision being made on them by the Executive Committee.

- Acting as a 'critical friend' to the Executive Committee by reviewing Council policies and strategies, making recommendations where appropriate.

- Performance and financial monitoring, to ensure the Council's services are sustainable and delivered to the highest possible standard.

- Commissioning reviews of services/topics that impact on the Council or on the lives of Redditch residents.

- Setting up Task Groups to focus on specific subjects and recommend ways to improve existing practices within the Council and community as a whole.

The Council's scrutiny scoping form, which should be submitted before Overview and Scrutiny considers setting up a Task Group, can be found at Appendix A.

Membership

The Committee appoints individual Members at the Annual Council meeting to oversee the work of Overview and Scrutiny. Membership in 2025/26 is as follows:



Cllr Matthew Dormer (Chair)



Cllr Craig Warhurst (Vice-Chair)



Cllr William Boyd



Cllr Claire Davies



Cllr James Fardoe



Cllr Andrew Fry



Cllr Sachin Mathur



Cllr Paul Wren



Cllr Rita Rogers

Activities and Outcomes in 2025-26

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee have considered various topics during the year. This includes a mix of 'overview' items – reports which had been specifically commissioned for Overview and Scrutiny and looked at various local issues of interest to Councillors – and 'pre-scrutiny' items, which is the scrutiny of Executive Committee reports. In addition, the Committee will finalise two in-depth investigations during this municipal year, having concluded the Fly Tipping and Bulky Waste Task Group in July 2025 and with the final report of the Post-16 Education Task Group due to be submitted in February / March 2026. The Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel has held its annual meeting on 27th November 2025.

Live Streaming / Remote Meetings

Although all meetings of Overview and Scrutiny are held in person, in some circumstances and with prior of agreement by the Chairman of the Committee, officers may attend meetings remotely to present reports. The public can also request a link to attend a meeting via video link. Members of the public can do this by contacting democratic (committee) services – contact information is provided on each agenda document and via the Council's website.

Meetings of Overview and Scrutiny continue to be live streamed where a significant local interest has been identified in the items on the meeting's agenda. The last meeting of Overview and Scrutiny which had been livestreamed took place on 10th March 2025.

Meetings of scrutiny Task Groups and Working Groups continue to be held remotely; these meetings are private and not accessible to the public, except when specific witnesses are invited. Task Group reports are made public via final reports following conclusion of an investigation.

Recommendations submitted to the Executive Committee

Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitors the impact of all recommendations it makes to the Executive Committee. A summary of reports considered by Overview and Scrutiny and its sub-groups to date in 2025/26 is given in the "Summary of Overview and Scrutiny Meetings" section.

Recommendations from Budget Scrutiny and Performance Scrutiny (details of these sub-groups given in the sections below) are also submitted to the Executive Committee via the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This municipal year so far, all the recommendations considered in Executive reports have been endorsed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Also, there have been no additional recommendations submitted by Overview and Scrutiny to date this year.

Pre-Scrutiny of Executive Reports by Overview and Scrutiny Committee

To date in 2025/26, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has scrutinised the following Executive Committee reports:

- Shareholders' Committee Annual Report (9th June)
- Housing Regulator Tenant Satisfaction Measures (9th June)
- Housing Regulator Self-Assessment Complaint Handling Code (9th June)
- Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre (DMIC) – Appointment of Contractor for Stage 4 Designs (7th July)
- Redditch Council Housing Growth Programme (7th July)
- Acquisition of Properties (7th July)
- Regulator of Social Housing Inspection Report and Housing Improvement Plan (1st September)
- Voluntary Sector Grants Scheme 2026/27 to 2029/30 (1st September)
- Adoption of Fixed Penalty Charge for breach of Community Protection Notice (1st September)
- Quarter 1 Housing Consumer Standards Report (1st September)
- Housing Ombudsman Findings Report 1 Ref 202417927 (1st September)
- Housing Ombudsman Findings Report 2 Ref 202331009 (1st September)
- Disposal of Housing Revenue Account Assets – Eight garages at Ashorne Close, Matchborough, Redditch (1st September)
- Disposal of Housing Revenue Account Assets – 53 Parsons Road, Southcrest, Redditch. 53 Crabbs Cross Lane, Crabbs Cross, Redditch (1st September)
- Bereavement Services – Burial Strategy (24th November)
- Quarter 2 Housing Improvement Plan Update (24th November)
- Quarter 2 Housing Performance (24th November)
- Biodiversity Duty First Consideration Report (12th January 2026)
- Homelessness Prevention Grant Funding 2026/27 to 2028/29 (including Rough Sleeper Grant) and Domestic Abuse Grant (12th January 2026)

Portfolio Holders for the relevant reports are invited to each meeting of the Committee in order to answer questions and to feed back to the Executive Committee on the comments raised by Overview and Scrutiny. In addition, any recommendations made by Overview and Scrutiny are also relayed directly to Executive Portfolio Holder concerned in this way, if applicable.

Overview items considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee

In addition to pre-scrutiny of the Executive Committee Work Programme items**,** the following 'overview' items have been considered at meetings of Overview and Scrutiny to date in 2025/26:

- Health Inequalities in Redditch – Public Health Presentation (9th June)
- Fly Tipping and Bulky Waste Task Group – Final Report (7th July)
- Rubicon Leisure Priorities and Progress Update – Managing Director Invitation (12th January 2026)

Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel

Membership: Councillors Craig Warhurst (Chair), Joe Baker, Andy Fry, Joanna Kane, and Rita Rogers

Local authorities are required to have a committee designated with responsibility for reviewing and scrutinising the work of the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. In Redditch this role is undertaken by the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel, which is a permanent sub-committee of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Panel is responsible for holding the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) to account for its work in Redditch.

This year the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel met on 27th November 2025. At the meeting, Members received an update in respect of the work of the Partnership in the Borough for the period December 2024 to October 2025. This included an update on community safety programmes and schemes delivered by NWCSP.

West Mercia Police provided a report focusing on the overview of crime in Redditch Borough, and outlining crime data, anti-social behaviour interventions, recent successes by the Police in tackling crime, and the Police work within Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) area – in Redditch Town Centre.

Following a referral made at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 1st September (Minute No. 34), the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel also considered a report on the serving of Community Protection Notices (CPNs) by Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) in relation to planning and environmental (e.g. fly tipping, littering, duty of care waste offences, dog fouling) offences. The WRS enforcement regime, and in particular the effectiveness of CPNs and the fixed penalty notices of £100 for failure to comply with a CPN, were discussed in detail at the meeting.

Working Groups

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has two permanent scrutiny working groups (sub-groups), the Budget Scrutiny Working Group**,** and the Performance Scrutiny Working Group.

Budget Scrutiny Working Group

Membership: Councillors Craig Warhurst (Chair), Matthew Dormer, Chris Holz, Andrew Fry, Sachin Mathur

The Budget Scrutiny Working Group has held 5 meetings so far in 2025-26 with 3 more meetings scheduled to take place over February and March 2026. To date, the Group has pre-scrutinised the following finance and budget-related Executive reports:

- Financial Outturn Report and Q4 Performance Monitoring Report 2024-25 (3rd July)
- Treasury Management Outturn Report 2024/25 (3rd July)
- Q1 2025-26 Finance and Performance Monitoring Report (28th August)
- Medium Term Financial Plan Scene Setting Report 2026/27 (28th August)
- Medium Term Financial Plan Budget Update and Consultation Report 2026/27 to 2028/29 – Business Rates Pool (3rd November)
- Q2 Finance Monitoring Report (including Financial Saving and Half Yearly Treasury Management Report) (20th November)
- Q2 2025/26 Performance Monitoring 2024/25 (20th November)
- Medium Term Financial Plan – Tranche 1 Budget including Fees and Charges (prior to consultation) (21st November)
- Council Tax Base Report 2026/27 (8th January 2026)
- Council Tax – Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026/27 (8th January)
- Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27 (8th January)
- Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy 2026/27 (8th January)
- Business Rates - Discretionary Rates Relief Policy 2026/27 (8th January)
- Housing Revenue Account Rent Setting 2026/27 (8th January)
- Medium Term Financial Plan 2026-27 to 2028-29 Fees and Charges and consultation outcome including Worcestershire Regulatory Services Budget Recommendations (8th January)

The outcomes of discussions at Budget Scrutiny are relayed to Overview and Scrutiny Members through updates provided by the Chair of Budget Scrutiny at each meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Performance Scrutiny Working Group
Membership: Councillors Craig Warhurst (Chair), William Boyd, Matthew Dormer, Chris Holz, Rita Rogers

The Performance Scrutiny Working Group (a sub-group of Overview and Scrutiny looking at performance across council service areas) has held a single meeting to date in the municipal year 2025/26, looking at Tree Maintenance across the Borough. A further meeting is to be arranged later in the year. The Performance Working Group considers 'overview' topics chosen by Members of the Group to date and does not consider specific Executive Committee reports.

The outcomes of discussions at Performance Scrutiny are relayed to Overview and Scrutiny Members through updates provided by the Chair of Performance Scrutiny at each meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Task Groups Established by Overview and Scrutiny

Task Groups are established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in order to conduct an in-depth review of any service, policy or issue that affects the Borough. During the 2025-26 municipal year, one Task Group review has been finalised and one is due to be finalised by spring 2026.

Fly Tipping and Bulky Waste Task Group

Membership: Councillors Matthew Dormer (Chair), William Boyd, Brandon Clayton, and Gary Slim

This Task Group submitted its final report in July 2025. Several conclusions have been drawn by Members of this Task Group:

- The Council provided a competitive and reasonably priced bulky waste collection service, which needed to be further promoted to raise awareness of the service within the community.
- Education and promotion of information relating to responsible disposal of waste should drive reductions in fly tipping in residential areas (of items such as white goods, black bags etc.). The Council should continue to provide residents with detailed information, through various media, on what can and cannot be recycled and information on how to dispose of bulky items.
- Building community pride in local areas would help to reduce fly tipping rates over time.

The Task Group made a single recommendation, namely *that Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) provide a bi-annual update report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which reviews fly tipping data and enforcement work undertaken in the Borough*. This recommendation was agreed at the meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7th July 2025.

Post-16 Education Task Group

Membership: Councillors Craig Warhurst (Chair), William Boyd, Matthew Dormer, Sachin Mathur, Paul Wren

This Task Group was launched in October 2024, with the aim of reviewing the range of post-16 education provision in Redditch, focusing on the position regarding vocational courses and apprenticeships for 16+ students in the Borough.

The Task Group has also decided to focus on how colleges, training providers and businesses in Redditch can work to ensure that post-16 courses can deliver better employability opportunities for people of Redditch and what skill sets can be developed through vocational courses to match the skills of students to the needs of employers in the Redditch area.

The Group has met four times to date, holding discussions with stakeholders including the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce, the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, Worcestershire County Council, Heart of Worcestershire College, the West Midlands Combined Authority, as well as apprenticeship providers in the region, including Midland Group Training Services.

The Group is expected to hold a further summary meeting and submit its final report by the end of this municipal year.

External Scrutiny Bodies

The Council's representatives on external scrutiny bodies have continued to provide regular updates at meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work undertaken by these regional bodies.

West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Council Representative, Councillor William Boyd

During the year Councillor Boyd has provided verbal updates on the meetings of this WMCA committee, in particular reporting any issued that were of relevance to Redditch.

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

During the year Councillor Fardoe has provided updates on the meetings of the WMCA's Transport Overview and Scrutiny, reporting on any issues of relevance to Redditch identified at those meetings.

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

The Committee has received regular updates from Councillor Fry about the work of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), highlighting health matters being discussed at that forum, such as the pharmaceutical needs assessment.

Summary of Overview and Scrutiny Meetings

The section below provides a summary of the main items considered at each meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2025-26 to date. Further information on the agendas and minutes from these meetings can be found using the link below:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meetings - 2025-2026

9th June 2025

Health Inequalities in Redditch – Public Health Presentation

A presentation on Health Inequality and Priority Health Neighbourhoods in Redditch was provided by representatives from Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Public Health department, Citizens Advice Bromsgrove and Redditch and Bromsgrove District Collaborative.

The Public Health team, WCC, reported that based on the analysis of the number of all emergency hospital admissions, emergency cardiovascular admissions, and emergency respiratory admissions across Worcestershire, 14 priority neighbourhoods with the highest levels of unmet health needs were identified. Redditch had the most priority neighbourhoods of all district areas in Worcestershire with 8 priority neighbourhoods.

It was noted that Redditch area as a whole was an outlier in Worcestershire in statistical analysis identifying incidence of non-elective emergency hospital admissions. This pointed to issues with wider determinants of health in Redditch. It was underlined that data on non-elective hospital admissions was taken over four continuous years, which meant that the LSOAs identified maintained consistently high (close or above 3 SD above the mean) level of non-elective hospital admissions over that period.

The work to addressing health inequalities and wider determinants of health issues at a local level in Redditch was outlined during consideration of this report, which included examples of public health initiatives that were already being supported in Redditch were covered. It was noted that progress had already been made, in terms of engaging affected communities, and developing initiatives to address the health inequality issues in Redditch. In the long-term, poor health outcomes required dealing with a complex set of problems that could best be addressed by directly involving people and communities affected by those health issues.

The Committee asked that Public Health, Worcestershire County Council, provide a further communication to update on Health Inequality reduction work within Priority Neighbourhoods in Redditch in 6 to 12 months.

Shareholders' Committee Annual Report – Pre-Scrutiny

The Shareholders Committee Annual Report 2024-25 was presented to the Committee. It was noted that arrangements for the operation of the Shareholders Committee changed in May 2024 with the Shareholders Committee being required to produce an annual update to Council on the performance of Rubicon Leisure Limited. This was the first time that an annual report was produced on behalf of the Shareholders Committee.

Members were reminded that the role of the Shareholders Committee was distinct from that of the Rubicon Board. The Board, comprising Executive and Non-Executive Directors, was responsible for running the business and the proper delivery of services. There were officers at the Council responsible for managing the client side of the business, and who monitored the service contract. The Shareholders Committee had no role over operational matters but was responsible for holding the Board to account for a number of reserved matters, detailed in the articles of the company.

Some Members expressed disappointment with the change to the status of Shareholders Committee since 2024-25, in that Shareholders Committee had now become a sub-committee of the Executive Committee with non-Executive Councillors not involved as voting members in its meetings. It was noted that in line with the terms of reference of the Shareholders Committee, the leader of the opposition political group at the Council would continue to be invited to attend meetings of the Shareholders Committee to participate in the debate, although as he was not a Member of the Committee he would not have the power to vote at these meetings.

Housing Regulator Tenant Satisfaction Measures – Pre-Scrutiny

The Committee was informed that the Housing Regulator had introduced 22 tenant satisfaction measures in 2023. These measures were designed to help regulate the performance of housing providers, including Redditch Borough Council. The Council had monitored the authority's performance in accordance with these measures in 2023/24 and 2024/25 and the data for both years had been included in the report. It was noted that when compared to the results from 2023/24 there had generally been an increase in tenant satisfaction levels although the Council still performed below the median level across other Social Housing Providers.

In considering the Tenant Perception Survey results for the two years, it was noted that there was year on year improvement in most areas. However, some measures remained at a low and stagnating level, for example in relation to satisfaction with the Council's complaint handling. It was noted that major improvements could be seen in repairs and maintenance which might be attributed to the Repairs and Maintenance team having recruited a number of new team members and having invested in modernising technical equipment during this period.

Officers were in the process of developing an improvement plan and this was at an interim stage by the date of the meeting. A response from the Housing Regulator to the latest inspection of the Council was due to be announced publicly in July 2025 and a report would subsequently be produced on the outcome of the inspection process to be available in September 2025.

The recommendations of the report were endorsed by the Committee.

Housing Regulator Self-Assessment Complaint Handling Code – Pre-Scrutiny

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

Officers reported that in 2024-25 the Council received 124 complaints which was a rate of 22.37 complaints per 1,000 social housing properties. This compared to the median rate across social housing properties of 42.5. Officers needed to fully understand and audit the reasons behind the Council's relatively low complaints rate, whether it was because of improvements to the service, because tenants were unsure how they could make a complain, or due to a combination of these factors.

It was noted that in the first quarter of 2024-25 the Council's performance in complaint response times had deteriorated. Performance had been improving since then and to drive further improvement in complaints handling a dedicated complaints investigator had been introduced within Housing Property Services.

The recommendations of the report were endorsed by the Committee.

7th July 2025

Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre (DMIC) – Appointment of Contractor for Stage 4 Designs - Pre-Scrutiny

A report on the appointment of contractor for stage 4 designs of the Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre (DMIC) was presented.

It was reported that the project remained on track for the construction to start in January 2026. The stage 4 design work was due to be contracted via a JCT Pre-

Construction Services Agreement and following input from costs consultants it had been estimated that the costs of bringing a contractor on board for Stage 4 designs would cost between £250,000 and £300,000. However, as the exact costs remained unknown prior to sourcing updated quotations this report requested delegated authority to agree a contract value of up to £400,000, to provide sufficient headroom and contingency.

It was noted that the cost of the DMIC had increased from £8 million in the original Town Investment Plan to almost £12 million in the revised Town Deal budget. It was It was responded that an allocation of extra funding to the DMIC project had been signed off by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). It was assessed by officers that the extra investment into DMIC would provide significant added value for the end users, including an increase in lettable space at DMIC from 7,000 square feet to 17,000 square feet. Following testing of the business model for DMIC, there was an estimated operating surplus of £60,000 to £70,000 per annum after costs. This estimate was based on 90 per cent occupancy rate.

Recommendations of the report were endorsed by the Committee.

Redditch Council Housing Growth Programme – Pre-Scrutiny

The Committee considered a report on the Redditch Council Housing Growth Programme. It was recapped that the Executive Committee agreed to the Council Housing Growth Programme in January 2017. The Council received funding for this programme through a process of one-for-one receipts from Government when council houses were being sold. There was a requirement that the receipts be spent within five years or else the funds had to be returned to Central Government with interest.

The present report identified a number of options, set out as part of the proposed recommendation, to increase the Council's housing stock to meet the housing growth target of achieving 230 additional units by 2030. The Council Housing Growth Programme had already delivered 107 units, with a plan in place for delivery of further 56 units. This meant the Council needed to secure and plan for an additional 67 units to achieve the target by 2030.

Under the current terms of the Council Housing Growth Programme, there was a capital budget of £3 million per year to spend on developing or purchasing new Council houses. Once this figure was spent, additional funding could not be accessed without agreement from the Executive Committee. Officers were asking for greater flexibility in the Council Housing Growth Programme to enable expenditure over this level where needed and this would help the Council to respond to opportunities on the open market as they arose in a timely manner.

It was being proposed that all properties delivered through the Council Housing Growth Programme be let at social rent levels, subject to viability in respect of the repayment of any capital funding on the given property being repaid within a set period of 30, 40 or 50 years. If this proved not to be viable, then the rent level of 65 per cent of market rent would be applied, and if that was also unviable, then affordable rent level of 80 per cent of market rent would be applied.

It was explained that officers anticipated that housing and construction costs would continue to increase. This was in addition to Government targets for house building. Current viability assessments undertaken by the Council showed that the pay back period for council housing, under the programme, at social rent was circa 25 years. This was below the 30 years mark and would enable the Council to provide these social housing at social rent levels if building was undertaken at present time. It was also highlighted that with this Council Housing Growth Programme the costs could be kept down as the Council was building on its own land.

Recommendations of the report were endorsed by the Committee.

Acquisition of Properties – Pre-Scrutiny

It was explained that the Council had been approached by a developer regarding 12 shared ownership properties that the developer had been unable to sell. The authority had concluded that these properties could be offered as social housing. The cost of this acquisition could be funded through one for one capital receipts. The Council had had the properties valued and would take this information on board in the process. There was a need for the sale to be completed by October 2025, so the timescales for completion were tight.

Members questioned why the developer had experienced difficulties with selling these properties as shared ownership units and why other Registered Providers operating locally had not expressed interest. Officers explained that this was part of a national issue for smaller developments. This development had a low number of units which was not considered attractive for many larger developers. Some Registered Providers would also only consider the purchase of properties in particular locations. However, the Council was keen to ensure that there continued to be a balanced housing market in the Borough and this proposed investment was deemed appropriate in helping to support this ambition.

Members queried whether this purchase would set a precedent in terms of council purchasing properties directly from developers. It was responded that similar purchases had been undertaken by the Council in the past also with similar aim to support social housing.

The recommendations contained in the report, to agree to acquire the twelve affordable housing units from a developer and to let them at a social rent commensurate with the Council's Housing Capital Growth programme, were endorsed.

Fly Tipping and Bulky Waste Task Group – Final Report

The Chair of the Task Group introduced the report and commented in terms of the overall findings that the Council's bulky collection service was important given that a high proportion of fly tips in Redditch consisted of household waste such as black bags or other household items such as white goods, electrical appliances and green garden waste. It was noted that most of such fly tipping occurred within residential areas and it was this that the Council needed to focus on.

The Task Group felt that the Council provided a competitive and reasonably priced bulky collection service, which was found to be significantly cheaper than that offered by many other authorities as well as private providers, and further promotion of the service was necessary to increase awareness of this offer among Redditch residents.

It was explained that the Task Group's report detailed a change to arrangements in fly tipping enforcement across the Borough. This responsibility was transferred from the Council to Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) as of 1 June 2024. It was felt that monitoring the effect of this change was important and to this end, the Task Group's recommendation was for officers from WRS to provide a twice-yearly update to Overview and Scrutiny on fly tipping enforcement work. The Task Group's recommendation was agreed by the Committee.

1st September 2025

Regulator of Social Housing Inspection Report and Housing Improvement Plan – Pre-Scrutiny

The Committee received a report on the inspection of the Council's social housing by the Social Housing Regulator and the Council's Housing Improvement Plan. Members were informed that the Council received a C3 Regulatory Judgment in relation to its social housing, indicating serious failings in delivering housing services, particularly in repairs and maintenance, fire safety, tenant engagement, and data management. It was noted that the regulatory judgment was graded from C1 to C4 with C1 being the highest grade and C4 representing most severe level of non-compliance. 56 per cent of local authorities (with social housing stock) inspected had received C3 gradings.

The Council had developed a Housing Improvement Plan with the interim plan approved by the Executive Committee in June 2025. The Plan had been updated following the announcement of the inspection result on 30 July 2025. The Plan

contained a set of targeted actions which included the appointment of a Senior Tenant Engagement and Participation Officer, establishment of tenant forums and training programmes, implementation of new systems for repairs and safety compliance, development of a five-year rolling programme for stock condition surveys, and an enhanced governance through a multi-tiered oversight structure.

It was reiterated that significant improvement had been made since the Service Review and restructuring of the Housing Property Services including the Capital Team in 2019. In 2019 the Service was at a point of full failure within no performance measures, lack of data on voids, a lack of gas safety records, lack of oversight in respect of contractors and many other issues. Since the restructure and change of leadership and management, there had been an overhaul in operations with improvements made as set out in detail in the reports.

The Council's commitment to keep progressing was highlighted with the increased capital investment in its housing stock as shown through the 5-year Housing Capital Programme and the long-term HRA 30-year Capital Investment Programme, agreed in February 2023.

Members felt there was a need for cross-party housing improvement panel / working group to be set up to enable Members to scrutinise progress in carrying out the Housing Improvement Plan initiatives. It was envisaged that this would take the form of task and finish groups, which would be set up by Overview and Scrutiny to look at specific housing issues when appropriate.

The recommendations as set out in the report, to note the Regulatory Judgment, to approve the Housing Improvement Plan, and to fund the initiatives from Housing Revenue Account as set out in the report recommendations, were endorsed by the Committee.

<u>Voluntary Sector Grants Scheme 2026/27 to 2029/30 – Pre-Scrutiny</u>

The report detailed proposals to change the Council's approach to funding Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations. Under the report's proposals, the Council would allocate £175,000 per year to support VCS groups. This would include £75,000 for a financial advice service and £100,000 for distribution of higher and lower value grants to VCS groups. The sum for higher and lower level grants would be further split with a pot of £90,000 allocated to provision of higher value grants (£2,000 to £10,000 in value) and £10,000 pot for smaller value grants (£500 to £2,000 in value).

It was further proposed that a Grants Panel, comprising a group of elected Members, should be reintroduced to consider applications for higher value grants. Smaller value grants would continue to be determined by Officers.

Members were asked to note that there was funding, derived from scrap metal recovered through the cremation scheme operated by Bereavement Services, which was invested in VCS activities. This was entirely separate to the rest of the VCS funding programme and the level of this funding could not be predicted in advance as it varied year to year. Officers were proposing that authority should be delegated to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Spaces and the Voluntary Sector, to distribute this funding.

Consideration was also given to the advantage of a Member-led Grants Panel in that smaller charities, for example those that could not afford to employ professional bid writers, had a more equal chance in this format as Members could ask questions and clarify points on the application submitted with each applicant before the decision to award a grant is made. With an officer-assessment format, this was more difficult. It was clarified that under the new grants policy there would still be a uniform scoring matrix as under officer delegations and that meetings of the Grants Panel would be overseen by the Grants Manager.

It was clarified that the VCS Grants Policy required each applicant to disclose other sources of grant funding that they received, including from public bodies. The Council encouraged funding applications from existing and/or ongoing or started projects, rather than only proposed/planned projects. Officers highlighted that the VCS Grants Scheme had seen increased numbers of organisations applying and it was noted that the scheme had historically been over-subscribed.

The recommendations of the report were endorsed by the Committee.

<u>Adoption of Fixed Penalty Charge for breach of Community Protection Notice – Pre-Scrutiny</u>

A report was presented concerning the proposal to adopt Fixed Penalty Charge Notices (FPNs) for breaches of Community Protection Notices (CPNs).

It was stated that FPNs would provide an additional tool that could be used to address poor behaviour where breaches of CPNs occurred. In some cases, it would be more appropriate to issue an FPN than to take court action. Equally, there would be no obligation to issue FPN if this was not identified as a correct course of action.

Some Members questioned in what way the adoption of a fixed penalty for breaches of a CPN would lead to offenders changing their behaviour. It was explained that a CPN was served where there were reasonable grounds to believe the offender's conduct was having a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality. Section 52 of Part 4 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 provided that might issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) as an alternative to

prosecution for breach of a CPN. In cases of lower end offences this enabled a tool to be in place that allowed a reprimand to be given to offenders without going to prosecution. In addition, it could prompt a person served with a CPN to engage with enforcement officers before the matter was escalated to the courts.

It was commented that it needed to be evidenced how this measure could lead to behavioural changes in communities going forward and the extent to which enforcement actions were actively being taken where necessary. In this regard it was proposed that Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel should consider a report on the Community Protection Notice (CPN), assessing the effectiveness of the fixed penalty notice and associated measures on reducing anti-social behaviour (ASB).

The report recommendation was endorsed for the Council to adopt a Fixed Penalty Notice Charge of £100 for failure to comply with a Community Protection Notice. In addition, the Committee resolved that the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel receive a report on the Community Protection Notices (CPNs), that assesses the effectiveness of introducing the Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) enforcement regime, and the fixed penalty notice referenced in the above resolution, on reducing Anti-Social Behaviour.

Quarter 1 Housing Consumer Standards Report – Pre-Scrutiny

The report detailed the Council's performance in relation to 10 of the Regulator of Social Housing tenant satisfaction measures. It was reported that Council had achieved targets regarding Building Safety measures covering compliance, however, there remained urgent remedial works, for example in relation to outstanding high-risk fire remedial actions.

The available data indicated that the Council's performance across the 10 landlord measures in Housing was improving, when compared to the same quarter in the 2024/25 financial year. In addition, information available from the Power BI system that the Council was now using was enabling Officers to more accurately identify and assess issues when they occurred. It was highlighted in relation to direct tenant data that in Q1 2025/26, the Service received 23 complaints and 54 complements.

The report recommendation was endorsed by the Committee.

Housing Ombudsman Findings Report 1 Ref 202417927 – Pre-Scrutiny

This report related to a complaint that had been submitted to the Housing Ombudsman by a local resident. Apologies were provided by Officers on behalf of the Housing department to the residents affected and the Committee for the maladministration found in the two Ombudsman cases presented before the Committee this evening.

The Housing Ombudsman had identified issues with poor record keeping at the Council as well as in respect of how staff worked with people who had vulnerabilities. Staff required training in order to provide appropriate support to residents with different vulnerabilities. Issues had also been identified with complaint handling at the Council, with an emphasis having been placed on the need for staff to have empathy when working with residents. Officers were working through the Housing Ombudsman's findings with a view to identifying the most appropriate action to be taken to prevent similar issues from occurring in the future.

Following the presentation, Members commented that when any concerns with a tenant's property or vulnerabilities were identified, it should be the responsibility and due diligence of every employee who comes into contact with that tenant to escalate any concerns urgently with the Housing department. There needed to be a similar principle to safeguarding, that it is everyone's responsibility to address issues when meeting the tenant in any capacity. A Member commented that the detail described within the Housing Ombudsman Findings Report appeared to indicate that there were cultural issues amongst staff in the Housing department that needed to be addressed.

Some Members suggested it might be helpful for the Council to have a case worker, or multiple case workers, who could be someone 'entrenched' within the system and be a central point of contact in relation to a tenant. This would enable problems, such as special support needs, repairs, or damp and mould, to be raised with management at an early stage.

The findings, orders and recommendation of the Housing Ombudsman in this case as well as Council's compliance with those matters was noted by the Committee.

<u>Housing Ombudsman Findings Report 2 Ref 202331009 – Pre-Scrutiny</u>
This report related to a second complaint that had been submitted to the Housing Ombudsman by another local housing tenant.

In the report, the Housing Ombudsman had highlighted two key areas in which maladministration by the Council had been identified in relation to this case: the Council's response to reports from the resident of damp and mould, and the Council's complaint handling.

Members were asked to note that the Council had already agreed to introduce a specialist Damp and Mould team. There had been successful recruitment to all of the posts in this team and new staff would commence employment with the authority over the coming weeks and months. It was explained that complaint handling in quarter 4 2024/25 was below par and the improvements seen in quarter 1 2025/26 needed to be embedded. It was noted that a programme of training was being rolled out in the

Housing department to prioritise training of staff, including courses for relevant staff to be trained in relation to dealing with queries from vulnerable customers.

The findings, orders and recommendation of the Housing Ombudsman in this case as well as Council's compliance with those matters was noted by the Committee.

Disposal of Housing Revenue Account Assets – Eight garages at Ashorne Close, Matchborough, Redditch – Pre-Scrutiny

The report concerned the proposed disposal by the Council of eight garages at Ashorne Close.

The eight garages were built in the 1970s and were made of concrete beam. These garages had been deemed uneconomic to repair and it was proposed that they be demolished on the grounds of structural safety. It was clarified that in respect of Ashorne Close, it was proposed that ten car parking spaces be created that would be free of charge and accessible on a first-come, first-served basis.

Members enquired into secure bike parking as part of this proposal and it was responded that this would be considered for similar schemes in the future. In response to a further question, it was stated that this land was not appropriate for housing as the area was too small.

A question was also asked regarding the potential to install Zest electric vehicle charging points at the site. Officers responded that electric charging points take up more space than ordinary parking so might not be suitable for this particular site, however, as part of the Council's contract with Zest there was an opportunity to review EV charging locations and the potential sites would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

The recommendations as stated in the report were endorsed by the Committee.

Disposal of Housing Revenue Account Assets – 53 Parsons Road, Southcrest, Redditch. 53 Crabbs Cross Lane, Crabbs Cross, Redditch – Pre-Scrutiny

This report concerned the proposal to dispose of the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) assets at 53 Parsons Road, Southcrest, Redditch and 53 Crabbs Cross Lane, Crabbs Cross, Redditch.

Overview and Scrutiny was informed that both properties were in a dilapidated condition. The potential for the Council to upgrade these properties had been reviewed but the conclusion had been reached that the cost of bringing these properties to a habitable state would not be financially viable for the Council. Therefore, it was considered preferable to dispose of both properties and the Council could use the capital receipts to invest in new properties as part of the Housing Growth Programme.

The recommendations as set out in the report were endorsed by the Committee.

24th November 2025

Bereavement Services – Burial Strategy – Pre-Scrutiny

It was explained that the Burial Strategy was a crucial document for the Council to ensure a long-term, respectful, and inclusive management of burial spaces whilst meeting legal, cultural, and environmental needs. Without prior planning, Redditch faced a risk of running out of burial space and the Burial Strategy was designed to be a positive step in the effective management of burial space and future development of cemeteries within the Borough.

Redditch Borough Council operated and managed three cemeteries, Plymouth Road, Edgioake Lane and Abbey Cemetery and St Stephen's, St Luke's and Feckenham closed church yards. Plymouth Road cemetery was closed to new burials, Edgioake Lane Cemetery had approximately five years of burial provision available at current usage but was under review to free up further space for 5+ years of burial provision.

Abbey Cemetery had been the main burial area in Redditch Borough and as of early 2024 had approximately 8 months left of burial space. Through the later part of 2024 a vigorous exercise of reviewing burial space within the cemetery led to the securing of a further 10 years of space at this site.

In recent years, the Council undertook work to assess the suitability of several different sites across the Borough as per previous reports. In total twenty-six sites were originally reviewed, the various sites including land at the rear of Morrisons, Foxlydiate Woods, additional extension to the existing Edgioake lane site, Ipsley Church Lane, Greenland's playing fields, Coldfield Drive, Oakenshaw Park, and Woodrow Park.

It was noted that following the change of administration in May 2024, works at Ipsley Church Lane site were put on hold. In early 2025 a new site review was undertaken in respect of Land North of Morrisons and West of the B4497, B98 0JD (Proposed Site 2B). To date this site had passed the Environment Agency (EA) requirements to secure a standard permit.

Natural burial ground provision. The Environmental Services Manager responded that this could not be accommodated at the Abbey Cemetery but would be considered as part of the provision at a new burial site. It was noted in terms of burial practices that there was a relatively static number of burials each year in Redditch Borough. Nationally, the proportion was around 15 per cent burials and 85 per cent cremations.

In relation to the twenty-six potential sites originally reviewed by the Council it was noted that ground water, geology and associated testing was carried out at all these sites. In respect of the Land North of Morrisons and West of the B4497, B98 0JD (Proposed Site 2B), as it was near the lake, borehole and deep ground water testing had been carried out over winter/spring time to determine the suitability of the site and this confirmed that the site had passed the Environment Agency (EA) requirements to secure a standard permit.

The recommendation, that the Council approve the Burial Strategy, was endorsed by the Committee.

Quarter 2 Housing Improvement Plan Update – Pre-Scrutiny

A Q2 update on the Housing Improvement Plan was provided. A summary of progress against each of the Consumer Standards was presented within the report.

It was reported that for measure NC3 to establish a procedure to keep tenants informed of progress of their Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) cases, staff training was being provided and processes had been reviewed to ensure cases were managed as per process with a final visit when a case was being closed.

With regard to Consumer Standard SQ5 – Implement Total Mobile for Repairs and Maintenance – it was reported that in Q1 2025/26 the Council had lost the project manager assisting the team in the configuration and development prior to implementation of the Total Mobile (TM) system. Nevertheless, the system was now at the final testing stage.

On the overdue repairs and maintenance jobs, it was reported that since the Regulatory Judgment, the number of overdue jobs had reduced from circa 3,000 to 1,052 at the end of Q2 2025/26, with 521 jobs currently in progress and a further 91 reported at no access to property.

For Electrical Inspection Condition Reports (EICR), work was progressing with contractors who were issued with properties where no certificate was currently held either at all or within the 5-year reporting cycle. There was greater co-ordination reported between Housing Tenancy Officers and the Electrical and Gas Teams in place to visit and seek to gain entry to hard-to-reach properties currently outstanding in terms of electrical and other inspections.

In terms of tenant engagement work, delays had been experienced but draft proposals for the range of formal and informal opportunities were being prepared. This would detail how tenants could interact with and influence Housing Services. It was highlighted that to provide meaningful engagement for tenants required work to

understand their specific needs and, for those on tenants' panel, how they could participate fully in tenant governance arrangements. Senior Tenant Engagement Officer would be recruited into post in early 2026 to help progress this area of work.

A question was raised about the programme for the completion of all outstanding fire safety remedial actions. It was explained by officers that the target was to clear all outstanding fire remedial actions within two years.

The Housing Improvement Plan Quarter 2 2025/26 update was noted by the Committee.

Quarter 2 Housing Performance – Pre-Scrutiny

The Housing Consumer Standards Report for Q2 2025/26 was presented. The report detailed the Council's performance in relation to 10 of the Regulator of Social Housing tenant satisfaction measures.

In respect of the 'Homes that Do Not Meet the Decent Homes Standards' measure, it was reported that, following a review of the asset management database the Council had identified an issue with software that had resulted in previous reporting being inaccurate. This had led to a revised figure for Q2 2025/26 which was a sharp increase in the number of properties that did not meet the Decent Homes Standards for this period. The percentage figure increased from 4.15 per cent up to 11.90 per cent. The Housing Regulator had been alerted to this error in previous reporting and Officers were working to identify properties affected and works that needed to be carried out in those properties. During Q2 2025/26 the Council had been working with the software provider to get the assurance that future reporting would be accurate.

For stock condition surveys, it was reported that these commenced in August 2025 with a target to complete 1,340 surveys in 2025/26. In Quarter 2, 121 surveys had been completed with additional resources allocated to target 100 surveys per week over the remainder of the fiscal year.

The Council's performance in non-emergency and emergency repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale showed improvement over the previous quarter whilst for building safety measures it was reported that fire safety checks were rated red due to consultant capacity issues with a shortage of fire risk assessors. This capacity issue had now been addressed.

In terms of work carried out to reduce fire risk within apartment blocks, it was highlighted that the caretaking team now operated a full service in communal areas of regular cleaning that included full checks for fire risks.

Another red rated measure was in respect of lift safety checks. It was explained that there was a drop in performance as the Council's insurer experienced difficulties accessing one of the lifts for inspection. This had now been remedied across the blocks as key safes were in place for inspectors to access lift shafts.

It was highlighted in relation to direct tenant data that in Q2 2025/26, the Service experienced a drop in performance in relation to complaints handling, but that Senior Complaints Officer had now been recruited which would improve capacity within the complaints team. It was reported that 113 compliments were received by the Housing Service at Q2.

With respect to repairs it was stated that the Service undertook around 10,000 repairs annually and there were now monthly reports submitted from complaints officer to classify each complaint and implement appropriate remedial action(s).

The annual tenant satisfaction survey would be released in mid-January 2026 and Members were asked to help raise awareness of this survey among the tenants.

The Quarter 2 Housing Performance for 2025/26 in respect of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (Landlord) was noted by the Committee.

12th January 2026

Biodiversity Duty First Consideration Report – Pre-Scrutiny

The Council's Biodiversity Duty Report, as required under the Environment Act 2021, was presented to the Committee. The 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.

It was explained that following the Biodiversity First Consideration Report publication, by 26 March 2026, efforts would be concentrated on the monitoring of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) to demonstrate the location and species of trees planted and would also work to improve greater ranges of species within the Borough. BNG would also be monitored through Local Plan policies and development management.

Members raised concerns about the lack of detail in the report with regards to citizen science public engagement, 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 recordings. 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 Members noting that works would develop over a five-year period. Incorporating the outcomes of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) would also be a contributing factor to future proposals.

The recommendations of the report were endorsed by the Committee.

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 grant funding, totalling £736,335 with £35,697 ring-fenced for domestic abuse activities. 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 prevention activities and the proposed allocations were outlined within the report.

The performance of the Council's funded initiatives was discussed by Members in detail. It was agreed by the Board that an annual performance report should be produced that would be presented to Overview and Scrutiny and Executive Committees. A current performance report for 2025/26 was also requested to come before the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its June meeting.

Members also requested data on food bank usage to understand the local need. Members were advised that some food bank organisations were independent and not Council run, however, Officers would gather the necessary data and share with Members of the Committee.

It was clarified that 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 the grant funding would be allocated through the new burdens process, however, the Homelessness Prevention Grant also covered areas for 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 submitted applications for grant funding required a detailed cost summary, which were assessed for any available funding. It was also commented 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 recommendations. 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 as well as review of the need for extra resources for the department.

The recommendations as set out in the report were endorsed by the Committee. An additional recommendation to the Executive Committee was agreed by the Committee in respect of Officers providing an annual update in respect of the Homelessness Prevention Grant initiatives that receive Council funding.

Rubicon Leisure Priorities and Progress Presentation

This item was considered by the Committee in exempt session. Following a request by Overview and Scrutiny Committee, this presentation covered Rubicon Leisure's business plan and priorities and recent progress in its delivery of leisure services

(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 any individual, information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual, and information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

Remaining Meetings in 2025/26

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is due to hold a further two meetings in 2025-26 on the 17th of February 2025, date of submission of this annual report, and the 16th of March 2026. At these meetings, the Committee is due to consider the remaining items on its work programme. However, please note that additional items may still be added to/removed from the work programme after publication of this annual report.

17th February

- Local Government Reorganisation Update Report
- Quarter 3 Housing Improvement Plan Update – Pre-Scrutiny
- Quarter 3 Housing Performance – Pre-Scrutiny
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy – Pre-Scrutiny
- Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2025-26

16th March

- Climate Change Strategy 2026 to 2031 – Pre-Scrutiny

- Construction of Redditch Innovation Centre – Pre-Scrutiny (Previously called: Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre (DMIC))
- Introduction of Enforcement of Littering from Vehicles – Pre-Scrutiny
- Revision of Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy – Pre-Scrutiny
- Shared Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2026-2031 – Pre-Scrutiny
- Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) – Update on Environmental Crime Enforcement

9th June (new municipal year)

- Homelessness Prevention Grant Initiatives for 2025/26 (Annual Report)
- Redditch Partnership Annual Update
- Leisure Concession Policy Review – Pre-Scrutiny
- Housing Decant Policy – Pre-Scrutiny

Conclusion

This year the Committee has continued to scrutinise issues of high relevance to the Borough, for example health inequalities in priority neighbourhoods of Redditch. In addition, the Committee has pre-scrutinised a number of Executive reports of interest and where necessary made comments for consideration by the Executive Committee. In addition, Overview and Scrutiny has finalised a task group investigation into Fly Tipping and Bulky Waste and is close to finalising the post-16 education in Redditch Task Group, which is expected to conclude by the end of this municipal year. There are two permanent working groups of Overview and Scrutiny looking at the Council's budget and finance issues (Budget Scrutiny) and issues relating to Council's performance in carrying out its functions (Performance Scrutiny).

The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee expresses his thanks to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, recognising in particular the valuable contribution made by Members through Task Group investigations and on the Budget and Performance Scrutiny Working Groups.

For any background information on the work of Overview and Scrutiny Committee in Redditch, please visit **https://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/council/the-council.aspx**

Democratic Services, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH
Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3095 email: democratic@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Appendix A – Task Group Proposal Scoping Document

(This form should be completed by sponsoring Member(s), Officers and / or members of the public when proposing an item for Scrutiny).

Note: The matters detailed below have not yet received any detailed consideration. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee reserves the right to reject suggestions for scrutiny that fall outside the Borough Council's remit.

Proposer's name and designation		Date of referral	
Proposed topic title			
Link to local priorities including the strategic purposes			
Background to the issue			
Key Objectives Please keep to SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)			
How long do you think is needed to complete this exercise? (Where possible please estimate the number of weeks, months and meetings required)			

Please return this form to: Democratic Services, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH

Email: democratic@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Redditch Borough Council
Working together for our communities

Licensing Committee

Thursday, 4th June, 2026

MINUTE EXTRACT

Present:

Councillor Nic Pioli (Chair), Councillor Simon Farmer (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juliet Barker Smith, Roger Bennett, Matthew Dormer, Sharon Harvey, Joanna Kane, Gary Slim and Monica Stringfellow

Officers:

Kiran Lahel and Hazel Powell

Democratic Services Officers:

Mat Sliwinski

6. HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE FEES AND CHARGES - UPDATE REPORT ON THE CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS RECEIVED

The Licensing and Support Services Manager, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the report to Members. The purpose of the report was to consider representations received in objection to the increase in licence fees associated with Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licences and operator licences.

Officers explained that as part of the legal agreement established with the formation of WRS, licensing remains a reserved matter. Thus, all policy decisions in licensing as well as income and fee setting remained the responsibility of the full Council at Redditch.

The proposal in the report for a 3% increase to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licences and operator licenses for 2026/27 was calculated as to enable the service to achieve a cost recovery (cost-neutral) position for the service. The Council was not legally allowed to make a profit from its licensing service. In response to a Member question, it was explained that the decision that the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licences and operator licences (as well as other licensing) should be self-financing was made by all WRS partner authorities upon the formation of WRS Board.

Chair

In accordance with section 70(1) of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, on 14th January 2026, a notice appeared in the Redditch Advertiser announcing the 3% proposed fee increases referenced in paragraph 3.2 of the report and inviting objections within 28 days of the date of newspaper's publication. A copy of the notice was also placed at the Council's offices. The last date for objections was 10th February 2026.

It was reported that the licensing service received two objections, attached at Appendices 1 and 2, to the proposed 3% fee increases for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licences and operator licences.

Officers stated that if licensing application projections remain the same as for 2025/26 and there is no fee change to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire personal licences and operator licences for 2026/27, the service would run at a deficit of between £4,000 and £5,000 for 2026/27.

It was noted that in proposing the 3% increase a number of variables had been analysed and costed including (but not restricted to):

- Officer costs – inclusive of the salary pay award approved in April 2026, which was a 3.3% increase. All officers involved in the licensing process were taken into account including WRS officers, and Democratic Services and Legal officers.
- The number of Committee and Sub-Committee meetings taking place across the year. In 2025/26 there were 16 Licensing Sub-Committees and 6 Licensing Parent Committees administered.
- The total number of Taxi applications processed throughout the year. In Redditch in 2025/26 there were: 175 Hackney Carriage Vehicle (HCV) applications and 228 Private Hire Vehicle (PCV) applications processed.
- Driver licences processed (although this was not included in the objections received).

Members queried the actual values for each of the variables considered in working out the proposed licensing fee variation for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licences and operator licences. Officers responded that a standard cost formula was applied to each of the variables by the Council's finance team which undertook the calculations. Some Members pointed out that even though the factors which were considered and the outcome of calculations was set out in the report, full details of the cost formula applied had not been made available to Members.

It was noted that all the districts in the county set their own fees in respect of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licences and operator licences.

Members discussed the objections that had been raised to the proposed fee increases. Reference was made to comments in the objections that there had been delays in the processing of applications for vehicle licences and driver licences. The Principal Licensing Officer responded that WRS officers had met with the taxi trade as part of the taxi forum. A lot of the issues raised by the taxi trade revolved around the application forms. It was explained that due to the current process, the WRS often received application information in parts. This had significantly lengthened the processing time for applications. The WRS was now putting an online application process in place, with both the vehicle and driver online application forms to go live later in June 2026. This would enable application queries to be dealt with through the online portal.

During the debate, some Members commented that the current licensing service model at Redditch was unviable in the context of the licensing application fees being significantly cheaper at Wolverhampton City Council, and even significant reductions in the fees charged by Redditch Borough Council would likely not lead to any substantial increase in the number of applications received by Redditch. It was explained that due to the volume of drivers submitting applications with Wolverhampton City Council there were economies of scale allowing Wolverhampton to offer low application fees.

Some Members expressed the view that the rigorous licensing conditions set by Redditch Borough Council, for example the mandatory twice-yearly compliance testing of vehicles, were beneficial to the standard of taxis licensed in Redditch and should be retained. Members queried whether the Council would be able to sustain the financial impact if the licensing fees were to be capped at the current level for 2026/27. Officers provided an affirmative reply that the Council could afford to freeze fees in this area.

A recommendation was proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Gary Slim that the licence fees in respect of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licences and operator licences for 2026/27 remain at the current level.

An alternative recommendation was proposed by Councillor Matt Dormer and seconded by Councillor Roger Bennett that the licence fees in respect of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licences and operator licences be reduced by 5% for 2026/27 compared to the current fee levels.

In response to a question about the impact of a 5% decrease to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licence and operator licence fees, officers confirmed that the projected operating deficit to the licensing service would be double that of the projected loss if the fees were to remain unchanged.

A Member commented that he proposed the 5% decrease to the fees as the taxi trade should be supported by the Council at this time and highlighted that there was currently not enough enforcement checks on the taxi ranks undertaken in Redditch among other issues highlighted in other parts of the discussion.

Another Member questioned whether decreasing the fees would not set a precedent and make the service increasingly unaffordable to the Council in future years. It was highlighted that capping the fees for 2026/27 at the current level would already result in a deficit to the Council.

The recommendations were put to the vote in the order they were proposed.

On the recommendation that the licence fees in respect of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licences and operator licences for 2026/27 remain at the current level (as set for 2025/26) being put to the vote, the majority of members present voted in favour. Therefore it was:

RECOMMENDED to Council that

The licence fee in respect of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licences and operator licences for 2026/27 remain at the current fee level.

The Meeting commenced at 7.04 pm
and closed at 7.58 pm

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees and Charges – Update report on the consideration of objections received

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor M Dormer
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Simon Wilkes – Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Report Author	Job Title: Licensing and Support Services Manager Contact email: Kiran.Lahel@worcsregservices.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01562 738067
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	N/A
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members consider the objections received to the 2026/2027 proposed licence fee increases in respect of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licences and operator licences and RECOMMEND referring the matter, including any recommendations, to full COUNCIL for determination.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 As part of the legal agreement established with the formation of Worcestershire Regulatory Services, licensing remains a reserved matter. This means that all policy decisions, as well as income and fee setting, remain the responsibility of the Council.

2.2 It is the Council's role to review and set its licensing fees and charges on an annual basis. The Licensing and Support Services Manager at Worcestershire Regulatory Services works closely with the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer alongside the Council's wider Finance Team to ensure all fees remain cost neutral.

2.3 The annual review of licensing fees and charges took place in December 2025. A copy of the proposed Licensing & Environmental Health fees and charges for 2026/27 that was presented at Council is attached at **"Appendix 3".** These fees and charges include the fees

proposed by the Council to ensure that the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire service is run on a cost-neutral basis.

2.4 The Council is required by section 70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, to advertise any proposed variation to its fees for hackney carriage and private hire vehicle and operator licences by publishing a notice in a local newspaper. This notice must provide a period of not less than 28 days for people to raise objections to the proposed variations to the fees.

2.5 If an objection is made against the proposed variation and not withdrawn then the Licensing Committee must consider the objection raised before recommending onto full Council. The mechanism to bring the matter before full Council is by way of referral and recommendation through the Licensing Committee.

2.6 On the 2nd April a report was presented to the Licensing Committee outlining the objections received to the proposed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire fees and charges agreed at Council. Members requested that further information on the financial position of the Council be presented to the Licensing Committee at the next meeting to allow Members to make a more informed decision.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 It is the Council's role to review and set its licensing fees and charges on an annual basis. The Licensing and Support Services Manager at Worcestershire Regulatory Services works closely with the Director of Finance and the Council's Section 151 Officer to establish accurate details aimed at achieving full cost recovery of the licensing service, in relation to the relevant cost centres.

3.2 The table below sets out the Council's proposed licence fees for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle and operator licences for the 2026/27 financial year as shown in Appendix 3. The proposed fees are a 3% increase (rounded up or down) on the 2025/26 licence fees.

Licence type	Current fee	Proposed fee
Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle Licence (new and renewal)	£308.50	£318.00
Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle Licence (temporary licence)	£231.40	£238.00

Private Hire Operator's Licence (5-year licence) (up to 3 vehicles)	£708.90	£730.00
Private Hire Operator's Licence (per additional vehicle)	£18.90	£19.00

3.3 In accordance with section 70(1) of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, on 14th January 2026, a notice appeared in the Redditch Advertiser announcing the above proposed fee increases and inviting objections within 28 days of the date of newspaper's publication. A copy of the notice was also placed at the Council's offices. The last date for objections was 10th February 2026.

3.4 On 23rd January 2026 the licensing service received an objection from Asim Nazir, Imran Altaf, and Mohammed Ilyas as representatives of the Redditch Taxi Association. The objection is attached as **APPENDIX 1**.

3.5 The objection from the Taxi Association raised concerns that the proposed increased fees do not reflect the impact of cross bordering, increased cost of living, illegal parking on ranks, or reflect the current level of administrative service.

3.6 On 9th February 2026 the licensing service received an objection from Amjad Ali Khan of A2B Taxis and Contracts (Redditch) Ltd, who holds a Private Hire operators licence and Private Hire vehicle licences with Redditch Borough Council. The objection is given as **APPENDIX 2**.

3.7 The objection from A2B Taxis and Contracts (Redditch) Ltd raised concerns that the proposed fees are disproportionate in terms of the financial pressures resulting from current policy requirements and in respect of the level of administrative service provided. The objection also details concerns that the proposed fees may drive the taxi trade to be licensed by other authorities whose licence fees are lower; the objection provides a cost comparison with Wolverhampton City Council's licensing fees.

3.8 When analysing and discussing any proposed increases in fees officers take into account a number of factors to ensure that the budget remains cost neutral. If licensing application projections remain the same as 25/26 and there is no fee increase then the Council will see a shortfall of between £4-5k in income to fund the service in 26/27.

3.9 In proposing the 3% increase a number of variables are analysed and costed including but not restricted to:

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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- Officer costs – this is inclusive of the salary pay award that was approved in April 2026 of 3.3% increase for all officers involved in the process including WRS officers, Democratic services and Legal officers.
- The number of Committees and Sub committees that take place across the year. In 25/26 there were:

  - 16 Licensing Sub Committees that were administered.
  - 6 Licensing Parent Committees that were administered.

- The total number of Taxi applications processed throughout the year for Redditch in 25/26 which were:

  -175 HCV Applications processed
  -228 PHV Applications processed

- Although driver fees are not included in the objection the below provides some context as to how many driver licenses were also processed in 25/26.

Dual licensed taxi and PHV drivers	231	260
Taxi only licensed drivers	43	0
PHV only licensed drivers	244	216
Both taxi and PHV drivers (two licences - not a dual)	0	0
Total taxi and PHV drivers	518	476

3.10 District Councils across Worcestershire will use a similar equation to determine a percentage increase for their Licensing Services. The percentage is not always the same as the figures used to determine a change (if any) will be specific to the individual district and will consider their licensing numbers, number of committees, individual recharge costs and overall income received into the Council.

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3.11 Members are asked to consider the information before them and propose any recommendations the Committee may wish to make in referring this matter to full Council for final determination.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The proposed increase in fees and charges would cover the increase in costs to the Council. This includes salary costs, NI, all internal costs to the Council including the cost of sun committees, Parents Committees and Legal Services. Licensing fees and charges are non-profit making, and the relevant cost centres will reflect the operation of the service as cost-neutral. Any reduction in the proposed fees may lead to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing service running at a financial loss.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Council may only charge a fee which enables the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing function to operate on a cost-neural basis. Any excess income must be carried forward to the next financial year and the review of the fees at that point would need to reflect the carry-over.

5.2 The 1976 Act requires proposed variation to the fees for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle and operator licences to undergo a 28 day public consultation by way of notice within a local newspaper and at the Council's offices.

5.3 Full Council holds the responsibility for final determination of fees. Any objections made to the proposed fees must first be considered by the Licensing Committee and referred to full Council with any recommendations that the Licensing Committee may have.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

6.1 The licensing fees and charges review found it necessary to increase fees and charges for 26/27 due to inflationary pressures, however the Council also recognises the economic pressure on licence holders and business, so have attempted to keep the increases to a minimum.

Climate Change Implications

6.2 None identified.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.3 The Council must have regard to its public sector equality duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In summary, Section 149 requires that a public authority, in the exercise of its functions, must have due regard to the need to:

a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act.

b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

6.4 Section 149(7) of the Equality Act 2010 defines the relevant protected characteristics as: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

6.5 The Council believes that the proposal to increase the licensing fees by the percentages outlined in section 3.2 above does not adversely impact or unlawfully discriminate against any protected characteristic.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 To minimise the risk of challenge to the setting of fees and charges, they are designed to meet but not exceed the costs the Council reasonably believes will be incurred in issuing licences and administering the service.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Objection from Redditch Taxi Association

Appendix 2 – Objection from A2B Taxi and Contracts (Redditch) Ltd

Appendix 3 – Licensing Fees and Charges

From: asim nazir <[redacted]
Sent: Friday, January 23, 2026 12:24:41 AM
To: [redacted]
Subject: Proposed licence fee increase

This email originated from outside of the organisation STOP : Were you expecting this email? Does it look genuine? THINK : Before you CLICK on any links or OPEN any attachments.

Dear Redditch Borough Council

We are writing to you on behalf of the drivers of the Redditch taxi and private hire trade, regarding the proposed increase in licence fees starting April 2026.
We as a trade feel that these are unjustified and unreasonable in the service we receive. Licencing is not delivering a service that is expected of them. We have delays in both vehicle and driver licence application's. When drivers are contacting WRS the standard of service is appalling with little or no information regarding the query in question. Drivers have reported the conduct of staff as being rude and being lied to about documents that have been submitted.
With cutbacks from the town hall we as a trade do not have a go to hub, and the face-to-face time we do have is limited to the amount of drivers licenced in the borough.
The trade is also feeling the pressure with the fast pace of the UBER takeover, which all journeys are carried out by out of area licenced vehicles.
A livable wage is becoming harder and harder by the day.

Licencing can confirm that many of our drivers and operators are opting to be licenced by Wolverhampton, as they are a lot more efficient in process times and price.
With the proposed fees a lot more drivers are looking at other authorities rather than Redditch.

We have raised concerns with various departments about the illegal parking on town taxi ranks including out of town private hires, to which we have had no response or action being taken.
A few questions that our drivers would like answered are
- Why do the fees need to be raised?
- Where will the fees be spent?
- What improvements in service can the drivers expect in dealing with their applications?
- How will the raise in fees add any value to the drivers?
- Will there be an introduction to reimbursement for delays in processing plates and badges by licencing to the drivers?

We as drivers want to know the justification for this increase and if it is still economically viable to be a driver with Redditch Borough Council.
We as a trade will await your response.
Please help the trade before you lose the trade.
We are happy to sit with you and discuss this matter and other issues we are facing.
Kind regards
Asim Nazir, Imran Altaf and Mohammed Ilyas
Redditch Taxi Association

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From: Accounts [redacted]
Sent: 09 February 2026 12:10
To: Hazel Powell [redacted]
Subject: RE: Consultation - Vehicle and Operator Licence Fees
Importance: High

Morning Hazel,

Thank you for your email and for giving us the opportunity to provide further detail on why we believe the proposed increases to vehicle and operator licensing fees would be detrimental to the trade in Redditch.

As one of the most established operators in the borough, responsible for **35 licensed vehicles** (currently) and **75–80 self-employed driver partners**, we feel these proposals will severely impact not only our business, but the wider trade and ultimately the public.

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1. **Redditch Already Applies Stricter Requirements Than Most Authorities**

Redditch Borough Council already imposes some of the most restrictive licensing conditions in the region, including:

- **Vehicle age limits** that significantly shorten the operational lifespan of vehicles.
- **Mandatory twice-yearly compliance testing**, whereas many authorities – including Wolverhampton – require only one annual test.
- **Higher existing fees** compared with a number of surrounding councils.

These obligations already place Redditch-licensed operators at a financial and competitive disadvantage before any further increases are applied.

---

2. Service Levels Do Not Reflect the High Fees Being Paid

Despite paying among the highest fees in the region, the level of service we receive as fee-payers remains inconsistent. We have frequently experienced:

- **Licences issued late**, delaying our ability to place vehicles into service.
- **Documents mislaid during processing**, creating further delays and additional administrative burdens.
- **Reliance on just one approved testing facility**, limiting flexibility for operators and creating bottlenecks during peak periods.

In addition, **there is still no online system for submitting applications**, amendments, or renewals. This means everything must be processed manually, which is slow, labour-intensive, and increases the likelihood of errors or delays.

Given the fees being charged, we would expect a far more **efficient and streamlined licensing process**, similar to what many other authorities have now implemented. Wolverhampton, for example, operates far more digitally and efficiently, which is one of the reasons so many drivers are opting to licence there instead.

These ongoing challenges make it difficult to understand or justify any fee increase.

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3. Higher Fees Will Drive More Drivers and Operators to Licence Elsewhere
Redditch already has a high number of **Wolverhampton- and Birmingham-licensed vehicles** operating locally through services like Uber. Meanwhile, those of us who continue to invest in the Redditch licensing system receive no tangible advantage or competitive support.
If fees continue to rise, many local drivers and operators will simply licence elsewhere out of financial necessity. This would result in:

- **Loss of enforcement capability** for RBC.
- **Reduced licensing income** as drivers migrate to cheaper, more efficient authorities.
- **Lower levels of oversight and public-safety control** over vehicles operating within the borough.

These are outcomes that harm both the Council and the local public.

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4. Cost Comparison: Wolverhampton vs Redditch (Including Testing Costs)
Our Wolverhampton Private Hire Vehicle licensing confirmation shows a **£175 licence fee** for the vehicle.
Redditch's proposed 2026 vehicle licence fee is **£318**.
Additional testing requirements:

- **Redditch:** 2 tests per year × £54.95 = **£109.90**
- **Wolverhampton:** 1 test per year × £54.95 = **£54.95**

Annual Cost per Vehicle

Council	Licence Fee	Mandatory Tests	Total Annual Cost per Vehicle
Wolverhampton	£175	1 × £54.95	**£229.95**
Redditch	£318	2 × £54.95 = £109.90	**£427.90**

Annual Fleet Cost (35 Vehicles)

Council	Cost per Vehicle	Total Fleet Cost (×35)
Wolverhampton	£229.95	**£8,048.25**
Redditch	£427.90	**£14,976.50**

Annual Difference
Redditch licensing costs us **£6,928.25 more per year** than Wolverhampton:
£14,976.50 – £8,048.25 = £6,928.25
This is an extra **£198 per vehicle, every year**, purely for remaining licensed locally rather than elsewhere.

Driver Licensing Costs (Not Included in This Proposal, But Relevant)
Although driver-licence fees are not being increased in this consultation, it's important to highlight the **significant difference** between Redditch and Wolverhampton:

Council	New Driver 3-Year PH Licence	Renewal 3-Year PH Licence	Additional Admin Fees
Redditch	£175.20	£175.20	£43.30 admin for new applicants [hart.moderngov.co.uk]
Wolverhampton	£98	£78	Included; no additional RBC-type admin fee

This means a Redditch new driver pays:
£175.20 + £43.30 = £218.50
A Wolverhampton new driver pays:
£98
Difference for new drivers: £120.50 more in Redditch
Difference for renewals: £97.20 more in Redditch

For a fleet with **75–80 self-employed drivers**, as well as our own 20+ drivers currently, this differential is hugely significant and another reason many drivers choose Wolverhampton instead.

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5. The Trade Is Already Under Severe Financial Pressure
Over the past two years:

- We have **invested heavily** in upgrading our entire fleet to hybrid vehicles.
- We experienced a decline of **over 90,000 jobs last year** due to Uber competition and cost-of-living pressures.
- Contract work has become a **race to the bottom**, leaving extremely tight margins.

Licensing has become one of the largest overheads operators can attempt to control. Any further increase will make it impossible for many to remain licensed in Redditch.

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6. Fees Should Not Be Increased — They Should Be Considered for Reduction
Given the current state of the taxi industry, we believe strongly that:

- **Fees should not be increased**, and
- **Serious consideration should be given to reducing them**.

The trade is, quite frankly, **on its knees**.
Increasing fees during a period of economic decline, high competition from out-of-borough licensed vehicles, and rising operating costs would further weaken the local industry, reduce the Council's income, and erode public safety.
Fee reductions — not increases — would help:

- Retain local operators
- Preserve enforcement capability
- Support investment in greener fleets
- Strengthen public safety
- Encourage compliance
- Maintain a viable long-term licensing system for the Council

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7. Summary

The proposed fee increases risk:

- Driving more operators out of the Redditch licensing system
- Reducing RBC's income
- Weakening enforcement
- Increasing public-safety risks
- Allowing out-of-borough operators to dominate the market
- Damaging the financial viability of long-standing Redditch fleets

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these concerns further and work with the Council to establish a framework that supports local businesses, protects the public, and ensures the long-term sustainability of licensing in Redditch.

Kind Regards

Ali

Amjad Ali Khan
(0603 Management Services Ltd)
For and on behalf of A2B Taxis and Contracts (Redditch) Ltd

A2B Taxis and Contracts (Redditch) Ltd
T: [redacted]
E: [redacted]
W: a2b60k.co.uk
Hazro House, Millsbro Road
Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 7BU

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Licencing Fees and Charges

Roundings to the nearest 10p.

Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25	Actual Charge 25/26	Actual Charge 26/27
Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence	£296.60	£308.50	**£318.00**
Private Hire Vehicle Licence	£296.60	£308.50	**£318.00**
Temporary Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence	£222.50	£231.40	**£238.00**
Temporary Private Hire Vehicle Licence	£222.50	£231.40	**£238.00**
Private Hire Operator Licence (5 year)(1 - 3 vehicles)	£681.60	£708.90	**£730.00**
Private hire operator licence (per additional vehicle)	£18.20	£18.90	**£19.00**
Dual Hackney carriage / Private Hire driver licence (3 years)	£168.50	£175.20	**£180.00**
Private hire driver licence (3 years)	£168.50	£175.20	**£180.00**
Knowledge Test	£25.90	£26.90	**£28.00**
Administration Charge - new applications	£41.60	£43.30	**£45.00**
Replacement vehicle licence plate	£25.90	£26.90	**£28.00**
Replacement driver's licence	£14.70	£15.30	**£16.00**
Amendment to paper licence e.g. change of address	£13.50	£14.00	**£14.00**
Transfer of ownership of a licensed vehicle	£57.40	£59.70	**£61.00**
Criminal Record (DBS) Check	£62.90	£65.40	**£67.00**
Replacement hackney carriage / private hire door signs (per sign)	£13.40	£13.90	**£14.00**
ANIMAL ACTIVITY LICENCES			
Hiring out horses, breeding of dogs, providing or arranging the provision of boarding for cats or dogs and selling animals as pets			
Application fee	£355.00	£365.70	**£377.00**
Licence fee (1 year)	£199.00	£205.00	**£211.00**
Licence fee (2 years)	£393.00	£404.80	**£417.00**
Licence fee (3 years)	£590.00	£607.70	**£626.00**
Application to vary a licence	£259.00	£266.80	**£275.00**
Veterinary fees (if applicable)	Recovered at cost	Recovered at cost	**Recovered at cost**
Local authority inspection (on request of licence holder)	£177.00	£182.30	**£187.00**

ANIMAL ACTIVITY FRANCHISE			
Application fee			**£377.00**
Application to vary a licence			**£275.00**
Inspection Fee (per hour)			**£187.00**
Keeping or training animals for exhibition (only)			
Application fee	£237.00	£244.10	**£251.00**
Licence fee (3 years)	£324.00	£333.70	**£344.00**
Application to vary a licence	£170.00	£175.10	**£180.00**
Veterinary fees (if applicable)	Recovered at cost	Recovered at cost	**Recovered at cost**
Local authority inspection (on request of licence holder)	£177.00	£182.30	**£187.00**
Keeping of Primates			
Application for grant of a licence (3 years)			**£366.00**
Application for renewal of a licence			**£300.00**
Application for variation of a licence			**£267.00**
Inspection fees			**£182.00**
Vet inspection fees			**Recovered at cost**
ACUPUNCTURE, COSMETIC PIERCING, SEMI-PERMANENT SKIN COLOURING, TATTOOING, ELECTROLYSIS			
Fee to register a premises	£152.80	£158.90	**£164.00**
Fee to register a practitioner	£100.00	£104.00	**£107.00**
Application to vary a licence			**£74.00**
GAMBLING ACT 2005 (inc. SMALL LOTTERIES)			
Small society lotteries			
Fee to register a small society lottery	£40.00	£40.00	**£40.00**
Small society lottery annual maintenance fee	£20.00	£20.00	**£20.00**

Application for the grant of a premises licence			
Betting (excluding tracks)	£2,081.90	£2,165.20	**£2,230.00**
Betting Tracks	£2,081.90	£2,165.20	**£2,230.00**
Bingo	£2,439.20	£2,536.80	**£2,613.00**
Adult Gaming Centres	£1,393.10	£1,448.80	**£1,492.00**
Family Entertainment Centres	£1,393.10	£1,448.80	**£1,492.00**
Premises licence annual fees			
Betting (excluding tracks)	£416.90	£433.60	**£447.00**
Betting Tracks	£416.90	£433.60	**£447.00**
Bingo	£718.00	£746.70	**£769.00**
Adult Gaming Centres	£718.00	£746.70	**£769.00**
Family Entertainment Centres	£662.90	£689.40	**£710.00**
Application to vary a premises licence			
Betting (excluding tracks)	£1,040.40	£1,082.00	**£1,114.00**
Betting Tracks	£1,040.40	£1,082.00	**£1,114.00**
Bingo	£1,219.10	£1,267.90	**£1,306.00**
Adult Gaming Centres	£718.00	£746.70	**£769.00**
Family Entertainment Centres	£718.00	£746.70	**£769.00**
Application to transfer a premises licence			
Betting (excluding tracks)	£833.60	£866.90	**£893.00**
Betting Tracks	£833.60	£866.90	**£893.00**
Bingo	£837.10	£870.60	**£897.00**
Adult Gaming Centres	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	**£1,200.00**
Family Entertainment Centres	£696.60	£724.50	**£746.00**
Application for a provisional statement			
Betting (excluding tracks)	£2,081.90	£2,165.20	**£2,230.00**
Betting Tracks	£2,081.90	£2,165.20	**£2,230.00**
Bingo	£2,439.20	£2,536.80	**£2,613.00**
Adult Gaming Centres	£1,393.10	£1,448.80	**£1,492.00**
Family Entertainment Centres	£1,393.10	£1,448.80	**£1,492.00**
Application for the grant of a premises licence (provisional statement holders)			
Betting (excluding tracks)	£833.60	£866.90	**£893.00**
Betting Tracks	£833.60	£866.90	**£893.00**
Bingo	£837.10	£870.60	**£897.00**
Adult Gaming Centres	£837.10	£870.60	**£897.00**
Family Entertainment Centres	£696.60	£724.50	**£746.00**

Application for reinstatement of a premises licence			
Betting (excluding tracks)	£837.10	£870.60	**£897.00**
Betting Tracks	£837.10	£870.60	**£897.00**
Bingo	£837.10	£870.60	**£897.00**
Adult Gaming Centres	£837.10	£870.60	**£897.00**
Family Entertainment Centres	£683.10	£710.40	**£732.00**
Premises licence fees (miscellaneous)			
Copy of a premises licence (all types)	£25.00	£25.00	**£25.00**
Notification of a change in respect of a premises licence (all types)	£50.00	£50.00	**£50.00**
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permits			
Application for grant of a permit	£150.00	£150.00	**£150.00**
Application for variation of a permit	£100.00	£100.00	**£100.00**
Application for the transfer of a permit	£25.00	£25.00	**£25.00**
Annual permit fee	£50.00	£50.00	**£50.00**
Change of name shown on a permit	£25.00	£25.00	**£25.00**
Request for a copy of a permit	£15.00	£15.00	**£15.00**
Licensed Premises Gaming Machines (Automatic Entitlement)			
Fee to serve notification	£50.00	£50.00	**£50.00**
Club Gaming Permits			
Application for grant of a permit	£200.00	£200.00	**£200.00**
Application for grant of a permit (Club premises certificate holders)	£100.00	£100.00	**£100.00**
Application for variation of a permit	£100.00	£100.00	**£100.00**
Application for renewal of a permit	£200.00	£200.00	**£200.00**
Application for renewal of a permit (club premises certificate holders)	£100.00	£100.00	**£100.00**
Annual permit fee	£50.00	£50.00	**£50.00**
Request for a copy of a permit	£15.00	£15.00	**£15.00**
Club Machine Permits			
Application for grant of a permit	£200.00	£200.00	**£200.00**
Application for grant of a permit (Club premises certificate holders)	£100.00	£100.00	**£100.00**
Application for variation of a permit	£100.00	£100.00	**£100.00**
Application for renewal of a permit	£200.00	£200.00	**£200.00**
Application for renewal of a permit (club premises certificate holders)	£100.00	£100.00	**£100.00**
Annual permit fee	£50.00	£50.00	**£50.00**
Request for a copy of a permit	£15.00	£15.00	**£15.00**

Family Entertainment Centre Gaming Machine Permit			
Application for grant of a permit	£300.00	£300.00	**£300.00**
Application for renewal of a permit	£300.00	£300.00	**£300.00**
Change of name shown on a permit	£25.00	£25.00	**£25.00**
Request for a copy of a permit	£15.00	£15.00	**£15.00**
Prize Gaming Permits			
Application for grant of a permit	£300.00	£300.00	**£300.00**
Application for renewal of a permit	£300.00	£300.00	**£300.00**
Change of name shown on a permit	£25.00	£25.00	**£25.00**
Request for a copy of a permit	£15.00	£15.00	**£15.00**
Temporary Use Notices			
Fee to serve a Temporary Use Notice	£348.30	£362.20	**£373.00**
Fee for a copy of a Temporary Use Notice	£18.00	£18.70	**£19.00**
STREET TRADING			
Annual street trading consent - food - initial	£1,625.80	£1,690.80	**£1,742.00**
Annual street trading consent - food - renewal	£1,490.90	£1,550.50	**£1,597.00**
Annual street trading consent - non-food - initial	£1,356.10	£1,410.30	**£1,453.00**
Annual street trading consent - non-food - renewal	£1,219.10	£1,267.90	**£1,306.00**
Day licence			**£80.00**
Consecutive day fee			**£25.00**
SCRAP METAL DEALERS LICENCES			
Application for a new site licence	£311.00	£320.30	**£330.00**
Fee per additional site	£160.00	£164.80	**£170.00**
Application for renewal of a site licence	£257.00	£264.70	**£273.00**
Fee per additional site	£170.00	£175.10	**£180.00**
Application for a new collectors licence	£155.00	£159.70	**£165.00**
Application for renewal of a collectors licence	£102.00	£105.10	**£108.00**
Variation of a licence	£70.00	£72.10	**£74.00**
Request for a copy of a licence (if lost or stolen)	£27.00	£27.80	**£29.00**
ZOO LICENCES			
Application for grant or renewal of a licence	£267.50	£278.20	**£287.00**
Secretary of state inspector and veterinary fees	Recovered at cost	Recovered at cost	**Recovered at cost**

DANGEROUS WILD ANIMALS (DWA)			
Application for grant or renewal of a licence	£251.50	£261.60	**£269.00**
Inspector and Vet's fees (for every inspection)	Recovered at cost	Recovered at cost	**Recovered at cost**
SEX ESTABLISHMENTS			
Application for grant or renewal of a licence	£1,091.40	£1,135.10	**£1,169.00**
Application for transfer of a licence	£535.00	£556.40	**£573.00**
Application for variation of a licence	£1,091.40	£1,135.10	**£1,169.00**
PAVEMENT LICENCES			
Application for a new pavement licence - 2 years		£500.00	**£500.00**
Application for a renewal pavement licence - 2 years		£350.00	**£350.00**
HYPNOTISM			
Application for authorisation	£53.50	£55.60	**£57.00**
An admin charge will be payable on receipt of refund request for any type of licence			**£30.00**

LICENSING ACT 2003 - FEES SET BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT - SAME FOR ALL DISTRICT COUNCILS

Temporary Event Notices	
Fee to serve a Temporary Event Notice (TEN)	**£21.00**
Copy of a TEN (if lost or stolen)	**£10.50**
Personal licences	
Application for the grant of a personal licence	**£37.00**
Fee for a replacement personal licence (if lost or stolen)	**£10.50**
Fee to notify a change of name or address on a personal licence	**£10.50**
Applications for new premises licences or club premises certificates	
Applications for the grant of a premises licence or club premises certificate	
Band A (NDRV 0 - 4300)	**£100.00**
Band B (NDRV 4301 - 33000)	**£190.00**
Band C (NDRV 33001 - 87000)	**£315.00**
Band D (NDRV 87001 - 125000)	**£450.00**
Band E (NDRV 125001 +)	**£635.00**
Applications for the grant of a premises licence or club premises certificate (where the premises is used exclusively or primarily for the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises)	
Band A (NDRV 0 - 4300)	**£100.00**
Band B (NDRV 4301 - 33000)	**£190.00**
Band C (NDRV 33001 - 87000)	**£315.00**
Band D (NDRV 87001 - 125000)	**£900.00**
Band E (NDRV 125001 +)	**£1,905.00**
Additional fees for grant of a premises licences (for large venues with capacities over 5000)	
5000 - 9999	**£1,000.00**
10000 - 14999	**£2,000.00**
15000 - 19999	**£4,000.00**
20000 - 29999	**£8,000.00**
30000 - 39999	**£16,000.00**
40000 - 49999	**£24,000.00**
50000 - 59999	**£32,000.00**
60000 - 69999	**£40,000.00**
70000 - 79999	**£48,000.00**
80000 - 89999	**£56,000.00**

Applications to vary premises licences and club premises certificates

Applications to vary a premises licence or club premises certificate	
Band A (NDRV 0 - 4300)	**£100.00**
Band B (NDRV 4301 - 33000)	**£190.00**
Band C (NDRV 33001 - 87000)	**£315.00**
Band D (NDRV 87001 - 125000)	**£450.00**
Band E (NDRV 125001 +)	**£635.00**
Applications to vary a premises licence (where the premises is used exclusively or primarily for the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises)	
Band A (NDRV 0 - 4300)	**£100.00**
Band B (NDRV 4301 - 33000)	**£190.00**
Band C (NDRV 33001 - 87000)	**£315.00**
Band D (NDRV 87001 - 125000)	**£900.00**
Band E (NDRV 125001 +)	**£1,905.00**
Application for a minor variation of a premises licence or club premises certificate	**£89.00**

Annual maintenance fees

Annual premises licence or club premises certificate fee	
Band A (NDRV 0 - 4300)	**£70.00**
Band B (NDRV 4301 - 33000)	**£180.00**
Band C (NDRV 33001 - 87000)	**£295.00**
Band D (NDRV 87001 - 125000)	**£320.00**
Band E (NDRV 125001 +)	**£350.00**
Annual premises licence (where the premises is used exclusively or primarily for the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises)	
Band A (NDRV 0 - 4300)	**£70.00**
Band B (NDRV 4301 - 33000)	**£180.00**
Band C (NDRV 33001 - 87000)	**£295.00**
Band D (NDRV 87001 - 125000)	**£640.00**
Band E (NDRV 125001 +)	**£1,050.00**

Additional annual fees premises licences (for large venues with capacities over 5000)	
5000 - 9999	**£500.00**
10000 - 14999	**£1,000.00**
15000 - 19999	**£2,000.00**
20000 - 29999	**£4,000.00**
30000 - 39999	**£8,000.00**
40000 - 49999	**£12,000.00**
50000 - 59999	**£16,000.00**
60000 - 69999	**£20,000.00**
70000 - 79999	**£24,000.00**
80000 - 89999	**£28,000.00**

Other applications and notifications	
Application to transfer a premises licence	**£23.00**
Application to vary a premises licence to nominate a premises supervisor	**£23.00**
Fee to change name or address of the holder of a premises licence	**£10.50**
Fee to change the name or address of a designated premises supervisor on a premises licence	**£10.50**
Fee for a replacement premises licence or club premises certificate (if lost or stolen)	**£10.50**
Fee to notify licensing authority of a propery interest in a premises	**£21.00**
Notication of change or club name or alteration to club rules	**£10.50**
Notification of change of registered address of club	**£10.50**
Interim authority notice following death, incapacity or insolvency of licence holder	**£23.00**
Application for grant of a provisional statement	**£315.00**

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Redditch Borough Council
Working together for our communities

Executive Committee

Monday, 2nd March, 2026

MINUTES

Present:

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

Also Present:

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

Officers:

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

Democratic Services Officers:

Jess Bayley-Hill and Eve Davies

97. APOLOGIES

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

98. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

99. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

100. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

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

Chair

Executive Committee

Monday, 2nd March, 2026

101. COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTIONS 2026/27

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

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

RECOMMENDED that

1) The calculation for the council tax requirement for the council's own purposes for 2026/27 (excluding parish precepts) as £7,571,719.791.2.2.

2) The following amounts be calculated for the year 2026/27 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

a) £64,256,433.00 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in section 31A(2) of the Act (taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils)(i.e., gross expenditure).

b) £56,618,713.21 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in section 31A(3) of the Act. (i,e gross income).

c) £7,637,719.79 being the amount by which the aggregate of 1.2.2(a) above exceeds the aggregate of 1.2.2(b) above, calculated by the council, in accordance with section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in section 31B of the Act).

d) £288.43 being the amount at 1.2.2(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1.1(a) above), calculated by the council, in accordance with section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (including parish precepts).

e) £66,000 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Feckenham Parish precept) referred to in section 34(1) of the Act.

f) £285.94 being the amount at 1.2.2(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 1.2.2(e) above by Item T (1.1 (a) above), calculated by the council, in accordance with section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no parish precept relates.

g) £459.26 being the amount given by adding to the amount at 1.2.2(f) the amount for the special item relating to the parish of Feckenham 1.2.2(e), divided by the amount in 1.1(b) above.

h) The amounts shown below given by multiplying the amounts at 1.2.2(f) and 1.2.2(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band, divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwelling listed in band D, calculated in accordance with section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

There was no urgent business for discussion at the meeting.

Executive Committee

Monday, 2nd March, 2026

The Meeting commenced at 6.31 pm
and closed at 6.35 pm

Redditch Borough Council
Working together for our communities

Executive Committee

Tuesday, 17th March, 2026

MINUTES

Present:

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

Officers:

Toni Ainscough, Maria Bailey, Ruth Bamford, Matthew Bough, Mark Cox, Amanda Delahunty, Matthew Eccles, Rachel Egan, Claire Felton, Rebecca Green, Georgina Harris, John Leach, Julie Lorraine, Katie Sharp-Fisher and Judith Willis

Democratic Services Officers:

Eve Davies

104. APOLOGIES

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

105. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

106. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

107. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader informed Members that the Joint Appointments Committee had recommended to Council that James Walton be appointed as the new Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer. It was explained that, subject to references and the completion of necessary checks, an offer of employment would be made. No objections were raised by any Members of the Committee.

The Leader drew Members' attention to the fact that this meeting was the Policy Manager's final meeting before leaving the Council.

Chair

The Leader expressed thanks to the Policy Manager for her hard work and dedication throughout her long service at the Council.

Members were also asked to note that at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16th March 2026, Members had pre-scrutinised the following items:

- Minute Item no. 110 – Climate Change Strategy 2026 to 2031
- Minute Item no. 113 - Shared Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2026-2029
- Minute Item no. 115 - Introduction of Enforcement of littering from Vehicles
- Minute Item no. 116 - Revision of Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy

Following their discussions, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had endorsed the recommendations contained within the reports.

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

108. INCLUSIVE PLAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services presented a report on the Inclusive Play Policy Statement.

The purpose of the report was to set out proposals for installing inclusive play equipment at play areas across the Borough. Officers explained that two parks in Redditch had been identified as having the greatest potential to meet inclusive play requirements. Arrow Valley Country Park already benefitted from good access arrangements, including pathways, car parking and accessible toilet provision. Morton Stanley Park similarly offered facilities that made it a strong candidate for seeking Plan Inclusive Play Areas (PiPA) accreditation. It was, however, acknowledged that Morton Stanley Park was unlikely to achieve full PiPA accreditation, although every effort would be made to secure the highest standard possible for the site.

The distinctions between ‘accessible’ and ‘inclusive’ play spaces were highlighted, with it being noted that that inclusive play extended provision to meet the needs of children with a wide range of abilities and requirements.

Members were advised that, for all other outdoor equipped play areas, the Council would seek to improve accessibility and inclusivity through use of an Inclusive Play Policy Assessment and Design Checklist. Play companies and contractors would be required to propose improvements using this checklist to ensure the highest achievable level of inclusivity.

Officers informed Members that funding had been allocated and proposed for the purpose of enhancing play areas to make them more accessible and inclusive. The recommendations sought delegated authority for the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to pursue the appropriate level of accreditation and to implement the new plans.

Members were advised that learning from the work at Arrow Valley Country Park and Morton Stanley Park would be applied to other outdoor play areas across the Borough, with the intention that even smaller local parks should include some equipment accessible to children with differing needs.

Following the presentation, Members had detailed discussion and commented on the following points:

- Thanks were expressed to the Leisure and Parks team for their work in producing the report.
- Members welcomed the policy, noting that play was essential for children and that many families had requested accessible equipment in local parks. Members were therefore pleased that the policy would support such provision.
- Members were pleased with the focus on inclusive rather than solely accessible play, recognising that this represented a more comprehensive approach to meeting all children's needs and ensuring barrier-free play environments.
- It was noted that the policy provided a clear and detailed explanation of how the proposals had been assessed against equality impact criteria.

RESOLVED that

1) the Inclusive Play Policy Statement be adopted;

2) the detailed audit of play provision at Arrow Valley Country Park (against the Plan Inclusive Play Areas [PiPA] accreditation criteria/checklist) be approved;

3) the proposals for Arrow Valley Country Park improvements will be implemented during 2026/27 and strategic and local sites by April 2028;

4) subject to completion of resolution 3 above, authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to apply for accreditation for the Arrow Valley Country Park play area against the PiPA standard;

5) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to develop plans to make the play space in Arrow Valley Country Park a Borough wide exemplar for accessible and inclusive play;

6) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Culture to commission an assessment of Morton Stanley Park against the PiPA standard, which should include establishing the viability of gaining accreditation;

7) the Inclusive Play Policy Assessment and Design Checklist be approved as a tool for improving the accessibility and inclusivity of all other play areas in the Borough; and

8) To NOTE that a budget bid of £300,000 in the capital programme was approved by Council in March 2026 as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2028/29 to pay for inclusive play improvements and for additional officer support.

109. EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY

The Senior Housing Strategy Officer presented a report on the Empty Homes Strategy.

Members were informed that in October 2025 there were 542,276 empty homes recorded across England, representing 2.1 per cent of all homes. At the same point in time, Redditch Borough had 660 empty homes, of which 320 had been empty for more than six months.

The strategy set out the Council’s commitment to identifying empty homes and developing options to bring them back into use as quickly as possible. It outlined the priorities and actions for tackling empty homes across the Borough and for applying the most effective interventions available.

Officers highlighted that a contribution of £7,681 from Redditch Borough Council's Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant (2026/27) had been agreed to support the funding of a part-time Empty Homes Officer.

The aims of the strategy were to:

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

It was explained that there were two main types of empty homes. Short-term empty homes were those unoccupied for under six months and typically occurred as part of property sales or routine changes in personal circumstances. Long-term empty homes were dwellings unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for six months or longer. Bringing long-term, privately owned empty homes back into use was the primary focus of the strategy, as these properties often remained empty due to additional underlying factors.

Officers reported that residential properties could remain empty for various reasons, including unresolved inheritance or ownership issues, new homes awaiting sale, abandonment, lack of funds for repairs, awaiting planning decisions, repossession, or perceived difficulties in renting. In some cases, owners also retained sentimental attachment to a property.

The Committee was advised that there was no Act of Parliament that placed a statutory duty on Local Housing Authorities to tackle empty homes. However, Councils had a general duty under the Housing Act 1985 to review housing conditions and housing needs. National policy empowered Local Authorities to bring vacant dwellings back into use, guided by a local strategy.

Local Authorities also had discretionary powers to charge Council tax premiums and a range of legislative tools to address empty homes.
The strategy focused on supporting homeowners to bring empty properties back into use and utilising enforcement measures where necessary. It centred around three priority areas:

1. Developing systems, processes and multi-agency working
2. Improving intervention pathways, resources and performance

3. Strengthening early intervention, engagement and monitoring

Officers advised that the action plan had been developed in line with the Local Government Association's Empty Homes Toolkit, which promoted a staged approach focused on accurate data, early engagement, proportionate enforcement and strong partnership working.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing asked Members to note that Redditch was in the lower bracket nationally for the proportion of empty homes, with 8.43 long-term empty homes per 1,000 dwellings. The Portfolio Holder welcomed the strategy and commented that the Council continually sought to improve its approach.

Members also made the raised the following points:

- Thanks were expressed to officers for their work in producing the report.
- The action plan provided clarity about when Members and the public could expect to see empty homes being brought back into use.
- Members welcomed the alignment of the strategy with Local Government Association good practice guidance.
- It was noted that the strategy represented a positive step towards bringing homes back into use at a time when many residents were in need of housing.

RECOMMENDED that

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

110. CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY 2026 TO 2031

The Climate Change Manager presented the Climate Change Strategy 2026 - 2031 report.

The proposed strategy sought to update and replace the previous Carbon Reduction Action Plan. Members were advised that the strategy provided a practical and affordable approach to keeping the Council on track to achieve Net Zero by 2040, with an interim target of a 50 per cent reduction in emissions by 2030. This remained aligned with, and ahead of, central Government's statutory target of Net Zero by 2050.

Members were informed that emissions continued to decline, with Redditch recording 3.5 tonnes of CO_2 per capita in 2023, a figure below both the regional and national averages.

The Climate Change Manager drew Members' attention to several key highlights within the report:

- Investment into retrofitting housing stock. £1.81 million had been invested in social housing energy efficiency upgrades, alongside £260,000 for private home retrofits, with further funding streams expected to deliver £4.27 million of improvements to Council housing stock.
- Updates to the Council's fleet and fuelling options.
- Biodiversity improvements, including revised mowing processes and the introduction of battery-powered equipment.

Members were asked to note that this strategy covered every service area within the Council. Officers provided reassurance that the strategy was sufficiently adaptable to meet the requirements of Local Government Reorganisation and would place the Council on a strong footing ahead of the transition to a unitary authority.

Following the presentation, Members raised the following points:

- Members welcomed the fact that the strategy covered all Council service areas, demonstrating a whole-Council approach to tackling climate change.
- Practical actions had been set out, enabling the Council to contribute proactively to climate change solutions.
- Members emphasised the importance of communicating with residents regarding the importance of Net Zero.
- Members welcomed the long-term commitment to making Redditch a good place to live for future generations.
- Clear targets and outcomes had been established to enable ongoing monitoring of progress.
- A Member welcomed the proposal to install solar panels on commercial buildings; it was expressed that this would avoid disturbance to residential areas and the green belt.
- The commitment to utilising external funding as one of the capital sources to deliver the strategy.

- The positive impact the strategy would have on reducing fuel poverty and making Redditch more self-sufficient in producing its own energy.

RECOMMENDED that

1) The Council's Climate Change Strategy 2026–2031 be approved; and

2) an annual review of the Climate Change Strategy be reported to Council.

111. QUARTER 3 2025/26 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Policy Manager presented the Quarter 3 2025/26 Performance Monitoring Report.

Members were informed that there were thirty two corporate measures in place, aligned to the Council priorities as set out in the Council Plan.

In reviewing the quarterly performance breakdown, it was reported that fourteen measures were rated green, three amber and four red. The unclassified category reflected areas where no targets had been set due to the nature of the data.

It was noted that two new measures had been added for quarter three, which were the number of active environmental enforcement cases and environmental enforcement fixed penalty notices. Members were advised that additional new measures would be incorporated in future iterations of the report.

Following the presentation of the report, Members had detailed discussions and commented on the below points:

- Thanks were expressed to the Policy Manager and the Assistant Director for Corporate Services and Transformation for their work in preparing the report.
- Members welcomed the format of the update, stating that it increased transparency and was easy to understand.
- Members highlighted a number of positive statistics, including: a Council Tax collection rate of 82.52%, an increase in Business Rates collection, a significant reduction in the number of complaints, and a decline in incidents of anti-social behaviour.

- Members were pleased with the progress made overall, while acknowledging that further work was required to address the measures rated red and amber.
- A query was raised regarding data on completed penalties that had been issued by the Worcestershire Regulatory Service (WRS). Officers advised that WRS intended to publish notices and enforcement data on their website so Members and the public would be able to access the figures.

RESOLVED that

1) **The Quarter 3 Performance Report for the period October to December 2025 be noted.**

112. PERMISSION TO REVOKE THE FIRST HOMES POLICY

The Housing Development and Enabling Manager presented a report on the proposed revocation of the First Homes Policy.

Members were advised that the Government had introduced an affordable housing product, known as First Homes, which all local housing authorities had been required to provide from 28th March 2022 as 25 per cent of affordable housing on Section 106 sites. These homes were required to be sold at a discount of at least 30 per cent against open-market value.

It was reported that First Homes had become increasingly expensive due to rising new-build house prices, meaning that they were often unaffordable for local residents. Members were informed that shared ownership properties offered a more accessible route into affordable home ownership for residents.

Officers explained that meetings had taken place with several Registered Providers, who had indicated that reducing the proportion of shared ownership units in favour of First Homes compromised the viability of Section 106 sites.

In terms of operational issues, Members were advised that administering the First Homes scheme placed a significant burden on local authorities, as it required detailed processing and approval of applications from prospective purchasers. Removing the requirement for First Homes would therefore reduce this administrative burden.

Regarding financial implications, the Committee was informed that while Councils charged £508 for administering variations to Section 106 agreements, this cost would be offset by the developer not

having to obtain valuation reports for First Homes properties from a RICS-qualified valuer.

Officers advised that revoking the First Homes Policy would support residents on lower incomes in accessing affordable home ownership and strengthen the viability of Section 106 sites for Registered Providers.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing thanked the Housing Development and Enabling Manager for the report. He highlighted that none of the sites with First Homes requirements had yet been built out and, as a result, no First Homes properties had been sold. He stated that revoking the policy would be a positive step to help lower-income households onto the housing ladder while also reducing the administrative demands placed on officers. It was hoped that developers would welcome the change, as it would make sites more viable and ultimately lead to the delivery of more homes for residents.

Members commented that they were keen to see more effective use of Section 106 agreements.

RESOLVED that

1) the Council's First Homes Policy be revoked with immediate effect;

2) and that any development sites that currently include an element of First Homes provision is offered an opportunity to revert to shared ownership and other forms of affordable home ownership.

113. SHARED HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2026-2031

The Housing Development and Enabling Manager presented a report on the Shared Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2026-2029.

The Committee was advised that the Council had undertaken a review of all forms of homelessness over the previous six months and had been working closely with partner agencies. A consultation event had been held on the 30th September 2025 with partners and stakeholders to consider housing from both a strategic and client-based perspective. The event was attended by a range of partners from a range of statutory and voluntary organisations.

Members were informed that central Government had published a National Plan to End Homelessness in October 2025, and that the new Shared Homelessness Strategy aligned with the five pillars of that plan.

The strategy set out how the Council would invest in early intervention and support systems designed to prevent homelessness before it occurred. It aimed to strengthen cross-service collaboration to ensure that risks were identified at an early stage.

The Committee was advised that the Crisis Resilience Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments would be used to support individuals struggling with their income or facing unexpected financial pressures. Residents experiencing sudden income shocks would receive holistic advice and support.

It was noted that Government would be providing nearly £3.5 billion in funding for homelessness prevention and rough sleeping services for the period 2026/27–2028/29.

It was proposed that the Executive Committee should consider whether to approve the draft strategy for public consultation and, following the consultation and subject to any feedback, the final version would need be submitted to Council for approval at a later date.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing highlighted that the strategy would no longer be delivered on a county-wide basis, as Worcestershire had chosen not to participate in the partnership. The strategy nevertheless covered support for rough sleepers, victims of domestic violence and care leavers. The Portfolio Holder suggested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee might wish to receive a progress report once the consultation had concluded and funding had been confirmed.

Following the presentation, Members held detailed discussions and commented on the below points:

- Members welcomed the measures aimed at preventing homelessness before it occurred, emphasising that early intervention was crucial and preferable to responding in crisis situations.
- The commitment to supporting care leavers was highlighted, along with the importance of providing support for those with neurodivergence and other protected characteristics.

RESOLVED that

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

114. RENTERS RIGHT ACT 2025

The Private Sector Housing Manager presented a report on the Renters Right Act 2025.

Members were advised that the Act had received Royal Assent on 27th October 2025, with reforms being introduced through a phased approach. New investigatory powers came into effect from 27th December 2025, and Phase 1 of the reforms was scheduled to commence on 1st May 2026.

The report outlined the key reforms that would affect residents in Redditch. It was estimated that the private rented sector in the Borough comprised approximately 5,318 homes.

Members were informed of the three phases of implementation and the elements included within each stage:

- Phase 1 – Key reforms included the abolition of Section 21 “no fault” evictions, limits on rent increases and making it illegal to discriminate against renters.
- Phase 2 – Scheduled for late 2026, this phase would introduce the regional landlord and local council database, along with the establishment of the new Ombudsman service.
- Phase 3 – Expected to come into effect between 2026 and 2027, this phase would introduce a new Decent Homes Standard for the private rented sector.

Officers noted that an increase in demand for support was anticipated, including higher volumes of enquiries to the Private Sector Housing team, an initial rise in homelessness, and some landlords leaving the sector. To prepare for this, the team had been expanded from three to five officers, with training and upskilling underway. Funding had also been secured for a new case-management system to ensure statutory deadlines could be met.

Following the presentation, Members had detailed discussion and commented on the following points:

- Members welcomed the increased support for those renting in the private sector, including the introduction of assured tenancies and a ban on rental bidding.
- It was highlighted that the Council would have strengthened enforcement powers to address rogue landlords who were not providing a good service to their tenants.
- Members expressed that everyone deserved to live in a decent home, and this policy would improve the living conditions for many residents across Redditch.
- A query was raised regarding the level of new burdens funding that had been awarded and how costs would be met. Officers advised that the funding was intended to support Councils in preparing for the reforms and that income from fines would be reinvested into the Private Sector Housing team. The Council would also receive a portion of the fees paid by landlords registering on the regional database. Members noted that expenditure would need to be monitored as the service developed.

It was proposed that the new burdens funding of £20,057.95 be noted, rather than recommending to Council that the 2026/27 Medium Term Financial Plan be updated.

RESOLVED that

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

2) The new burdens funding of £20,057.95 be noted.

RECOMMENDED that

3) The Scheme of Delegations be amended to incorporate new powers under the Renters Rights Act 2025 in accordance with the wording as set out below.

2. Private Sector Housing			
Subject	**Detail**	**Delegated by:**	**Delegated to:**
~~Power of entry~~	~~To exercise the powers of Authorised Officers in respect of entry, inspection and investigation in relation to housing conditions as specified in any legislation the enforcement of which is delegated to Director of Leisure, Environment and Community Services~~	~~Executive Committee~~	~~[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Housing Strategy Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Team Leader] / [Housing Strategy C Enabling Team Leader] / [Private Sector Housing Officer]~~
~~Service of Notices and obtaining warrants~~ Housing legislation – regulatory powers	To exercise all ~~the~~ powers in respect of entry, inspection, investigation, service of notices and other functions ~~of Authorised Officers for the purposes of the legislation listed below, serve notices and obtain warrants of entry from a Justice of the Peace~~ for the purposes of the following ~~at~~ legislation: -	Executive Committee	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Housing Strategy Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Team Leader] / [Housing Strategy C Enabling Team Leader] / [Private Sector

	Renters Rights Act 2025 sections 114 to 132 (investigatory powers) and section 110 (reporting to government) Housing Act~~s~~ 1985 (as amended), Housing Act 2004 (as amended)		Housing Officer]
2. Private Sector Housing			
Subject	**Detail**	**Delegated by:**	**Delegated to:**

	Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations 2006 Licensing C Management of HMO C other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 Environmental Protection Act 1990 Building Act 1984 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Acts 1976, 1982 Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 Public Health Act 1961 Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (additional provisions) (England) Regulations 2007 Mobile Homes Act 2013 Caravan Sites C Control of Development Act 1960		

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

4) Authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Community & Housing to spend the new burdens funding for Renters Rights Act 2025 preparations.

115. INTRODUCTION OF ENFORCEMENT OF LITTERING FROM VEHICLES

The Principal Officer from Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) presented a report on the introduction of enforcement measures for littering from vehicles.

It was explained that littering was currently enforced as a criminal offence. However, it was often difficult to prove beyond reasonable doubt who had committed the offence. Officers were therefore seeking delegated authority to issue Litter Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs).

Members were advised that the PCNs would be issued to the registered keeper of the vehicle, in the same way that parking charges were administered.

Officers reported that this approach would enable the Civil Enforcement Team to use their time proactively while undertaking their parking-enforcement duties.

Members welcomed the report and commented that it was important to provide officers with appropriate enforcement tools, which they hoped would contribute to behaviour change around littering.

RECOMMENDED that

1) Civil enforcement of Littering from Vehicles be introduced.

2) The Civil Enforcement Team be given delegated authority to issue Litter Penalty Charge Notices.

3) The parking administration team be authorised to deal with appeals and enforcement matters in respect of Litter Penalty Charge Notices.

4) The Penalty Notice Charge be set at the level set by Council for Criminal offences where a Fixed Penalty Notice is served for Depositing Litter (section 87/88 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990) which for 2026/27 subject to Council approval are proposed to be set as:

a) £250; and

b) £125 for prompt payment (within 14 days).

5) Authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Regeneration & Property to issue Penalty Notice Charges for Littering from Vehicles under The Littering From Vehicles Outside London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018.

116. REVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME ENFORCEMENT POLICY

The Principal Officer, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the Revision of Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy report.

The purpose of the report was to introduce an update on the existing joint environmental enforcement strategy. Members were advised that the revised policy would mirror the WRS policy already

in operation for environmental health and licensing enforcement across the six Worcestershire districts for which WRS delivered environmental crime functions on behalf of. The updated policy also ensured that the most current procedures and enforcement options were clearly set out in a transparent manner.

Following the presentation, Members discussed the report and made the following comments:

- Members welcomed the strategy and the clarity it would provide to the public regarding enforcement processes.
- A query was raised about the policy for abandoned and nuisance vehicles. Officers advised that responsibility for these matters remained with the Council's Environmental Services team.

RESOLVED that:

1) **The Redditch and Bromsgrove Enforcement Policy be adopted and replace the current Joint Environmental Enforcement Policy.**

117. PRIDE IN PLACE PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE MODEL

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund Manager presented a report on the Pride in Place Programme Governance Model.

The Committee was advised that an area covering parts of Greenlands and parts of Woodrow had been selected to receive Pride in Place funding, which was the Government's flagship communities programme.

It was reported that the programme would be community-led, with funding decisions made by a Neighbourhood Board following extensive consultation with local residents. Redditch Borough Council's primary role would be to act as the accountable body, ensuring that funding was distributed fairly and transparently and that all legislative requirements were met.

Members were informed that the Council was required to appoint an independent Chair, alongside the local Member of Parliament (MP). The Chair would need to have a strong connection to the local area, and officers proposed that the recruitment process should commence immediately after the local elections in May 2026. A full-scale promotional campaign was being planned to ensure that candidates represented a broad cross-section of the community.

Shortlisting and interviews would be carried out by a panel comprising a senior officer, the MP, a Member for the Greenlands and Lakeside ward, and a Member for the Matchborough and Woodrow ward. A Community Panel of local residents would also be invited to provide views on the shortlisted candidates, and other ward Members for the relevant areas would have the opportunity to meet candidates before the final appointment.

Following the appointment of the Chair, they would lead the recruitment of the remaining Board members, with a requirement for a minimum of eight members in total. It was highlighted that representation from the MP was mandatory, and at least one ward Member must also sit on the Board, although officers would recommend two Members to ensure representation from both wards.

Members were advised that the deadline for submitting the final Board membership to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government for approval was 17th July 2026.

Following the presentation, Members discussed the report and made the following comments:

- It was clarified that the Chair could not be an elected representative.
- Members noted that there was a prospectus which set out guidance on spending and emphasised the importance of ensuring that Board decisions reflected community priorities while adhering to due diligence requirements.
- The wider implications for residents in surrounding areas. For example, any new facilities would be available for all to use.
- Members welcomed the clear timescales outlined in the report to support strong community engagement.

RESOLVED that

1) Authority to recruit and appoint an independent chair of the Greenlands and Woodrow Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board be delegated to the Assistant Director Regeneration & Property following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Environmental Services and in agreement with the MP for Redditch and the Villages;

2) Authority to approve the final membership of the Greenlands and Woodrow Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board be

delegated to the Assistant Director Regeneration & Property following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Environmental Services and in agreement with the MP for Redditch and the Villages; and

3) The Council agrees to act as Accountable Body for the Pride in Place Programme and adopt programme governance arrangements.

118. REDDITCH COUNCIL PLAN UPDATE REPORT

The Policy Manager presented the Redditch Council Plan Update Report.

The purpose of the report was to provide an update on the Council Plan that had been adopted in Spring 2025. Members were reminded about the development process for the Council Plan, which had been considered by the Executive Committee in March 2025.

The report summarised progress from April 2025 to January 2026, highlighting areas of work that had contributed to delivering the priority objectives, projects and vision of the Council Plan.

Following presentation of the report, Members discussed the below points:

- Members were pleased to note the progress made against the Council's priorities. While acknowledging that some targets had not been met, Members recognised that delays were often due to external or unforeseen circumstances.
- Visitor numbers to Redditch had increased to 199,556.
- Members expressed that the report served as an opportunity to celebrate the hard work of officers across the organisation.
- Members welcomed that residents would be able to see clear improvements in service delivery, for example with Dial a Ride and improvements to the Housing and Environmental Services teams. It was expressed that this demonstrated good value for money and showed that residents were receiving a fair deal.
- The report contributed to greater transparency and openness within the Council.
- Improvements within the Housing Department were highlighted, including increased Tenant Satisfaction Survey

responses, progress with the house-building programme, empty homes being brought back into use, the establishment of the Damp and Mould team, and improvements to the Caretaking team.

- Thanks were expressed to the Shopmobility and Dial-a-Ride teams for their hard work despite the challenges they had faced.
- Members noted that a designed, public-facing version of the report would be produced to support accessibility and engagement.

RECOMMENDED that

1) The Council Plan report and update table be noted.

119. QUARTER 3 2025/26 FINANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer presented the Quarter 3 2025/26 Finance Monitoring Report.

The report set out the key highlights for Quarter Three. Members were reminded that the Council had recently approved the 2026/27 budget, which had taken into account the pressures outlined within the report. The forecast position was noted to be within £19,000 of the position reported in the previous quarter.

The Interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer drew Members' attention to capital expenditure. Capital spending stood at £6.776 million against an original budget of £8.082 million, which had been revised with carry forwards to £19.921 million.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance acknowledged the pressures identified within the Quarter Three report and advised that mitigations had been implemented. In particular, reference was made to pressures within the Housing Revenue Account relating to expenditure on fire doors, which represented a Health and Safety requirement. Earmarked reserves had been factored into the following year's budget, and savings targets were reported to be close to being met. The Portfolio Holder also reminded Members that some ward budgets remained underspent.

Members commented on the following points:

- Members were asked to review any allocations made from ward budgets, and options for making donations to local charities were discussed.

- A Member queried whether capital spending should be included on the Corporate Risk Register. Officers clarified that this would depend upon the individual circumstances and status of particular projects. Reassurance was provided that the financial position had already been anticipated within the new budget and that additional resources had been identified to support capacity.

RESOLVED that

1) There is a forecast revenue overspend position of £399k at Q3 be noted.

2) The current Capital spending of £6.776 million against an original budget of £8.082 million revised with carry forwards to £19.921 million be noted.

3) The current savings delivery is £1.751 million against an annual target of £2.342 million for 2025/26 be noted.

4) Forecast Earmarked Reserves at 31 March 2026 are £17.294 million be noted.

5) The Ward Budget allocation position to date is 21 approved allocations at £32,100, leaving a balance of £21,900 to be allocated before year end be noted.

6) There is an updated procurements position, with any new items over £200,000 to be included on the forward plan be noted.

7) The position on Council Tax and Business Rates be noted

8) The position on benefits processing be noted.

RECOMMENDED that

9) That the Balance Sheet Monitoring Position for Q3 is noted – which is the Treasury Monitoring Report and required to be reported to Council.

10) The Medium-Term Financial Plan is amended to include the Pride in Place Fund Allocation which is confirmed as £19,660,000 (capital £12,470,000 and revenue £7,190,000) over 10 years and includes the current year's capacity fund of £150,000, which has already been received.

120. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting which took place on 17th February 2026 were noted.

121. 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.

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

There was no urgent business for discussion at the meeting.

123. GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY BODIES AWARDING OF GRANTS

The Assistant Director for Community and Housing Services presented the Grants to Voluntary Bodies Awarding of Grants report.

The purpose of the report was to outline the applications that had been received and the grants to be awarded to voluntary sector organisations as determined by the Grants Panel. It was noted that during their consideration of the applications, the Grants Panel had expressed a desire to improve the scoring criteria in future rounds to give greater priority to local Redditch organisations whose projects were based within the Borough.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Spaces and Voluntary Sector thanked the Assistant Director and the Grants Panel for their work in scrutinising the large number of applications received.

RESOLVED that

1) **grants be awarded to voluntary sector organisations as set out below:**

Organisation	Funding Recommended	Project
Acorns	£10,000	Specialist palliative care for children from Redditch
Astwood Bank Community CIC	£10,000	Astwood Bank Carnival
Carers Careline	£10,000	Carers Careline support for unpaid carers
P&E Sports CIC	£10,000	Matchborough Positive Activities for Young People
Primrose hospice	£9,225	Volunteer and Befrienders Wellbeing
Redditch Nightstop	£10,000	Safe Accommodation & Support Project
Where Next	£10,000	Where Next Redditch Core Costs
YMCA	£9,184	Church Hill Youth Wellbeing & Mentoring Support
New Starts	£5000	Local People Helping Local People
Oasis	£5000	Christians Against Poverty Debt Centre
Total	**£88,409**	

2) the additional wording in bold set out below, be added to paragraph 9.5 of the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Policy in order to allow scoring to support smaller and local charitable organisations:

"There will be no pre-determined demographic allocation of funds but **priority will be given to local Redditch organisations whose projects are based in Redditch and funding will be used only for the benefit of Redditch residents, this is compared to larger national charities"**

Executive Committee

Tuesday, 17th March, 2026

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 8.27 pm

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive **17th March 2026**

Empty Homes Strategy

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Bill Hartnett (*Councillor Hartnett was the relevant Portfolio Holder on the date of the Executive Committee meeting*)
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Judith Willis Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services
Report Author Maria Bailey	Job Title: Senior Housing Strategy Officer Contact email: maria.bailey@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 07768 307628	
Wards Affected		No specific ward relevance
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		Not Applicable
Relevant Council Priority		Community and Housing
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND to Council that: -

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

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 According to the national council tax database for 2025, there were 542,276 empty homes recorded in October across England, representing 2.1% of all homes. Action to tackle empty homes has a significant potential to address national housing needs.

2.2 In October 2025, Redditch Borough had 660 empty homes, of which 320 had been empty for more than 6 months. At the same time there were 943 households on the housing register seeking affordable housing.

2.3 Redditch Borough Council is committed to identifying empty homes and developing options for bringing them back into use as quickly as possible. The empty homes strategy sets out priorities and actions to tackle empty homes across the Borough and to use the most effective interventions to do so.

2.4 The aim of the strategy is to:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.10 National policy focuses on empowering local authorities to bring vacant dwellings back in to use, guided by a local empty homes strategy. Local authorities have the discretion to charge empty home owners council tax premiums and have a range of legislative powers to tackle empty homes.

2.11 Since April 2013 local authorities have been able to charge a council tax premium on homes, empty for more than 2 years, that is, an amount charged on top of the council tax due. In April 2024, this was extended to properties empty for more than one year.

2.12 Some empty home owners are exempt from paying council tax. The key reasons for this are the owner: is deceased and the property is subject to probate, has moved to hospital or into a care home or the owner is a charity.

2.13 The Local Government Association (LGA) has developed good practice guidance for tackling empty homes. LGA good practice approaches focus on systematically identifying and recording empty homes in their areas and engaging, encouraging and using enforcement (where necessary) to bring homes back in to use. Legislative powers for tackling empty homes can be found in appendix 1 to this report

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

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

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

Priority 3 - Strengthen early intervention, engagement and monitoring

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

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

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

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

Relevant Council Priority

6.2 Tackling Empty Homes positively impacts:

- Community and Housing

Climate Change Implications

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

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.4 No specific equalities and diversity implications have been identified.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

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

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive **17th March 2026**

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

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

Redditch Borough Council

Empty Homes Strategy 2026 – 2029

Redditch Borough Council

Working together for our communities

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

Priority 2 - **Improve intervention pathways, resources and performance**

Priority 3 - **Strengthen early intervention, engagement and monitoring**

Appendix 1 - Legislative Powers for Tackling Empty Homes

Appendix 2 – Strategy Action Plan

Foreword

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Councillor Bill Hartnett
Executive Member for Housing

Introduction

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

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

The aim of this strategy is to:

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

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

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

Our commitment

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

What is an empty home?

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

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

What are the reasons behind empty homes?

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

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

Advantages of bringing empty homes back in to use

Advantages of bringing empty homes back in to use include:

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

National Context

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

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

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

Council Tax Premiums

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

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

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

Good Practice

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

Local Context

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

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

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

Number of Long-Term Empty Homes in Worcestershire

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

Source: Council Tax Base Oct 2025 & Oct2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Local Good Practice

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

Wychavon District Council & Malvern Hills District Council

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

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

Empty Homes Strategic Priorities

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

Priority 1

Develop systems, processes and multi-agency working

Priority 2

Improve intervention pathways, resources and performance

Priority 3

Strengthen early intervention, engagement and monitoring

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

Accountability

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

Appendix 1 Legislative Powers for Tackling Empty Homes

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

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

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

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

Appendix 2 – Action Plan

Empty Homes Strategy – Action Plan

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

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

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

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

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

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

Priority 2 – Improve intervention pathways, resources and performance

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

processes	actions agreed and tracked	2027	annual)	analysis (Feb 2028)	Strategic Housing
Identify and explore good practice to address barriers	Benchmarking completed; practice note adopted and implemented	1st December 2027	31st March2028	Desk research (Dec 2027); Peer engagement (Mar 2028); Practice adoption (Jun 2028)	Private Sector Housing (Lead), Strategic Housing, Empty Homes Regional Network
Develop targets to bring empty homes back into use	Annual and strategy-level targets set; quarterly monitoring in place	1st Sept 2026	15th Dec 2026	Baseline agreed (Oct 2026); Draft targets (Nov 2026); Sign-off (Dec 2026)	Private Sector Housing

Phase 3 – Strengthen early intervention, engagement and monitoring

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

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

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

17th March 2026

Climate Change Strategy 2026 - 2031

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

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that:-

1) **The Council's Climate Change Strategy 2026–2031 be approved; and**

2) **an annual review of the Climate Change Strategy be reported to Council.**

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Redditch Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and committed to place climate considerations at the centre of decision-making. The proposed Climate Change Strategy 2026–2031 updates and replaces the previous Carbon Reduction Action Plan and sets out the pathway to Net Zero by 2040 for the Council's own operations, with a 50% reduction by 2030.

2.2 The Strategy aligns with the UK statutory target of Net Zero by 2050 and international commitments under the Paris Agreement; it also reflects the Council Plan's green thread, embedding climate action across services.

2.3 The Strategy focuses on priority themes where the Council has direct control or significant influence:

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

2.4 **Evidence base highlights (baseline & progress):**

- **Domestic retrofit**: £1.81 million has been invested in social housing energy efficiency upgrades, alongside £260,000 for private home retrofits, with further funding streams set to deliver £4.27 million of improvements to council housing stock.
- **Council energy**: Energy consumption across council buildings has fallen by 20% since 2021, supported by solar PV installations and a 100% green energy tariff.
- **Area emissions context**: DESNZ local authority GHG statistics (2005–2023) provide the latest official picture for Redditch and Worcestershire. Emissions continue to decline, with Redditch achieving 3.5 tCO_2e per capita in 2023, below regional and national averages

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

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

3.2 **Governance.** The Strategy will be embedded in the Council's performance framework with annual Cabinet reporting. Climate implications are already a standard section in committee reports; options to introduce a simple climate impact assessment tool for officers to utilise.
In addition, Assistant Directors will incorporate actions from the strategy within their service business plans and include date bound targets that will form part of the plans quarterly monitoring and reporting

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

3.3 **Partnerships.** Continued collaboration with Worcestershire County Council (e.g., LEVI on-street charging), Rubicon Leisure, Registered Providers, Act on Energy, Midland Net Zero Hub, Worcestershire Regulatory Services, will maximise delivery capacity and funding leverage.

3.4 **Current Activity.** Key operational programmes include: PV at Abbey Stadium and lighting upgrades across the estate; Warm Homes retrofit; expansion of EV charging (including support to WCC's LEVI rollout); preparation for separate weekly food waste collections; and biodiversity improvements (mowing regimes, equipment electrification).

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The strategy will be delivered through a mix of existing revenue budgets, invest-to-save business cases, Capital Programme bids, and external funding as required by service areas. Any additional funding that requires an amendment to the Council's Budget Framework will be reported through the Executive Committee to Council.

4.2 The climate Change team will work with the Finance Services team to profile costs, savings, and funding sources through the Medium-Term Financial Plan, ensuring robust whole-life business cases. The Council will explore funding opportunities and partnerships with the private sector to bring in inward investment to the borough to deliver climate change projects.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).** Under the Environment Act 2021, a mandatory minimum 10% BNG applies to qualifying planning applications (major developments from 12th February 2024; small sites from 2nd April 2024). The strategy supports implementation through development management and local plan policy.

5.2 **Waste and recycling reforms.** The Government's Simpler Recycling requirements standardise collections nationally; separate household food waste collections are required by 31st March 2026, subject to transitional provisions. Preparatory work is underway to ensure operational readiness (collection systems, communications, and processing).

5.3 **Procurement and contracts.** Delivery will align with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and proposed sustainable procurement updates, incorporating whole-life carbon and social value where proportionate and lawful.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

6.1 Any structural changes will be monitored. Programme sequencing (e.g., fleet transition and depot infrastructure) will be reviewed to minimise stranded costs, maintain service continuity, and align with any future operating model.

6.2 The strategy is constructed in a way that will allow it to be adapted to the new unitary authority.

Relevant Council Priority

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

Climate Change Implications

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

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.4 Actions are designed to reduce fuel poverty and improve health outcomes (e.g., domestic retrofit, air quality). Equality Impact Assessments will be completed for major programmes to ensure fair access and mitigate unintended impacts.

6.5 All documents will be produced accessibly in line with the Council's corporate accessibility guidance.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 **Funding availability and affordability** – *Mitigation:* phased delivery, external grant maximisation, robust invest-to-save business cases.
Market capacity and supply chain constraints – *Mitigation:* early engagement, framework procurement, regional collaboration (e.g., Midlands Connect / MNZH).
Operational disruption during works – *Mitigation:* programme planning around service needs, contractor management, stakeholder communications.
Policy and regulatory change – *Mitigation:* horizon scanning, flexible delivery plans, governance oversight.
Data quality and benefits realisation – *Mitigation:* climate dashboard, baselines and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs); regular monitoring and reporting.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Climate Change Strategy 2026 - 2031

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

17th March 2026

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

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

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

17th March 2026

Renters Rights Act 2025

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Bill Hartnett (*Councillor Hartnett was the relevant Portfolio Holder on the date of the Executive Committee meeting*)
Portfolio Holder Consulted		**Yes**
Relevant Assistant Director		Assistant Director Community and Housing Services
Report Author: Katie Sharp-Fisher	Job Title: Private Sector Housing Manager Contact email: k.sharp-fisher@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881437	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		Community and Housing
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

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

The Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that:-

2) The Scheme of Delegations be amended to incorporate new powers under the Renters Rights Act 2025 in accordance with the wording set out at Appendix 1

3) The 2026/27 Medium Term Financial Plan is updated to include the new burdens funding of £20,057.95

4) Authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Community & Housing to spend the new burdens funding for Renters Rights Act 2025 preparations.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Renters Rights Act 2025 (RRA25) obtained Royal Assent on the 27th October 2025 with reforms being introduced through a phased approach with new investigatory power being implemented from the 27th

December 2025. Phase 1 will commence on the 1st May 2026. The RRA25 represents the most significant reform of the private rented sector in a generation with the aim to improve security, fairness, and standards for private tenants while strengthening enforcement powers for local authorities.

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

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

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

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

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

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

- **Make it illegal to discriminate against renters** who have children or receive benefits – landlords and letting agents will not be able to do anything to make a tenant less likely to rent a property (or prevent them from renting it) because they have children or receive benefits. This includes withholding information about a property (including its availability), stopping someone from viewing it, or refusing to grant a tenancy.
- **Require landlords in the PRS to consider tenant requests to rent with a pet** – landlords will have an initial 28 days to consider their tenant's request, and they will have to provide valid reasons if they refuse it.
- **Strengthen both local council enforcement and rent repayment orders** - civil penalties will be expanded, and there will be a new requirement for local councils to report on enforcement activity. Rent repayment orders will be extended to superior landlords, the maximum penalty will be doubled, and repeat offenders required to pay the maximum amount.

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

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

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

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

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

3.7 The Ombudsman will provide a redress service for private rented sector tenants when things go wrong. It will also support landlords with tools, guidance and training on handling complaints from tenants early. The

Ombudsman scheme will be mandatory for PRS landlords. Landlords will be required to fund the service through a fair and proportionate charging model which is due to be confirmed closer to launch.

3.8 Implementation of the Ombudsman will happen after the introduction of the database, and the government are exploring ways to share information between the database and the Ombudsman to minimise landlord sign-up burden.

3.9 The development of the Ombudsman will happen in stages:

- Stage 1 will happen at least 12-18 months before implementation. The Secretary of State will choose a scheme administrator to run the new service, which will then need time to scale up.
- Stage 2 will require landlords to be members of the new service, expected to be in 2028, when the Secretary of State is confident the service is ready for delivery. We will make sure landlords are given sufficient notice in advance of requiring them to be members of the scheme.

3.10 **Phase 3** involves the introduction of a new Decent Homes Standard (DHS) in the PRS (dates of implementation to be confirmed following consultation but likely between 2035- 2037).

3.11 A DHS will be introduced to the PRS for the first time. This will ensure that all PRS properties meet a minimum standard of housing quality and provide local councils with powers to take enforcement action if PRS properties fail to meet it.

3.12 While the deadline for implementation may be some years away, the expectation is that landlords should commence works earlier wherever feasible, remaining mindful of the effect of property conditions on tenants.

3.13 In addition to these measures, the Government has consulted on plans to require all domestic privately rented properties in England and Wales to meet Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) of EPC C or equivalent by 2030 unless a valid exemption is in place. Further details will be set out surrounding this in due course.

3.14 As part of the pathway to applying the DHS to the PRS, the Housing, Health & Safety Hazard Rating System (HHSRS) will be reviewed.

3.15 Awaab's Law will also be extended to the PRS, setting clear legally enforceable timeframes within which PRS landlords must make homes

safe where they contain serious hazards. This will empower tenants to challenge dangerous conditions in their homes.

3.16 It should be noted that the Decent Homes Standard already applies to social housing and Awaab's law applies to social housing from 27th October 2025.

3.17 Under the RRA25, the Private Sector Housing Teams powers will expand to include investigation and enforcement of: -

- Tenancy agreement clauses
- Illegal eviction and harassment
- Breaches for grounds of possession e.g. re-letting property before 12 months if using sale as reason for possession
- Time limits on possession grounds

3.18 As a result of new legislation, powers and tenants' rights, there are several new areas that the service has not dealt with before such as anti-discrimination, rent bidding and rent increases and unreasonable refusal of pet requests. This will require training to address knowledge gaps, upskilling staff as well as additional resources to respond to the demand and change of enquiries.

3.19 The primary anticipated impacts on the service relate to an increase in demand generated through enquiries from tenants surrounding their rights, the identification and enforcement of offences and an increase in homeless presentations as a result of section 21 notices being issued in the lead up to the implementation of phase 1 and a potential reduction in PRS accommodation post implementation.

3.20 Officers have pre-empted the increased workload anticipated under the RRA25 and have therefore expanded the Private Sector Housing team from 3 FTE to 5 FTE. The Private Sector Housing Officers are able to undertake enforcement across all tenures, including private rented, socially rented (excluding RBC accommodation), owner-occupied and empty properties.

3.21 Training, development and upskilling the workforce will be undertaken to ensure that key staff in the service have the knowledge and skillset to provide support, respond to and enforce the Act relevant to their role. This will ensure customers receive the best possible service and build trust and confidence with customers as well as key stakeholders.

3.21 To support compliance with the RRA25 Redditch Borough Council has secured and allocated funding to implement a regulatory case management system. This system will play a crucial role in enabling the council to meet new statutory duties under the Act. Once operational the new system will provide robust data reporting to central government as required by the RRA

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

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

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

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

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

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

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

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

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

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

The relevant government guidance states that: -

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

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

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Currently informal action is used in addition to the use of formal powers, and the provisions of the Act are likely to limit such informal action in the future.

5.2 The Council must ensure these duties and powers are exercised in accordance with the criteria outlined within the Act. This requires

amendments to the Scheme of Delegation to cover the provisions of the Act (Appendix 1).

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

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

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

Relevant Council Priority

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

Climate Change Implications

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

Equalities and Diversity Implications

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

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 The following risks and opportunities have been identified to inform planning and mitigation.

- Increased enquiries to both PRS and housing options:
    - Provide clear, consistent information to all internal and external partners through website information, landlord emails and internal scripts for all teams.

- Short implementation timescales:
    - Develop early workflows and deliver training to all relevant staff ahead of Phase 1.
- Some landlords may choose to exit the PRS due to perceived regulatory burden, leading to a reduction in available rental stock
- Reduced PRS availability, rising evictions, and higher demand for homelessness support may increase Temporary Accommodation placements and expenditure
- Increased workload for PSH, Housing Options, and Legal Services may require additional budget for staffing, training, legal costs, and system improvements.
- Increased enforcement activity and financial penalties may lead to higher levels of debt to recover, requiring additional administration and legal oversight.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Proposed amendments to Scheme of Delegations

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

17th March 2026

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

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

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

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

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

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

17th March 2026

Littering from Vehicles

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Sharon Harvey (*Councillor Harvey was the relevant Portfolio Holder on the date of the Executive Committee meeting*)
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Simon Wilkes, Director Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Report Author Toni Ainscough	Job Title: Principal Officer Contact email:toni.ainscough@worcsregservices.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01562 738035	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		Green, Clean and Safe
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1) **Civil enforcement of Littering from Vehicles be introduced.**

2) **The Civil Enforcement Team be given delegated authority to issue Litter Penalty Charge Notices.**

3) **The parking administration team be authorised to deal with appeals and enforcement matters in respect of Litter Penalty Charge Notices.**

4) **The Penalty Notice Charge be set at the level set by Council for Criminal offences where a Fixed Penalty Notice is served for Depositing Litter (section 87/88 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990) which for 2026/27 subject to Council approval are proposed to be set as:**

   a) **£250; and**
   b) **£125 for prompt payment (within 14 days).**

5) **Authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Regeneration & Property to issue Penalty Notice Charges for Littering from Vehicles under The Littering From Vehicles Outside London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018.**

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

17th March 2026

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Currently littering from vehicles is only enforced as a criminal offence and since June 2024 has been enforced by Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS). In line with the existing policy, enforcement has been discharged through informal action, Fixed Penalty Notice or consideration for prosecution. However, when littering occurs from a vehicle, to take formal enforcement action, there is a requirement to prove beyond reasonable doubt who committed the offence. Consequently, it can be difficult to identify the offender with sufficient certainty to take enforcement action.

2.2 On 1st April 2018, The Littering From Vehicles Outside London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018 gave powers to litter authorities to issue Penalty Charge Notices to the keeper of a vehicle when the Council has reason to believe that litter was thrown from that vehicle onto land within the Council's control. This includes any highways within the district for which Redditch Borough Council are the litter authority.

2.3 It is recommended that the Council introduces Litter Penalty Notices at the earliest opportunity and that the Civil Enforcement Team are given delegated authority to issue Litter Penalty Charge Notices and the parking administration team are authorised to deal with all appeals and enforcement matters in relation to these.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 The Littering From Vehicles Outside London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018 is a civil route based on the same model as the issue of a Penalty Charge Notice used for parking enforcement in Redditch. Civil Enforcement Officers are on district undertaking this duty on a day-to-day basis. If they are also able to issue a Penalty Notice Charge to a person depositing litter, this would be an effective use of time and resource whilst they are undertaking their parking enforcement duties.

3.2 Civil Enforcement Officers will only issue a Penalty Charge Notice if they witness the incident and will process this in a similar way to a system that is already in place (please see appendix 1 – flow chart).

3.3 Civil Enforcement Officers and parking administration team are already undertaking this service on behalf of Wychavon District Council.

3.4 These recommendations only concern littering from vehicles witnessed by Civil Enforcement Officers. All other officers of the Council or members of the public who witness littering from vehicles should report this to WRS using the report it form on the Council or WRS' websites or call WRS directly for investigation. Such reports will be investigated through the criminal route.

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

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The provision of Civil Enforcement Officers in Redditch is through a contract with Wychavon District Council, managed by the Assistant Director of Economic Development, Property and Regeneration. The proposal is to expand the current Service Level Agreement (SLA) to include issuing of Penalty Notices for littering from vehicles The SLA variation itself will not incur any cost.

4.2 The Civil Enforcement Officers will be able to utilise their existing handheld devices, DVLA link and systems that they use. There are no additional equipment costs and only a small software set up cost which will be covered by the existing WRS Envirocrime budget.

4.3 The cost of each additional Penalty Notice that is served is negligible at 35 pence each. For any Penalty Notices that are unpaid, there is an additional £10 charge for debt recovery in line with the existing SLA arrangements for parking charges and will be covered by the current budget arrangements.

4.4 The current SLA arrangements set a contractual limit on Penalty Charges issued without additional costs. It is not anticipated that this limit will be exceeded. Publicity around the introduction of the enforcement will similarly reduce the likelihood of this.

4.5 The current team of Civil Enforcement Officers will be used and will be trained to monitor and report incidences of littering from vehicles during

their parking duties. The parking administration team will be trained on the recovery of unpaid littering penalties with an added volume of correspondence to manage.

4.6 Intelligence collated in the course of the service delivery will be used to inform the targeted approach to the wider enviro-crime enforcement by WRS.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Littering from Vehicles (Outside London) Regulation 2018 derives from Section 88A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 which provides that the Secretary of State has the discretion to make regulations which may oblige the keeper of a vehicle to pay a fixed penalty to a litter authority where there is reason to believe that there has been littering in respect of the vehicle.

5.2 The legislation can be enforced by a local authority or charging authority for the offence of littering from a vehicle under Section 87 of the Environmental Protection Act. A person may be pursued through civil proceedings, where they throw down, drop or otherwise deposit any litter in respect of the vehicle and enforcement will be to a civil standard.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

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

Relevant Council Priority

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

Climate Change Implications

6.3 No direct implications, however raising the profile of appropriate behaviour with regard to the environment helps support our Climate Change priorities.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.4 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Operational Flow Diagram.
Appendix 2 – FAQs

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

17th March 2026

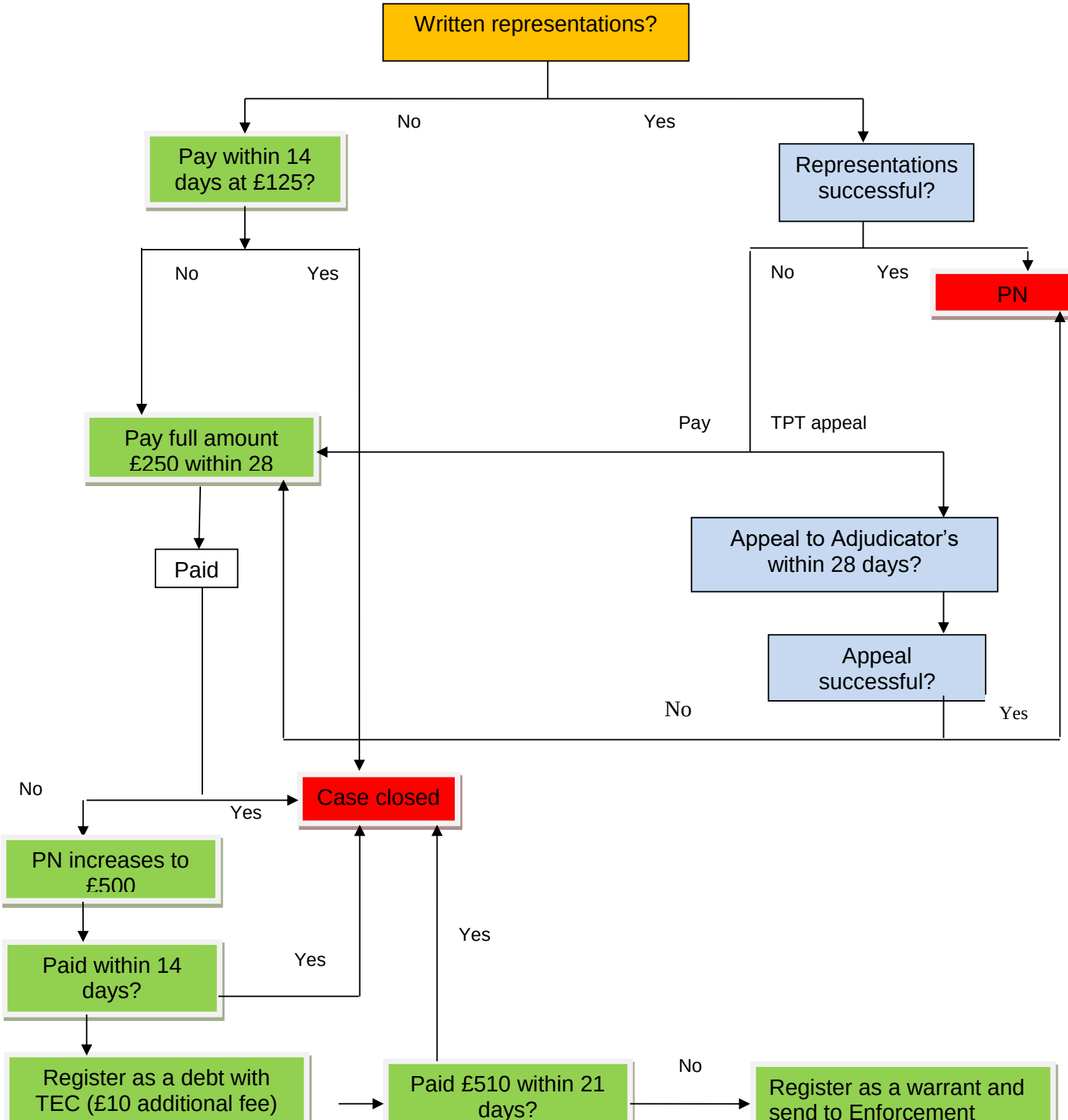
9. REPORT SIGN OFF

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

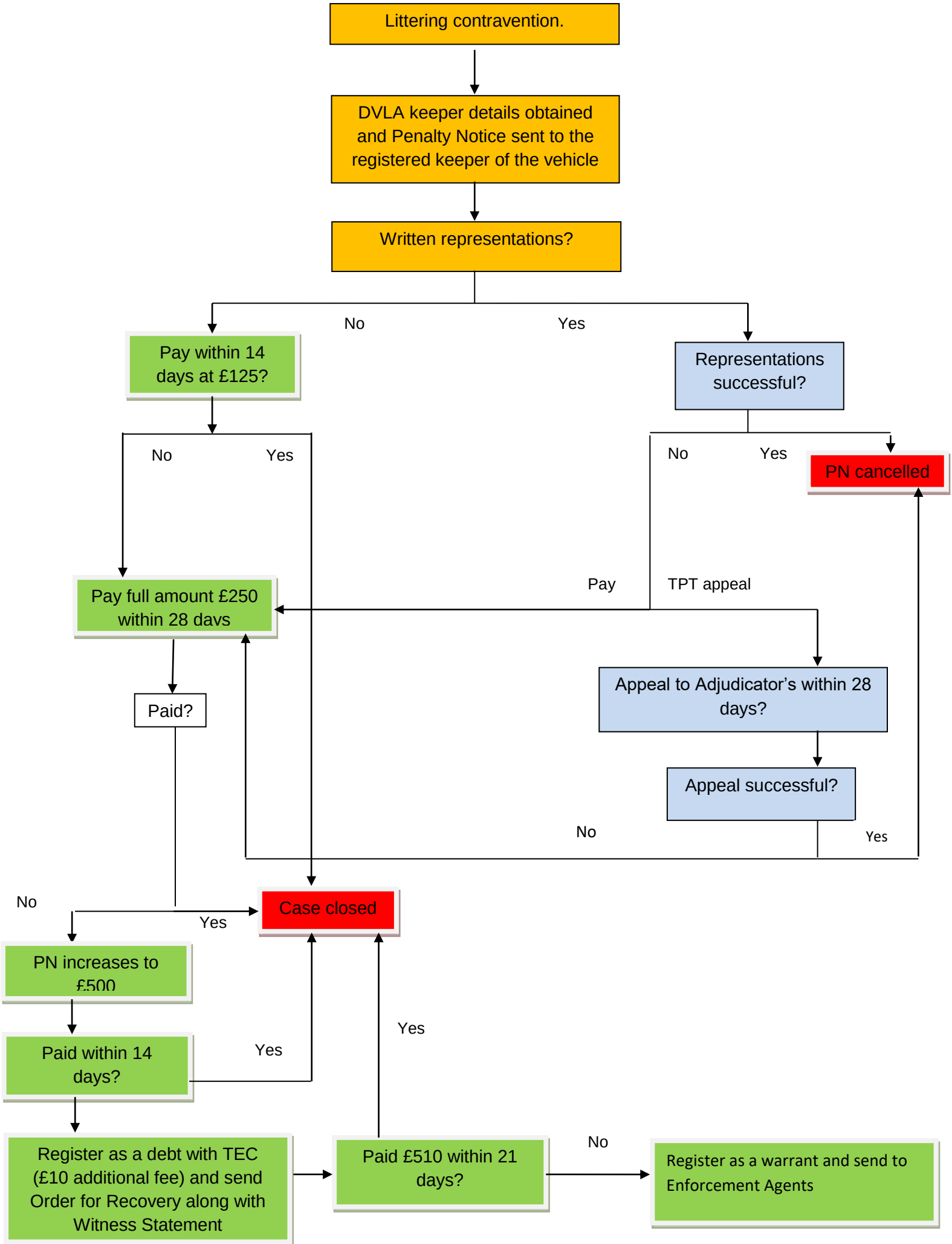
REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

17th March 2026



Appendix 1


Littering contravention.
DVLA keeper details obtained and Penalty Notice sent to the registered keeper of the vehicle
Written representations?
No
Yes
Pay within 14 days at £125?
Representations successful?
No
Yes
No
Yes
PN cancelled
Pay full amount £250 within 28 davs
Pay
TPT appeal
Paid?
Appeal to Adjudicator's within 28 days?
Appeal successful?
No
Yes
No
Yes
Case closed
PN increases to £500
Paid within 14 days?
Yes
Yes
Register as a debt with TEC (£10 additional fee) and send Order for Recovery along with Witness Statement
Paid £510 within 21 days?
No
Register as a warrant and send to Enforcement Agents

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Appendix 2

Frequently Asked Questions

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

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

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

Yes at this time.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- **What is the additional cost?**

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

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

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

17th March 2026

Redditch Council Plan update

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Jane Spilsbury (*Councillor Spilsbury was the relevant Portfolio Holder on the date of the Executive Committee meeting*)
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Hannah Corredor, Assistant Director for Corporate Services & Transformation
Report Author Rebecca Green	Job Title: Policy Manager Contact email: r.green@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881616	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		
Relevant Council Priority		All
Key Decision		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive Committee RECOMMEND that:-

1. **The Council Plan report and update table attached at Appendix 1 be noted**

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The development of the new Council Plan began with sessions supported by the LGA in 2024. The priority areas identified in these sessions were built upon in two workshops, which brought together the Cabinet and Corporate Management Team to consolidate the learning and direction identified with the LGA, in combination with relevant data, into a new vision for the borough, distinct priorities and key objectives for the next four years. These have been articulated in the plan as the overarching vision, which focuses on the quality of life of local communities, and three new priorities:

- Economy & Regeneration
- Green, Clean & Safe
- Community & Housing

2.2 The Council Plan 2025-2028 went to Executive in March 2025. This report summarises progress from April 2025 up to January 2026,

highlighting areas of work that have contributed to delivering the priority objectives, projects and vision of the Council Plan.

2.3 **ECONOMY & REGENERATION**

UKSPF

During the 4-year UKSPF programme, grants have funded business start-up, growth grants, innovation grants (for both new and existing businesses), energy efficiency business grants and employee training grants. Businesses have been able to apply for up to £10,000 for start-up and growth grants. Larger grants – up to £30,000 – have been available for innovation projects (product or process development) and the adoption of energy efficiency measures including clean energy generation, e.g. biomass, wind turbine, etc. Employee training grants have been available for up to £1,500 per employee. All grants are match-funded by the business at various levels from 50 – 60%. We also secured some match-funding from Worcestershire County Council. UKSPF funding has strengthened local skills, employment pathways and community capacity, including support for VCS organisations, targeted help for young people and NEET residents through the Redditch Youth Hub, and employability support for those with caring responsibilities via Family Hubs. Funding has also enabled local people in work to access employer-matched training to boost their skills.

To date in 2025/26, the following has been delivered:

Deliverable	Achieved to Date
Amount of green or blue space created or improved	168
Number of enterprises receiving grants	3
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	48
Number of potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready	11
Number of local events or activities supported	105
Number of economically inactive people engaging with support services	70
Number of people reached	630
Number of people receiving support to gain employment	144
Number of people receiving support to sustain employment	30
Number of people supported to participate in education	52

Number of households receiving cost of living support	314
Number of households supported to take up energy efficiency measures	20
Number of organisations receiving grants	6
Number of volunteering opportunities supported	68
Increased visitor numbers	199556
Jobs created	13
Number of new enterprises	0
Number of enterprises engaged in innovation	4
Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support	44
Number of people in education following support	9
People gaining a qualification or completing a course	44
Estimated carbon dioxide equivalent reductions as a result of support	213 tonnes
Number of volunteering opportunities created	43

Businesses at all stages of development benefit from specialist advice and access to match-funded grants. The Innovation Lighthouse programme, delivered in partnership with the Warwick Manufacturing Group, is supporting the local manufacturing sector by helping firms develop new products and processes, enhancing innovation, productivity and long-term resilience. The programme has supported 4 local businesses; with 1 grant application approved and another 3 anticipated. The project will continue through to 2027/28, supporting a further 12 businesses.

Town Hall Redevelopment

The Town Hall redevelopment has continued to make strong progress over the past year delivering major modernisation across the building to create a more efficient, accessible and future-ready hub for council services, partners and residents. Following the initial strip-out phase in early 2025, revised designs and procurement lead-in times adjusted the construction schedule,.

Key improvements include:

- **Lower Ground Floor:** new archiving space, upgraded toilet and kitchen facilities, and open-plan office accommodation intended for future commercial lease.
- **Ground Floor:** a new glass atrium entrance, modern Customer Service Desk, meeting pods for services such as Housing and

Planning, a new Civic Chamber, and continued NHS service provision.
- **First Floor:** retained NHS space alongside high-quality Grade A office accommodation.
- **Whole-Building Upgrades:** installation of new mechanical and electrical systems, a modern fire alarm, and improved access control to enhance safety and security.
- **Phase 2** – refurbishment of floors two and three

Once completed, the redevelopment will deliver a brighter, more accessible and energy-efficient building that brings services together in one place, supports improved customer access, provides enhanced civic facilities, and creates new commercial opportunities for Redditch Borough Council.

Public Realm

RBC have worked in partnership with WCC to deliver further public realm improvements in Redditch Town Centre. Funded by The Town Deal, these Improvements included resurfacing of the footways and highways, including the addition of a cycle lane along this route which also forms part of National cycle route 5. New tree planting, street furniture and lighting has helped to enhance the public realm, providing a pleasant environment for visitors and increasing dwell time.

Improvements have taken place along Church Green East and Unicorn Hill, providing an enhanced entrance to the Town Centre for people arriving via train and improving the conservation area around St. Stephen's Church. This phase of public realm works link into previous improvements in the town centre. Further phases of work can be delivered to ensure the Town Centre is fit for the future and remains a pleasant place to visit.

Innovation Centre

Designs for the Innovation Centre have advanced significantly throughout 2025/26, in line with plans to develop an expanded centre with increased floorspace. RIBA Stages 2 and 3 have been completed. This was followed by a rigorous value engineering exercise to ensure that the project can be delivered on budget. Stage 4 designs are now advancing rapidly with construction profiled to commence Summer 2026. Speller-Metcalfe have been appointed as the design and build contractor up to stage 4 design, with an option to extend into delivering the development in full.

Planning permission has been submitted and approved within this time-period and £2.425m LEP funding has also been secured following submission of full business case to Birmingham City Council.

Outdoor Market

Redditch's outdoor market was successfully brought back by the Council at the end of March 2025 after a four-year absence, reopening on 29 March with new stalls, infrastructure and traders. The market now trades twice weekly and includes steady regulars such as fruit-and-veg sellers alongside a growing mix of stalls that reflect what residents said they wanted. The relaunch was well attended, with strong positive feedback from both shoppers and traders.

Forge Mill Museum

Permitted development has been received for the installation of a new food kiosk installation. The electrical and heating upgrade works are now complete and the refurbishment of the toilets was undertaken in February.

2.4 **GREEN, CLEAN & SAFE**

Service Leadership and Improvement

In August 2024, a new manager was appointed to lead Environmental Services Place functions including Grounds Maintenance, Tree Management and Bereavement Services. Since then, the service has undergone a renewed focus, securing key investment to modernise operations and enhance performance. The workforce are highly capable and are dedicated towards making the area green, clean and safe. During the last year investment has been made on vehicles, including 6 replacement vehicles and machinery to modernise and improve efficiency in service delivery. To support this, the Abavus open space management system was fully relaunched and embedded within teams, ensuring clear work instructions, improved data capture, and robust pre- and post-work evidence trails.

Street Cleanliness

Three new mini-road sweepers have been procured, alongside enhanced brush systems designed to more effectively remove ingrained kerb line weeds and moss. Route optimisation has been completed, with hotspots now targeted on a more frequent basis. Redditch town centres now benefit from two full annual jet washes, helping to remove accumulated grime from high-footfall areas. In

addition, a walk-behind “green machine” has been introduced to access narrow and restricted spaces.

Voluntary litter picking

Environmental Services continues to welcome and actively support public involvement in keeping the borough clean. A fully stocked supply of litter-picking equipment—including grabbers, gloves, bags and bag rings—is maintained for community use. In 2025, the Place Teams facilitated 29 individual and group-led litter picks, working in close partnership with colleagues in Parks to plan and support these events.

Hedge Maintenance

In 2025, additional agency seasonal workers were appointed to deliver a deeper hedge-cutting programme. The aim was to significantly reduce both width and height to restore hedge lines across key areas. This work was successfully completed, resulting in a more manageable stock and reducing the need for large agency teams in future seasons.

Major Route Management (WCC Partnership)

Through the Service Level Agreement with Worcestershire County Council, Redditch Borough Council is responsible for grass cutting, hedge and tree management, and litter clearance on major routes. A new approach was introduced, deploying a single, dedicated team selected from across the service. This method proved significantly more effective, particularly given the time-limited nature of road closures.

This year also saw the first substantial programme of coordinated tree works along major roads, reducing tree lines to a level manageable by flail cutting in future years. This work was part-funded by the County Council and will be expanded further in 2026.

Reduce fly-tipping

Increased environmental enforcement has helped to protect the environment of the borough and minimise pollution. In 2025/26, WRS Officers have served 8 Fixed Penalty Notices. The team remain committed to educating businesses and the public on how to dispose of waste properly, reducing fly-tipping and serving more FPNs where necessary.

A refreshed communications strategy, launched in early 2025, has increased public awareness of fly-tipping offences and penalties. Since

Q1 2025/26, there has been steady decline in the number of fly tips per quarter, from 503 in Q1 to 370 in Q3. The time taken to remove fly tips has also remined below the target of 5 days; averaging 3.7 days in Q1 2025/26, 3 days in Q2 and 2.5 days in Q3.

Bulky waste

Promotion of the bulky waste collection service throughout 2025—particularly during peak periods such as the run-up to Christmas—has resulted in a 15% increase in collection volumes compared with the previous year. This provides residents with accessible alternatives to fly-tipping.

Delivering the Environment Act

The Council Plan sets out our dedication to the delivery of the Environment Act and how we can work to reduce waste and increase recycling. We are compliant with dry recycling requirements of Simpler Recycling across Domestic and Commercial Waste Services.
The Council remains committed to implementing food waste collections in line with the Environment Act. We had been working with Bromsgrove District Council and Wyre Forest District Council on a joint procurement exercise, which closed in December 2025, and vehicles had already been ordered in preparation for delivery of the service. In February 2026, WFDC formally withdrew from the process due to concerns about central government funding arrangements. Following legal advice, their withdrawal represents a material change to the procurement, meaning the joint tender cannot be completed. We are therefore developing a phased, in-house model for service delivery, making use of the vehicles already purchased and progressing direct procurement of caddies using existing capital funding. A key challenge remains with the limited depot capacity required to operate the service internally. A project team is now developing the revised approach, with the intention of commencing phased food waste collections during 2026/27. In the interim we have written to Defra to provide an update on the issues raised above.

Waste management systems

We remain committed to improving our waste management systems; in 2025, RBC introduced HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) as a renewable diesel alternative across its fleet and machinery; approximately 30% of fuel usage for the fleet has been swapped to HVO, reducing the carbon impact of operating services. This is further enhanced through the refuse fleet replacement programme for new, more environmentally friendly and efficient vehicles, with old trucks

being sold for parts and scrap, with proceeds going back to the public purse.

Bereavement Services

A new Burial Strategy has been developed and approved, setting out clear guidance and trigger points for future cemetery capacity planning. With Abbey Cemetery now projected to have approximately nine years of remaining capacity, the process of securing a new burial site is underway. Phase 1 geological and groundwater assessments have been completed, with the proposed site meeting Environment Agency requirements.
A new project is also progressing to introduce pet cremation services at the Abbey site. This would utilise a separate machine located in a distinct area of the existing building, meeting local demand and creating a new income stream for the council.
Bereavement Services has further launched a bespoke version of the Abavus system to modernise data capture, reporting, and memorial management in preparation for a forthcoming e-commerce platform.

Tree management

In 2025, the council introduced a suite of key policies providing clarity to the public and councillors:

1. **Tree Management Policy**
2. **Tree Planting Policy**
3. **Ash Dieback Strategy**
4. **TPO (Tree Preservation Order) Guidelines**

The Tree Team also developed a bespoke Abavus-based management system, which is now used daily. Alongside this, a detailed mapping project is underway using high-precision GPS technology. To date, 6,500 trees have been recorded, focusing initially on roadside trees, paths, desire lines, schools, and other priority locations.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity has also been a key workstream, with the Biodiversity First Duty report being developed, which sets out continued engagement with the Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy, monitoring and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

through planning, enhancing biodiversity on Council-owned land and promoting citizen science and community engagement.

Climate Change

Work to develop the new Climate Change Strategy has been undertaken, with a view to be adopted April 2026. The strategy includes the approach to working hand in hand with the community and partners to address climate related issues in Borough. Improving the efficiency and renewable energy generation on council buildings continues to be explored.

Environmental Services has progressed several important climate and biodiversity initiatives:

1. Soil Carbon Sequestration
By altering grassland management and introducing deep-rooted grass species, carbon capture has been increased—by **up to 200%**, depending on soil type. This method provides faster and more effective carbon sequestration than young tree planting.

2. Reduction in Glyphosate Use
Trials of steam-foam applicators are underway as an alternative to chemical weed spraying. The aim is to limit glyphosate use solely to roadside areas by late 2026.

3. Transition to Battery-Powered Equipment
Twenty-five handheld tools have been converted from two-stroke engines to battery power, reducing carbon emissions, hand-arm vibration, and noise pollution.

Warm Homes Programme

The Capital Programmes Team manage the delivery of the Energy Efficiency Measures across the RBC Housing stock including the Warm Homes funded programmes. This funding is offered as a 50% share of the project, with another 50% co-funding from the RBC Capital Energy Efficiency Budget.

From 2023 to 2026, we improved 159 homes across Batchley and the flats at Winslow Close, with all homes now registered as an EPC C. The WAVE 2.1 scheme concludes in February 2026. Works have included Cavity Wall Insulation, loft insulation, high heat retention heaters, new windows and doors, damp and mould resolution and new ventilation.

The latest scheme to be delivered is SHF WAVE 3, this is set to improve to 230 homes primarily in the Woodrow area' which will be concluded at the end of the 2027/28 financial year. This funding is being delivered in collaboration with the Warm Homes Local Grant (Private Homes funding) to allow us to retrofit full terraces of houses in the borough and bring energy efficiencies to both tenants and private home owners. The Energy Efficiency measures will include a mixture of External Wall Insulation (our first scheme in approximately 10 years), loft insulation, windows and doors, heating controls, ventilation. This will invest a further £4.27million into the RBC stock and allow almost 300 homes to meet the EPC C rating and above.

We continue to identify new channels of funding to assist RBC in its goal to meet the EPC C minimum Social Housing standard for its entire stock by 1st April 2030. To assist further we have commissioned a programme of EPC surveys on uncertified properties across the estate, this will be a rolling programme to ensure RBC has the necessary Asset Management data to enable future Energy Efficiency programmes.

Local Plan

The Redditch Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation was carried out in Spring – Summer 2025. 10 consultation events were held across the Borough, totally nearly 60 hours of engagement. 89 responses were received; the majority from the public, with further responses from developers and landowners and statutory consultees. In the public responses, there was a general consensus that there was a need for new homes and more employment opportunities, particularly for young people. The results of that consultation are currently being assessed and additional evidence commissioned. The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is shortly to formally introduce its new 30-month plan making system. Whilst work continues on the plan, the timetable for the Local Plan will need to be amended to take into account the new plan making procedures; this new timetable is expected to be announced in the spring.

Community Safety

The Community Safety Team continue to deliver the Respect Programme, a therapeutic mentoring scheme which provides weekly support and guidance sessions to young people at risk of becoming victims and/or perpetrators of crime. A 'Right Path Project' using Serious Violence Duty funding allocated to Worcestershire, and working with South Worcestershire, has been commissioned by NWCSP. This delivers intensive 1:1 mentoring to support and guide young people who are at greater risk of criminalisation through use

of violence, including those not accessing education and those at risk of permanent exclusion. The Right Path project was hugely successful in 2024/25 to the point of being oversubscribed.

A number of campaigns/events were supported in 2025, including:

- Freshers Week at HoW College
- Police and Fire Station Open Day
- Council Staff Well-being Event - All about me
- Operation Sceptre and other Knife Crime awareness events
- International Human Rights Day
- Loan Shark Awareness
- International Women's Day
- Child Exploitation Awareness Week
- Mental Health Awareness Week
- Delivering talks to various community groups about Home Security and Scam Awareness
- White Ribbon Campaign
- Hate Crime Awareness Week

Nominated Neighbour Scheme

The Nominated Neighbour Scheme aims to protect vulnerable residents from doorstep crime and rogue trader offences and continues to be a successful local initiative. The scheme has been well established in Redditch and there are 169 vulnerable residents signed up to the scheme (increase of 14 comparing to last year). Several events were held with vulnerable adult and OAP groups to promote the scheme and provide advice to residents about door-step scams and staying safe:

- Older Persons Forum
- Carers Careline Event
- Various Care Provider Companies
- Ibstock Close OAP Sheltered Housing Scheme
- Bereaved OAP Group @ The Bridge Church, Headless Cross
- Probus OAP Group, Bromsgrove Road

Worcestershire Drug & Alcohol Strategy 22-27

North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) focuses on Priority 1of the Strategy – Prevention: Breaking Supply Chains. NWCSP is working with local and regional partners to reduce the harm associated with the supply of illicit drugs in Redditch. This is fulfilled via the Multi-agency Targeted Enforcement (MATEs) group which brings operational officers together to take collective action against problem premises and organised crime groups involved in drug supply. The

group has also had some success with local shops and establishments who engage in the sale of alcohol and tobacco to those who are underaged. This collective approach means that critical information is shared, joint visits are conducted, and offenders can face punitive measures from a range of agencies all using their respective tactics and powers.

Community Neighbourhood Wardens

The first Neighbourhood Warden commenced on 23 February 2026 and is undertaking an introductory work programme and meeting with colleagues and partners.

CCTV

CCTV operates 24 hour a day. The team proactively monitor 51 fixed Public Space CCTV cameras. Since April 2025 there have been 400 incidents logged in the Redditch area; 85 resulted in seizure and collection by police. In the full financial year 2024/25 there were 388 incidents logged by operators, with 110 resulting in seizure and collection by the police. The Council have 5 temporary cameras which have been deployed to 10 different locations since April, working with local Partners and communities to tackle hotspot areas. The introduction of cloud-based evidence sharing means the police can access footage more easily; we expect this to lead to an increase in seizures and evidence sharing.

2.5 **COMMUNITY & HOUSING**

In July 2025, Redditch Borough Council was inspected by the Regulator of Social Housing under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and received a C3 judgement, highlighting serious failings in repairs, fire safety, tenant engagement and data management. While significant backlogs and weaknesses were identified, the Regulator recognised areas of good practice and the commitment of staff and Members. In response, the Council has developed a comprehensive Housing Improvement Plan focused on meeting the new Consumer Standards, strengthening tenant involvement, improving safety and repairs systems, and enhancing governance, supported by additional Housing Revenue Account funding. The Council has committed to transparent monitoring and regular reporting as part of a wider transformation of its housing services to deliver safe, high-quality homes and stronger tenant engagement.

Alongside this, the Council surveys tenants using the Regulator's standard Tenant Perception Measures, which apply consistent questions and scoring across the sector. Using this methodology, there is an upward trend across all questions with overall satisfaction with housing services showing a sustained improvement, rising from 47.4% in 2023/24 to 56.7% in 2024/25 and 64.6% in 2025/26.

Tenant survey

Tenant feedback is essential to shaping our housing services. In 2024/25, key concerns included repairs, communication, communal areas, feeling safe, and complaints handling.

Actions included:

- We developed a comprehensive improvement plan addressing these areas. Our focus is on delivering better repairs, clearer communication, stronger tenant engagement, and enhanced safety measures.
- We created a Performance Dashboard to more effectively manage repairs performance and identify any trends, there is ongoing improvement in the timeliness of repairs
- We've identified backlogs across roofing and fencing jobs and have brought in additional contractor support to deliver on these.
- We have publicised our repairs priority timescales (link to website)
- We created and circulated the first Annual Report for 2 years and will create this every year
- We have purchased new systems that will be shortly implemented to improve diagnosis of the repair you require and also better scheduling of our workforce
- We have established a new Caretaking Service to properly clean and maintain our communal areas that have been neglected

The Council Housing Growth Programme

The Council Housing Growth Programme, funded by the Council, to create an additional 230 units by 2030. The current budget until 2030 is £15 million. We have also purchased 14 properties on the open market, to replace sold council housing. Acquiring properties in this

way has meant not having to wait for planning permission and build time, increasing the supply of social housing, as well as targeting the purchase of larger homes for families including several with adaptations for people with disabilities.

We have been granted planning permission to build 6 2-bedroom Council houses in Church Hill, with work started during 2026-27.

In addition, the Council is also developing an Empty Homes Strategy to work with homeowners or landlords of empty properties to bring them back into use.

Damp and mould team

Since taking on the initial damp and mould team operatives in September 2025, we have stepped up to deliver damp and mould inspections and remedial works within the new time constraints set out in Awaab's Law. The team of 5 decorators and 2 builders work tirelessly to inspect and mitigate the risk on 1st visit then complete follow up remedial works within the time constraints set out in the regulation. We have had numerous compliments for the team and feel that the system and processes we have put in place help to provide this important service to our customers is working very well.

Caretakers

Since bringing communal block cleaning in house and extending this to all 278 blocks since November 2025, the caretaking team, 8 in total, have gone from strength to strength, providing an excellent service to all customers. The team are delivering a consistently high standard of clean to our blocks where previously this was delivered by contractors to a poor standard. We now do all of our void cleans in house, which has helped with the void turnaround time and making significant financial savings by not outsourcing this work. In addition, communal block repairs are being picked up on the monthly inspections to ensure these areas are safe and well maintained.

Repairs

We use Omfax (Keyfax - Repairs Diagnostic Tool) because our frontline staff are not technical specialists, which meant we were sometimes missing key information needed to diagnose repairs accurately. This often led to sending the wrong trade, allocating incorrect repair priorities, and setting unsuitable timeframes for jobs. Omfax's intelligent diagnostic scripting (Keyfax) helps standardise the

process, reduce errors, and ensure the right repair is identified first time, improving both efficiency and customer experience.

Total Mobile

We are moving to Total Mobile because our current bespoke scheduling system is outdated, heavily manual, and no longer supports efficient ways of working. The existing system lacks the intelligence to automatically adapt when exceptions occur—such as delays, overrunning jobs, or staff absence—which limits our ability to respond in real time and work smarter. Total Mobile provides a modern, intelligent scheduling platform that updates dynamically, improves operational efficiency, and enables us to deliver a more responsive and effective service.

Homelessness support

The Council has also joined with some of the other districts in Worcestershire to develop a shared Homelessness Strategy for 2026-2031 in line with the Government's National Plan to End Homelessness.

The Council has increased the number of temporary accommodation units in council housing stock, which has led to a reduction in the use of bed and breakfast, positively benefiting our residents and the wider budget.

New rough sleeping outreach service has been engaged through homelessness prevention grant funding, which is based in the town centre, which has led to a proactive and responsive approach which are working to reduce the levels and duration of rough sleeping.

Affordable housing

The Council has been working with developers and registered providers to deliver more affordable housing across the Borough.

The council has worked in partnership with Redditch Cooperative Homes in 2025 on delivering a new housing development over 2 sites, which has enabled us to rehouse an additional 68 households.

Private rented sector

Support for the private rented sector continues to develop, with the Council hosting a Private Sector Landlord Forum, a chance to share best practice, get practical advice, and build stronger links between

landlords and the Council. The Council has also been working with Citizens Advice to develop a debt advice service to Private Tenants and homeowners. This new service will ensure that where rent arrears and mortgage arrears are putting a home at risk, that households will be able to access support and advice to prevent this from happening.

A new computer system has been implemented, which means data is much more robust and enables effective reporting to central government.

The Council are also the Worcestershire lead for the Renters Bill Act 2025, ensuring consistency for renters and landlords across the county and are working with central Government on the national landlord database, one of 13 councils selected nationally to support the legislation.

Lifeline

NEW Lifeline has been accredited to the Technology Enabled Care industry best practice Quality Standards Framework, which was achieved through rigorous external audit and no areas of improvement were identified. They continue to support a six-week free service, enabling residents of Redditch to try the Lifeline service. Over the last 12 months we have had approximately 70 people using the free service at any one time. During 2025 the team installed 183 equipment packages in within Redditch. NEW Lifeline are also delivering continuity of service where a person becomes Care Act eligible and/or their support/care needs become more. The team have supported 104 residents of Redditch through this Social Care funded partnership.

Family Hubs

Family Hubs continue to attend or lead local events aimed at families and are positive examples of partnership working not only with other professionals and community groups but with families – using an asset based approach and co-production to understand the types of support and activities children, young people and families are asking for and what they are able to do themselves. For example, Just for dads – engagement event in Woodrow was coproduced with father's voice and involvement. The feedback gained from dads and male carers has been shared with partners and has helped tweak and shape local provision. The events have enabled us to reach new people, gain voice and highlight volunteers. The Family Hubs have developed a Parent Representative model – it is designed to ensure we provide the right support in the right way for communities, particularly in our priority focus areas. We recognise the importance of a blended approach –

using both data and direct feedback from local communities. Our goal is to build a diverse pool of parent reps who can help us to engage with both currently engaged and those we have yet to reach. We are developing our hub and spoke model and offering Family Hub pop ups in local spaces, to enable us to reach families and reduce barriers to access our services. In Summer 25 we provided 3 family picnics and Fun sessions: one in Woodrow, Batchley and Church Hill. The aim was to raise awareness of the family hub offer, build relationships, offer free fun and food in the school holidays.

Shopmobility

Redditch Shopmobility relocated to its new premises in George Walk in May 2025 and have leased a fleet of new scooters. Since that time, the Kingfisher have closed Car park 3 and, despite providing additional 8 disabled parking spaces, customers have found parking there a struggle. This has impacted on customer numbers. Staff are delivering equipment to various locations around the Kingfisher Centre to customers and retrieving when customers have finished with their equipment.

Number of users has dropped slightly since last year, although it is becoming busier, with 1917 users from April to end of January 2025/26. We have also just started selling a few disability aids for customers and are actively seeking volunteers to assist at Shopmobility.

Dial-a-ride

Dial a Ride numbers remain consistent, with 15,880 passenger journeys from April to January 2025/26.

A cancellation policy was introduced in November 2025 to try and reduced the number of cancellations received as they were increasing. This requires a nominal fee to be paid should the customer fail to cancel their journey when it's no longer required. £96.68 has been charged in cancellation fees so far.

We have worked with many groups, and these are on the increase. We have recently arranged transport for groups from Millward Place and Parklands Care Home. This is a very efficient use of the service, picking up and dropping off in one place instead of making multiple journeys.
Dial-a-ride are also looking to recruit volunteers to work as passenger assistants on the buses with drivers. New vehicle purchase is planned for the next financial year where, in addition to minibuses, we would like to make use of a smaller vehicle that can be driven by all staff for those small groups or individual passengers.

Play provision

A series of capital investments have been made across parks and play areas within the Borough. Following a Play Assessment, an Inclusive Play Policy has been developed, including a design checklist, which will help to promote inclusivity, accessibility and equality for children in Redditch.

Arts & events

Arts and events continue to be important to our residents and communities, and the council have supported numerous activities from summer activity programmes to the Halloween Light Trail.

The ReNEW project was successful in obtaining over half a million pounds in Place Partnership funding from Arts Council England, which will support residents across Redditch and Bromsgrove to share their stories to creatively shape the future of both areas. Under the ReNEW Skills and Capacity Development programme, two specialist officers are now in post, increasing professional capacity and directly supporting the objective to develop local creative and cultural sectors. An external evaluator has been appointed, and youth recruitment is well underway. These young people will shortly benefit from structured creative skills development opportunities delivered by performing, visual and digital arts organisations appointed through the contract opportunities that are currently being advertised. In addition, a local cultural sector skills programme is at design stage. This programme will support a wide range of amateur and professional arts, culture and heritage organisations, strengthening sector-wide capacity and creating pathways for high-quality local jobs.

The Council continues to support to Reimagine Redditch, a programme designed to engage local people—many for the first time—in creative activity. Alongside this, the Council played a key role in shaping a successful funding application securing just under £1m, ensuring the programme's sustainability until 2029 and contributing to the wider objective of attracting public and private investment into the borough.

Physical activity

The Council engaged with the consultation on the Redditch Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), delivered by Worcestershire County Council. The LCWIP was published in 2025, acknowledging Redditch Borough Council as a key stakeholder and

contributor towards the plan. The LCWIP will be a key source of information for active travel when RBC is updating their local plans.

The '*A Movement for Change'* project brought together more than 50 local organisations in a unified approach to improving health and wellbeing by increasing physical activity levels across Redditch. This strengthened partnership model directly supports the objective to work collaboratively to improve residents' health, creating the conditions for more active, healthier lifestyles throughout the borough.

Redditch District Collaborative (RDC) and Redditch Partnership Groups

The importance of working in partnership is recognised in the Council Plan as we cannot meet the needs of our residents by working in isolation. One way we do this effectively is through the Redditch District Collaborative (RDC) and Redditch Partnership Groups which bring together representatives from the Borough and County Council, NHS, Police, Fire, a range of voluntary and community sector organisations and more.

Despite a reduction of available resources to support the Redditch District Collaborative, there has been a commitment from partners, in particular both Primary Care Networks (PCNs), Public Health and the Borough Council to ensure a more streamlined and sustainable structure, linking even more closely with Redditch Partnership Groups, in particular the Redditch Community Wellbeing Group. Recognising the significant value of our voluntary and community sector (VCS) partners, an increased number of VCS representatives were invited and joined the RDC Steering Group during 2025.

A total of eight Priority Neighbourhood Development (PND) areas were identified in Redditch in 2025. This was following an examination of data by Public Health, analysing the fine detail of small areas (Local Super Output Areas) and using statistical process control analyses to find neighbourhoods with significantly higher rates of emergency hospital admissions, lower healthy life expectancy and greater social challenges compared to the County average. Supported by the Public Health team, the Redditch District Collaborative and other Partnership Groups have since been focussed on tackling these inequalities by targeting resources, partnership working and community engagement in the areas where need is greatest, ensuring it is done in such a way that avoids stigma and concentrates on local strengths rather than on problems.

Taking a place-based partnership approach, the PND within Woodrow has been the initial focus and following a handful of well-attended Woodrow specific partnership meetings during the latter part of 2025, the suggestion of a community hub in Woodrow Centre was put forward to enable local organisations and services to deliver support and engagement opportunities directly to local residents. Supported by Public Health, West Mercia Police and the Borough Council, a new multi-agency community hub very recently opened at the start of 2026, managed by a trusted local community partner. Access to the Hub is free of charge and intended for the use of individuals, groups or organisations who can deliver opportunities to support or enrich the Woodrow community offer.

Also with the aim of improving the wellbeing of residents and communities, the joint Redditch and Bromsgrove Cost of Living Partnership Group continues to create a unified approach to alleviating the impact of the cost of living. Following on from the production of cost of living leaflets and dedicated Council webpages, in response to consultation surveys, which showed residents were unsure where to go for support, discreet business cards of useful contacts were produced and partners, along with a number of Ward Councillors, helped to distribute at different events and various places in the community such as GP surgeries, libraries, shops, and Family Hub. In addition, a Redditch-only Financial Support Partnership meets informally to ensure those trusted working relationships and that local provision is co-ordinated so that residents obtain the right support regardless of which agency they may contact initially.

Household Support Fund (HSF7)

Working with the County Council, Redditch Borough Council received an allocation of the Household Support Fund (HSF) since it started, including the current phase 7 which runs up to end of March 2026. We received £347,900.14 from WCC to help with the delivery of HSF 7 for 2025/2026. The Borough Council distributed a proportion to the voluntary sector, in particular the local foodbank. However, the majority of funds have and continue to be paid direct to households by the Borough Council through a cash voucher scheme, delivered in partnership with Citizens Advice Bromsgrove and Redditch, as it would not have been possible to deliver on our own but in partnership we are more likely to reach the most vulnerable households.

The funds were distributed as per below:

Scheme	Total Amount Allocated (£)	Percentage Allocated (%)	Spend up to Q3 (£)	Percentage Spent up to Q3 (%)	Number of households helped up to Q3 (#)
Cash Vouchers	256,500	74	147,253	57	427
Acts of Kindness	72,500	21	60,000	83	245
Foodbanks	13,500	4	11,510	85	499

We receive figures quarterly from partners, so the data held is only up to December 2025, the final return is to be submitted to WCC mid-April 2026. AGE UK, also receive a small amount of £1500 to assist in the delivery of their advice service. To note that details of the allocations are provided on our website at the end of each award year:

The Knowledge Bank

The Knowledge Bank, our community services directory covering Redditch and Bromsgrove, was redesigned during 24/25 to make it more inviting and user friendly. It's available publicly for all to use and is a searchable tool to help connect people to relevant support and activities. The Council works closely with partners, in particular BARN (Bromsgrove and Redditch Network – who work with and support our voluntary and community groups) who help us to update and maintain the content of the Knowledge Bank. This is all done through existing resource only, at no additional cost, simply due to the close and trusted working relationships we have with partners.

2.6.1 **VISION & ORGANISATIONAL PRIORITIES**

Vision

'A Council which listens to and delivers quality services for our communities, residents and businesses'

Organisational Priorities

- Financial Stability
- Organisation Stability
- Community Focus
- High Quality Services

- Supported Governance
- Principle Driven (4 P's)

Through working closely with employees across the organisation, we identified the '4P's' as a way of defining organisational culture and the aspirations of everyone who works for Redditch Borough Council:

- Purpose
- People
- Pride
- Performance

Activities and initiatives have been undertaken to engage and support staff, including an internally delivered staff survey, staff wellbeing events and enhanced inductions for new staff which include an opportunity to meet the Chief executive and the Corporate Leadership Team. Employee Assistance and Benefits programmes are also in place to support employees across the Council.

Local Government Reorganisation

Major changes are planned to councils across Worcestershire as part of the biggest shake-up of local government in more than 50 years, with the Government requiring 21 areas of England to restructure their system of local government before 2029, including Redditch Borough Council. Through local government reorganisation, the Government is looking to replace Bromsgrove District, Malvern Hills District, Redditch Borough, Worcester City, Worcestershire County, Wychavon District and Wyre Forest District Councils with fewer councils.
Redditch Borough Council voted to submit an ambitious proposal to transform local government in Worcestershire to the Government: 'Transforming Worcestershire: Local government that works for people, powered by place and built for the future - The North and South Local Government Reorganisation Proposal for Worcestershire'. To reach that point, the council carried out public engagement during summer 2025 for residents to have their say on their preferred option, called 'Shape Worcestershire: Reorganising your local councils together'.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 The Council Plan is essential to provide the strategic direction for service delivery. Operationally, the content of the Council Plan has informed and will continue to the service business planning process; this helps to ensure that services deliver against the priorities and objectives identified. From 2026 onwards, updates against the Council Plan will be captured using a PowerBI dashboard, linking information from service business plans, quarterly performance and project highlight reports into a single coherent summary of our progress to date.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Finance and performance reporting are already aligned through the quarterly reports and the Council Plan, by setting out the priorities, objectives and projects, will help to structure the service business planning process and will underpin the medium-term financial planning.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities

6.1 The Council Plan articulates the priorities for Redditch Borough Council; this report gives an update of progress against each priority area of work.

Climate Change Implications

6.2 The Council Plan has ‘Green, Clean & Safe Redditch’ as one of the three priorities, and explicitly supports work around climate change through the identification of a key objective on renewable energy and key projects to work with the community on climate change, support the Warm Homes initiative and increasing the number of electric vehicle charging points.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.3 There are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report; however, the Council Plan highlights the importance of listening to communities and will empower officers to meet the needs of those communities, which could include specific issues relating to equality and diversity.

6.4 Specific Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) of projects detailed within the Council Plan will be undertaken as required.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 Publishing a Council Plan makes the strategic direction of the Council clear to employees and Members and as such supports the management of risks identified around robust decision making and the accuracy/effectiveness of performance data.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1- Redditch Council Plan 2025-28 progress update **To follow**

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

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

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

17th March 2026

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Redditch Council Plan update on progress February 2026

Priority: Economy, Regeneration & Prosperity

Key objective	Update on progress until end of Jan 2026	RAG
More high-quality jobs	Enterprising Worcestershire: In Q3 25/26, a further 2 businesses have accessed advisor support, bringing the total to 7 to date. 7 people attended a business start-up course this quarter, bringing the total to 18 year to date.	GREEN
Greater opportunities to develop new skills	Careers Worcestershire: In Q3 25/26, 56 people have been supported to gain employment (year to date: 175), with 20 getting a job (62 year to date). Employability support in Family Hubs: In Q3 25/26, 15 volunteering opportunities, 13 people gaining a qualification and 10 people have been supported to gain employment. Employability skills programme: Grants have been awarded to 3 organisations to deliver employability support to young people who are NEET. In the first quarter of delivery, 7 people have received support to gain employment and 7 are participating in education. Skills Boost: In Q3 25/26, 3 grants have been paid (year to date: 27). All funding has been allocated with a total of 76 grants approved.	AMBER
Increase footfall in the town centre	First stage has been completing procurement of footfall data provider; this has been done. Two 'geo-fences' have been set for the town centre, one covering the market and one the public realm. This will enable baseline data to be compiled to understand current footfall. Improvements to the public realm and continued development of Redditch Market will both help to encourage greater footfall in the town centre.	GREEN
Engage with our communities to understand the needs of our district centres	Engagement activity to be undertaken in 2026/27	GREEN
Support local independent businesses	Business Grants: 1 grant was paid in Q3 25/26 (3 year to date), with a further 7 approved. Business Innovation & Productivity programme: 3 businesses are participating in the programme with several more in the pipeline to take up the final place on the programme.	GREEN
Support and encourage new start-up businesses	Business Grants: 1 grant was paid in Q3 25/26 (2 year to date) with a further 6 approved.	GREEN
Collaborate with partners to secure public and private investment	Redditch has been included in the Government's Pride in Place Strategy, with £20 million of investment into Greenlands and Woodrow to regenerate the area for the community.	GREEN

Attract businesses to locate in Redditch	This will be developed in the new Economic Development Strategy, which will be developed in 2026.	GREEN
Regeneration of the Town Hall	A revised plan to refurbish the lower ground, ground and part of the first floor is now being delivered with works due to be completed in summer 2026.	AMBER
Redditch outdoor market	Redditch Market continues to develop, running on a Thursday and Saturday, with gazebos and mobile pitches. Thursdays have seen steady traders' numbers week on week whilst Saturdays remain less busy, Christmas and themed markets have proven successful. Themed markets are being planned for throughout the year alongside trader and promotional campaigns.	GREEN
Forge Mill Museum enhancements	Permitted development received for the new food kiosk installation. The contract was re-tendered due to issues with the original submissions, and the contract is being awarded w/c 23.02.26. Toilet refurbishment will be complete w/e 27.02.26, minor snagging items only outstanding. Electrical and heating upgrade works now complete.	AMBER
Innovation Centre	Speller-Metcalfe have been appointed as Design & Build contractor and are currently working on Stage 4 Designs. Planning permission was approved on December 11th. The full business case for Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership funds was approved by the Enterprise Zone Partnership Board and ratified by Birmingham City Council's Cabinet on January 20th 2026. Construction is scheduled to commence Summer 2026 with an estimated 15-month programme, and due to become operational by the end of 2027.	GREEN
Utilise land and assets for the benefit of residents	A new asset management strategy will be developed in 2026/27	GREEN
Develop an approach to Community Wealth Building	The new Economic Development Strategy, which will be developed in 2026, will have an aim of embedding a community wealth building model.	GREEN
New Economic Development Strategy for Redditch	Work on the new Economic Development Strategy will commence in the new calendar year as scheduled.	GREEN

Priority: Green, Clean & Safe

Key objective	Update on progress until end of Jan 2026	RAG
Improve street cleanliness of our neighbourhoods and local environment	A new system of gauging condition, APSE LAMS, a mobile application, has been introduced, which enables benchmarking against similar councils to give us an idea of how we are performing. This has allowed us to further raise standards on a consistent basis.	GREEN
Support voluntary groups litter picking in their communities	We provide litter pickers, gloves, bags and rings to support anyone helping keep Redditch clean and tidy. We work with the Parks team to plan these events and in 2025, the Redditch Place teams supported 29 individual and group litter picks.	GREEN
Improve recycling rates	The waste education and engagement job description is being reviewed to attract suitable candidates for the new financial year to improve recycling as well as play an important role in promoting the new food waste service and the implications of the use of the various bins that will be available.	GREEN
Protect and enhance open spaces	Continuing the delivery of the Parks and Open Spaces Action Plan, in relation to recommendations as part of the Leisure and Culture Strategy, including working towards Green Flags. Projects have commenced, with some completed and we are now looking to action the delivery of capital investments, once the budget has been secured through the MTFP.	AMBER
Enhancing biodiversity	We have undertaken a review of biodiversity in Redditch and current actions being delivered in the Borough. The Biodiversity Duty Report has been taken through Executive Committee and includes working across the council to develop and implement action plans to continue to improve biodiversity across the Borough.	GREEN
Work with partners to tackle ASB, serious violence, burglary and drugs misuse as part of the statutory Community Safety Partnership	NWCSP meets quarterly and the multi-agency Safer Redditch Tasking group meets approx. every 6 weeks to discuss crime, disorder and ASB issues across the Borough and in accordance with the NWCSP priorities. The Police continue with proactive enforcement of ASB within the PSPO area in Redditch and one Neighbourhood Warden commenced on 23 February 2026, with the second post being readvertised as initial recruitment was unsuccessful. The Right Path project (funded by the Home Office SV fund) continue to receive referrals for young people at risk of being involved in serious violence. They receive intensive therapeutic mentoring to prevent and deter violence and implement behavioural change. The Community Safety Team continue to deliver the Respect Programme, a therapeutic mentoring scheme which provides weekly support and guidance sessions to young people at risk of becoming victims and/or perpetrators of crime. A 'Right Path Project' using Serious Violence Duty funding allocated to Worcestershire, and working with South Worcestershire, has been commissioned by NWCSP. This delivers intensive 1:1 mentoring to support and guide young people who are at greater risk of criminalisation through use of violence.	GREEN

	The Nominated Neighbour Scheme continues with its aim to protect vulnerable residents from doorstep crime and rogue trader offences and continues to be a successful local initiative.	
Increase the amount of renewable energy generated by the Council	Solar energy is already being generated by the Council; data on this is being used to help calculate the carbon saving. Information on the amount of renewable energy generated will also feature on the Climate Change Dashboard which is currently under development. We are exploring additional opportunities and alternative funding streams as the central government decarbonisation funding has paused.	AMBER
Utilise brown field and industrial sites for development	The Council is currently awaiting the regulation for the new 30-month plan making system, once those are known a new timetable for the Local Plan will be published.	AMBER
Ensure large developments provide better green space and invest in existing open spaces	The Council is currently awaiting the regulation for the new 30-month plan making system, once those are known a new timetable for the Local Plan will be published.	AMBER
Develop a programme to reduce fly-tipping	Working in partnership with WRS and a fly tipping strategy is currently being finalised. A new enforcement strategy has been developed by WRS and performance data concerning the number of fly tips, the time taken to remove them and the number of enforcement actions taken are now embedded in the reported performance information.	GREEN
Review options for disposal of bulky waste	Based on suggestions from the Fly Tipping and Bulky Waste Task Group, a promotional campaign was introduced to raise awareness about bulky waste collections. This initiative resulted in a 15% rise in service usage compared to last year. We have also strengthened our messaging to make sure residents understand which items can be collected.	GREEN
Develop a campaign to reduce littering and dog fouling in the Borough	Initial ideas and action plan being produced to set out campaigns, objectives, target audiences and a communications plan including the development of posters, social media posts and campaign slogans.	GREEN
Implement a Neighbourhood Warden Scheme	One Neighbourhood Warden commenced employment on 23 February 2026 as is working to an introductory work programme. The second post is being readvertised following unsuccessful recruitment to this post at the end of 2025.	AMBER
Implement locally the Worcestershire Drug & Alcohol Strategy 22-27	North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) focuses on Priority 1of the Strategy – Prevention: Breaking Supply Chains. NWCSP is working with local and regional partners to reduce the harm associated with the supply of illicit drugs in Redditch. This is fulfilled via the Multi-agency Targeted Enforcement (MATEs) group which brings operational officers together to take collective action against problem premises and organised crime groups involved in drug supply. The group has also had some success with local shops and establishments who engage in the sale of alcohol and tobacco to those who are	GREEN

	underaged. This collective approach means that critical information is shared, joint visits are conducted, and offenders can face punitive measures from a range of agencies all using their respective tactics and powers.	
Implement food waste collection and improve quality of recycling	Compliant with Dry Recycling requirements of Simpler Recycling across Domestic & Commercial Waste services. The tender for the Domestic Food Waste Service was cancelled after Wyre Forest District Council withdrew. A new project for in-house service delivery is being finalised, with phased implementation planned through 2026/7, beyond the original April 2026 target date. Defra has been informed of these updates.	RED
Review future cemetery provision	We have identified 10+ years burial capacity at Abbey Cemetery and are currently assessing Edgioake for additional capacity. A project plan for the potential development of an additional site is being finalised.	GREEN
Work with the community on climate change	The new climate change strategy sets out a number of actions and milestones for collaborating and engaging with climate change. The strategy is due to be presented at Executive Committee in March 2026	GREEN
Warm Homes programme	The Council has received funding for both private and public sector housing energy efficiency improvements. This will initially be targeted within the Woodrow area.	GREEN
Electric vehicle charging points	Work is ongoing with our provider to install EV charging points across our car parks, with a number of sites to go live early 2026.	GREEN
Undertake an audit of biodiversity requirements and actions	The Biodiversity Audit was undertaken and completed late summer 2025. This was followed by the Biodiversity Duty Report which includes working across the council to develop and implement action plans to continue to improve biodiversity across the borough.	GREEN
Ensure the protection and provision of open spaces through the Local Plan	The Council is currently awaiting the regulation for the new 30-month plan making system, once those are known a new timetable for the Local Plan will be published.	AMBER
Identify land for development through the Local Plan	The Council is currently awaiting the regulation for the new 30-month plan making system, once those are known a new timetable for the Local Plan will be published.	AMBER

Priority: Community & Housing

Key objective	Update on progress until end of Jan 2026	RAG
Build more Council houses	The Housing Growth Programme has been approved by Executive to deliver 56 new homes. A further programme will be developed to deliver a further 67 homes to achieve the overall target of 230 additional homes by 2030. We have been granted planning permission to build 6 2-bedroom Council houses in Church Hill, with work started during 2026-27.	GREEN
Reduce the housing waiting list	The new homes to be delivered as part of the Housing Growth Programme will contribute to a reduction of numbers on the housing waiting list.	GREEN
Reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation	Number of individuals and families in b & b continuously to remain relatively low with a number of stock allocated for temporary accommodation.	GREEN
Ensure our housing stock is clean & safe to live in	The new Caretakers Service, to clean and maintain communal areas, went live in November 2025 and is making a positive impact for residents with communal areas. Positive feedback has been received from residents, and the proactive removal of ad hoc flammable materials has significantly increased safety within these areas.	GREEN
Improve the time taken for repairs to be completed	The implementation of Power BI reporting has enabled the repairs service to evaluate its performance and identify areas requiring improvement. A new repairs policy has been approved, introducing an additional priority code for tasks—such as windows and doors—that generally take longer due to measurement and manufacturing requirements. Ongoing analysis is being conducted to further enhance performance.	GREEN
Work with partners to improve health & wellbeing	Redditch Partnership's Community Wellbeing Group continues to meet bi-monthly to allow partners to come together. This connects into the Redditch District Collaborative, chaired by the Director of the Kingfisher Primary Care Network (PCN). RDC involves both PCNs, RBC, Public Health, Rubicon and a range of VCS. A main focus is the PND (Priority Neighbourhood Development) areas. RBC and RDC engaged with the NHS 'Neighbourhood Health Workshop' in July set up by the ICB. Accelerator Sites (delivered by the PCNs, including Kingfisher PCN in Redditch), trialling integrated neighbourhood teams, were highlighted to consider lessons learnt that could help build a health model that works for communities in Worcestershire.	GREEN
Provide high quality play provision	A Play Audit and Investment Plan is now being put into implementation. A series of improvements have already been undertaken. An Inclusive Play Strategy has been developed and costed and subject to the funding being made available through the MTFP this work will progress early in the municipal year.	AMBER
Promote the establishment of community fitness and mental health groups	The *'A Movement for Change' project b*rought together more than 50 local organisations in a unified approach to improving health and wellbeing by increasing physical activity levels across Redditch. This	GREEN

	strengthened partnership model directly supports the objective to work collaboratively to improve residents' health, creating the conditions for more active, healthier lifestyles throughout the borough. Further works are currently taking place to develop leadership training initiatives for the local sector and pilot projects to test out the most effective ways to encourage people to be active in the areas of highest need. The RBC website continues to help raise awareness of what opportunities are available locally, including the promotion of Healthy Worcestershire –commissioned by WCC Public Health.	
Provide more walking & cycling routes	The Council is currently awaiting the regulation for the new 30-month plan making system, once those are known a new timetable for the Local Plan will be published. The LCWIP was published in November 25.	AMBER
Maximise funding available to the sector	UKSPF: Grants have been awarded to 7 voluntary organisations. A training provider has been identified to deliver a VCS leadership course which will commence October 2025. Partnership working: RBC and BARN have a partnership agreement where we provide a contribution to BARN to help them continue to support our local VCS groups. BARN provides a funding portal on their website, free for all to use and search. In addition, they are providing further funding information via a regular funding e-newsletter to their members. Our monthly Partnership Bulletin includes funding information we become aware of, to help spread the word to our VCS groups. This includes a range of Public Health funding streams as well as tools such as the Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Insights website that provides a wealth of data the VCS can use to help complete funding bids.	GREEN
Engagement with the voluntary sector	We continue to engage and work in partnership with our VCS in delivering the district element of the Household Support Scheme (currently HSF phase 7). Working with Citizens Advice B&R to deliver our local Redditch HSF scheme, as well as working with other VCS offering support, such the Redditch Trussell Trust Foodbank (Acts of Kindness). This is in addition to the countywide schemes involving our VCS, such as Act on Energy who is delivering the Worcestershire HSF Energy related support scheme, alongside the free Redditch Energy advice line Act on Energy provide to our residents for RBC. The Redditch Partnership Community Wellbeing Group is a way we engage directly with the sector. It includes a range of VCS and it meets regularly. It enables an ongoing opportunity to engage and maintain strong partnership working with our VCS, and it can be where partnership opportunities first come to light. As part of our agreement with BARN, they facilitate Networking meetings for our VCS groups to come together in Redditch. In addition, they also help facilitate the local Community Frontline Workers. As part of the Best Start in Life contract with WCC and delivery of Family Hubs, there is a Redditch Network meeting specifically engaging partners, including VCS who support families too. This links to the Redditch Community Wellbeing Group and RDC. The Redditch Youth Provider Meeting, including relevant VCS, is looked after by our Leisure Team.	GREEN

Support the development of the local creative and cultural sectors	We are currently recruiting skills and capacity development expertise to support our local cultural sector develop appropriately between now and the onset of local government reorganisation in 2028. £60,000 is allocated from Arts Council England to support this work. Initial work will happen during 2026 and further development opportunities will come through in 2027	GREEN
Improve the Shopmobility scheme	The Shopmobility scheme has relocated to a new and improved unit within the Kingfisher Centre. The service has also started selling a few disability aids for customers and are actively seeking volunteers to assist at Shopmobility.	GREEN
Specific damp and mould resource	The damp and mould team was newly recruited on October 25. Processes have been updated to comply with Awaab's Law, and performance is now monitored quarterly through a Power BI report.	GREEN
Implementation of Total Mobile project	Final configuration and testing of the system are underway. A new project team is handling the last stages of testing and system integration. Delivery issues with the provider have been escalated within their organisation.	AMBER
Use stock condition data to create improvement programmes	Stock condition surveys are currently underway to ensure accurate and up-to-date information regarding the state of our housing. The findings will inform investment programmes. As part of the budget setting process, a review of the Capital Programme for 2026/27 and subsequent years has been incorporated to support home improvement initiatives and address non-decency issues.	GREEN
Buy back scheme	We have purchased 14 properties on the open market to increase the number of houses available for tenants.	GREEN
Bringing empty houses back into use	Ongoing process through our void management process we measure performance to ensure properties are brought back into use at the earliest possible time. Where properties are beyond economical repair, approvals are sought for disposal. An Empty Homes Strategy to work with homeowners or landlords of empty properties will be developed in 2026.	GREEN
Support community allotments by implementing the Leisure Strategy	As part of the Action Plan, discussing with allotment holders the possibility of implementing a self-management pilot scheme, which is to be delivered in 26/27. The Tenancy Agreements were amended in December 2025 to support tenants and prevent legacy issues, improving site conditions. Works have been undertaken at several sites to get them to a suitable standard.	AMBER
Improvements to play area provision via clarifying prioritisation	A Play Audit and Investment Plan is now being put into implementation. A series of improvements have already been undertaken. An Inclusive Play Strategy has been developed and costed and subject to the funding being made available through the MTFP this work will progress early in the municipal year.	AMBER
Address the provision of walking and cycling routes through the Local Plan	The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) was published in November 25 https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/travel-and-highways/walking-wheeling-and-cycling/redditch-local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan-lcwip	AMBER

Support the work of the Redditch District Collaborative	The Partnership Manager and Community Services Manager attend the RDC Steering Group to support its work. The Partnership Manager has supported with increasing VCS engagement and linked in the Redditch Partnership's Community Wellbeing Group to RDC. The Partnership Manager supports the Chair of RDC Steering Group (Director of Kingfisher PCN) where possible and on a regular basis. In addition, RBC Chief Exec met with RDC Chair a few months ago and is due to meet again, along with PCN Clinical Leads.	GREEN
Implement a Town Hall Community Hub	A revised plan to refurbish the lower ground, ground and part of the first floor is now being delivered with works due to be completed in summer 2026.	AMBER
Restore the elected member grant panel	Completed. The Grants Panel was restored during 2025 and met in December to consider and make recommendations to Executive Committee on the annual grants to voluntary bodies for 2026/27.	GREEN
Develop an internal Bid Writer role	A bid for funding is being considered by Executive Committee for the 2026/27 financial year.	AMBER
Review how we support the 3rd sector	This will be considered in conjunction with the ongoing bid writer provision in 2026.	AMBER
Review Dial-a-Ride charges	Completed. Charges for 2026/27 reviewed as part of the Fees and Charges report to Executive Committee	GREEN
Support Reimagine Redditch	Council continues to support to Reimagine Redditch, a programme designed to engage local people—many for the first time—in creative activity. Alongside this, the Council played a key role in shaping a successful funding application securing just under £1m, ensuring the programme's sustainability until 2029 and contributing to the wider objective of attracting public and private investment into the borough.	GREEN
Deliver the ReNEW Sharing Stories Shaping Futures campaign	The ReNEW project was successful in obtaining over half a million pounds in Place Partnership funding from Arts Council England, which will support residents across Redditch and Bromsgrove to share their stories to creatively shape the future of both areas. Under the ReNEW Skills and Capacity Development programme, two specialist officers are now in post, increasing professional capacity and directly supporting the objective to develop local creative and cultural sectors. An external evaluator has been appointed, and youth recruitment is well underway. These young people will shortly benefit from structured creative skills development opportunities delivered by performing, visual and digital arts organisations appointed through the contract opportunities that are currently being advertised. In addition, a local cultural sector skills programme is at design stage. This programme will support a wide range of amateur and professional arts, culture and heritage organisations, strengthening sector-wide capacity and creating pathways for high-quality local jobs.	GREEN
Work with the community to develop an engagement forum	Work to develop the community forum will be undertaken in line with the reopening of the Redditch Town Hall in 2026, with a community launch event at the newly refurbished Town Hall being the starting point for bringing residents and community representatives together.	GREEN

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive **2nd March 2026**

Quarter 3 2025/26 Finance Monitoring Report

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Ian Woodall – Portfolio Holder for Finance (*Councillor Woodall was the relevant Portfolio Holder on the date of the Executive Committee meeting*)
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Debra Goodall
Report Authors	Debra Goodall Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services Debra.goodall@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	All
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

SUMMARY

Regular budget monitoring and reporting forms the basis of good governance and best practice in budget management. Councillors and committees should be able to rely on the information provided to assist in sound decision making around budgets and spending plans for the Council.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to RESOLVE that the following are noted:

1) There is a forecast revenue overspend position of **£399k** at Q3.
2) The current Capital spending of **£6.776 million** against an original budget of **£8.082 million** revised with carry forwards to **£19.921 million** as outlined in Appendix A
3) The current savings delivery is **£1.751 million** against an annual target of £2.342 million for 2025/26.
4) Forecast Earmarked Reserves at 31 March 2026 are **£17.294 million** as outlined in Appendix B.
5) The Ward Budget allocation position to date is 21 approved allocations at £32,100, leaving a balance of £21,900 to be allocated before year end as included in Appendix C.
6) There is an updated procurements position set out in Appendix D, with any new items over £200,000 to be included on the forward plan.
7) The position on Council Tax and Business Rates is noted
8) The position on benefits processing is noted.

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The Executive is asked to **RECOMMEND** that:

9) That the Balance Sheet Monitoring Position for Q3 is noted – which is the Treasury Monitoring Report and required to be reported to Council (Appendix E)
10) The Medium-Term Financial Plan is amended to include the Pride in Place Fund Allocation as set out in paragraph 4.60.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 This Quarter 3 Financial Monitoring Report for Redditch Borough Council (April–December 2025) provides a comprehensive overview of the Council's financial performance, budget delivery, and strategic project progress. The report supports informed decision-making and ensures transparency in financial governance.

2.2 Key highlights include:

- **Revenue Position**: An overspend of £399k is forecasted for the year, driven largely by a prudent adjustment to bereavement income levels, large movements on the Housing Subsidy budget, pressures on Dial-a-ride and Shop Mobility and costs relating to the installation of a new fire alarm system. These have been offset by additional income in Development Control.
- **The position has moved adversely by £19k since Q2** - This relates mainly to movement in Housing Subsidy resulting in a £520k overspend due to housing subsidy budgets no longer aligning with received grant offset by £500k in Revenue Grants Received in Advance from 2024/25 now being recognised.
- **Capital Programme**: £6.776 million has been spent against an annual original budget of £8.082 million revised to £19.921 million following carry forwards from 2024/25. Significant projects include the Innovation Centre and Public Realm improvements funded through the Town Deal and UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- **Savings Delivery**: £1.751 million of the £2.342 million annual savings target has been achieved, primarily through vacancy management and efficiency measures.
- **Reserves**: The Council holds £17.957m in earmarked reserves. Following a thorough review during the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) process these are expected to decrease to £17.294m by 31 March 2026.
- **Ward Budgets**: £32,100 has been allocated, with £21,900 available for allocation in the final quarter of the financial year.

- **Treasury and Balance Sheet Monitoring**: No new borrowing has occurred during Quarter 3; £5.2 million is held in short-term investments. The Council remained compliant with all prudential indicators and investment limits.
- **Collection Fund Performance**: Council Tax and Business Rates collection are slightly below target, with 82.52% and 77.06% collected respectively in Q3. This is indicative of the ongoing cost of living pressures facing residents and business owners and I line with experiences of other peer councils.
- **Benefits Processing**: Average processing times are 15 days for new claims and 6 days for changes, well within the required thresholds.
- **Procurement Pipeline**: 25 contracts exceeding £200,000 are scheduled for procurement within the next 12 months, ensuring strategic resource planning.

2.3 The report also outlines risks and operational implications, with financial pressures and contract management flagged as key areas.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the Council's draft Revenue and Capital Outturn position for the first nine months of the financial year (April – December 2025). This report presents:

- The Council's forecast yearly outturn revenue monitoring position for 2025/26 based on data to the end of Quarter 3 including delivery of the savings targets as set out in the MTFP.
- The position in respect of balance sheet monitoring as requested by the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee including the Treasury Management report for Quarter 3.
- The spending as of Q3 of Ward Budget Funds.
- The updated procurement pipeline of Council projects to be delivered over the next 12 months in order to properly resource plan for the delivery of these projects.

4. DETAILED PERFORMANCE

Financial Performance

4.1 As part of the monitoring process a detailed review has been undertaken to ensure that issues are considered, and significant savings and cost pressures are addressed. This report sets out, based on the position at the end of Quarter 3, the projected revenue outturn position for the 2025/26 financial year and explains key variances against budget.

4.2 The £13.475m full year revenue budget included in the table below is the budget that was approved by Council in February 2025.

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Service Description	2025-26 Approved Budget	2025-26 Revised Budget	2025-26 Revised Q3 Budget	Q3 Adjusted Spend	Full Year Projected Forecast	Full Year Projected Variance Q2	Movement in Projected Variance Q2 to Q3	Full Year Projected Variance Q3
Business Transformation and Organisational Development	2,127,379	1,911,041	1,379,196	1,492,796	1,977,252	128,873	-62,662	66,211
Community and Housing GF Services	2,978,979	2,397,508	1,650,020	1,939,428	2,793,978	81,628	314,842	396,470
Corporate Services	-4,390,100	-2,862,339	-2,146,599	-2,056,081	-2,630,191	183,272	48,876	232,148
Environmental Services	3,327,695	3,175,207	2,343,283	2,880,351	3,790,588	397,948	217,433	615,381
Financial and Customer Services	3,151,803	3,036,655	2,539,274	3,251,908	3,724,830	-398,207	1,086,382	688,175
Legal and Democratic Services	1,213,796	1,084,233	806,536	837,086	1,064,768	-6,742	-12,723	-19,465
Planning and Leisure Services	1,272,841	1,075,593	725,927	446,144	784,594	-308,888	17,889	-290,999
Regeneration & Property	2,213,443	2,130,943	1,552,581	1,828,518	2,341,194	186,186	24,065	210,251
Regulatory Client	711,638	711,638	533,729	525,717	732,657	20,638	381	21,019
Rubicon Client	867,481	867,481	650,611	733,785	996,872	127,910	1,481	129,391
Grand Total	**13,474,955**	**13,527,960**	**10,034,558**	**11,879,652**	**15,576,542**	**412,618**	**1,635,964**	**2,048,582**
Service Description	**2025-26 Approved Budget**	**2025-26 Revised Budget**	**2025-26 Revised Q3 Budget**	**Q3 Adjusted Spend**	**Full Year Projected Forecast**	**Full Year Projected Variance Q2**	**Movement in Projected Variance Q2 to Q3**	**Full Year Projected Variance Q3**
Corporate Financing	-13,474,955	-13,527,960	-10,127,220	-9,193,297	-15,176,594	-32,048	-1,616,586	-1,648,634
Grand Total	**-13,474,955**	**-13,527,960**	**-10,127,220**	**-9,193,297**	**-15,176,594**	**-32,048**	**-1,616,586**	**-1,648,634**
TOTALS	**0**	**0**	**-92,662**	**2,686,355**	**399,948**	**380,570**	**19,378**	**399,948**

* *see note on Corporate Financing within the body of the report on Page 8*

Budget Variances

4.3 The draft position is set out in the above table.

4.4 Overall, the Council is currently forecasting a full year revenue overspend of £399k at Quarter 3. This position will continue to be reviewed particularly given the impact of the increasing costs linked to inflation and further updates will be provided to Councillors throughout 2025/26. This includes service projections as follows:

Business Transformation & Organisational Development £66k overspend

4.5 Business Transformation is forecasting a £66k overspend in total.

4.6 This is due to the forecasted overspend on telephone charges of £70k due to increases in the contract charge. This has been addressed in the budget for next year. There are also additional IT purchases of £69k. This is offset by additional street naming and numbering income of £13k, HR savings on salaries of £20k and training cost of £40k as BDC is recharged 50% for these reducing pressure on Redditch.

Community and Housing GF Services £396k overspend

4.7 Community & Housing Services is forecasting a £396k overspend.

4.8 There are additional Lifeline and CCTV costs of £98k due to increased BT charges, Sim charges and new equipment purchase. The increased equipment costs will be offset by increased income for the sale or hiring by customers. A budget pressure bid of £75k has been put forward for 2026/27 and ongoing, and some of the Sim charges will be offset by the increased weekly lifeline charges introduced via fees and charges.
Dial-a-Ride income has reduced by £97k this should be offset by the £44k additional allocation approved by Executive Committee part of the council's commitment to reduce fairs by 50%, this allocation has been built into the new budget from 26/27. The Bus Service Operators Grant income has reduced as it is based on mileage, and a service redesign has reduced the mileage of the vehicles. 2026/27 will also see a reduction in bus maintenance costs as 3 new vehicles are to be purchased through the fleet capital programme.

4.9 Shopmobility moved to a new location and will be spending more on electricity, service charge and advertisement. This is alongside a reduced income with pre covid customer numbers not returning, which is a national trend; only 42% of the income is expected creating an expected overspend of £111k. The allocation of £30k by Executive Committee to offset these identified additional costs has been incorporated in the 26/27 budget. In addition, Officers are looking to increase income through the sale of aids and adaptions and to review the services business hours in 2026/27.

4.10 There is an overspend in housing options due to write-offs circa £56k, additional £8k for council tax for dispersed units, leased dwellings insurance of £18k above budget and other various overspends of £8k. Consideration is being given to the use of grant funding to offset costs where relevant.

Corporate Services £232k overspend

4.11 Corporate Services is forecasting a £232k overspend.

4.12 This comprises a combination of grant funding adjustments of £108k, Lump Sum Pension Deficit payment of £26k, additional HMRC costs of £13k, additional subscriptions of £8k, costs of £37k due to staffing change at Director level and agency costs of new S151 Officer, alongside other net costs of £28k. There are also pressures relating to additional Postage Charges of £25k. This will be addressed as part of the MTFP.

4.13 These have been offset by overachieved vacancy management savings of £13k across the whole Council.

Environmental Services £615k overspend

4.14 Environmental Services is forecasting a £615k overspend above budget.

4.15 The variance is largely due to underachieved bereavement income of £374k due to the income budget being set higher than the service can currently achieve within the period, as such a prudent adjustment to bereavement expected income levels is warranted. There are also increased business rates of £48k and increased servicing and maintenance costs of the cremator of £53k.

4.16 Aside from bereavement services, there have also been increased agency costs for seasonal hedge cutting of £96k. This is addressed as part of the MTFP.

4.17 There have been one-off legal costs of a tree subsidence legal case of £60k offset by £16k minor savings across the service.

Financial and Customer Services £688k overspend

4.18 Finance & Customer Services is forecasting a £688k overspend against budget.

4.19 Due to changes in national policy with a greater focus on prevention, Housing Subsidy budgets no longer align with received grant creating a service based overspend of £520k. This is a significant pressure facing all authorities and reflects ongoing risk.

4.20 The Council has had work carried out by the external auditor, Ernst and Young for both 2023/24 and 2024/25 accounts and this has resulted in increased audit costs based on actuals to date of £33k. There have also been pressures as a result of the use of agency staff costs to cover vacancies of £153k.

4.21 These pressures have been offset by various other savings of £18k.

Legal, Democratic and Elections Services £19k underspend

4.22 Legal, Democratic and Elections Services are forecasting a £19k underspend.

As a result of correcting an error with the shared service recharge which has reduced budgeted charges for Democratic Services by £43k, this has been reflected on an ongoing bases in 26/27 budgets. This saving is offset against a projected lower income on Land Charge Searches and increase in Electoral Services due to the licence for the Civica system. A budget pressure has been accommodated in the 26/27 budget setting process.

Planning and Leisure Services £291k underspend

4.23 Planning and Leisure Services are forecasting a net underspend of £291k.

4.24 This is largely due to additional Development Control income of £249k due to high value planning applications received.

4.25 There have also been salary savings in Arts and Development of £19k due to grant receipt. There have been reduced agency costs within Parks and Events due to a planned review on Leisure Services. There are other various savings of £23k.

Regeneration and Property Services £210k overspend

4.26 There is a forecast overspend position of £210k on Regeneration and Property Services.

4.27 As reported in Quarter 2 a large part of this variance relates to essential works to replace the fire alarm system at the Town Hall costing £146k. There are also above budget costs of £54k relating to parking enforcement and a budget bid has been agreed to address this in 26/27.

4.28 The engineering and design service has pressures relating to insurance claims of £64k, as well as fleet maintenance and overtime costs of £15k. A reserve has been set up to meet the insurance claims going forward.
The service has pressures relating to building and maintenance cost for the business centres of £41k, some of which relates to improvements in the safety and security of the buildings. There is a £24k pressure relating to staffing, fleet, materials and income as the new market establishes itself. There are also £12k reflecting a timing delay in efficiency savings that will be met in Quarter 4.

4.29 The overspends have been offset by £21k in vacancy management savings, additional roundabout sponsorship income of £8k, insurance claim income of £53k for Greenlands, UKSPF vacancy management savings of £43k, an underspend on the recharge to Wyre Forest of £21k and various other savings of £7k.

Regulatory Client £21k overspend

4.30 Regulatory Client is forecasting a £21k overspend due to underachieved efficiency savings of £11k, Pest Control Fees of £2k recharge from WRS above budget and various other costs of £8k.

Rubicon Client £129k overspend

4.31 Rubicon Client (the costs incurred by the Council, such as landlord and some salary expenses) is forecasting a £129k overspend.
The variance is due to additional Management Fees of £41k, increased Maintenance and Insurance costs of £76k due to Rubicon client not having an insurance budget for buildings and efficiency savings of £15k that has not yet been met. These are offset by other minor savings of £3k.

Corporate Financing

4.32 Corporate Financing reflects sums centrally held outside of service budgets and allocated to services for the period. The position is forecasting £1,649k additional income arising from: additional Investment Interest amounting to £404k and Grant Income of £916k together with £500k of Revenue Grants Received in 24/25 recognised in 25/26 offset by lower-than-expected Fees & Charges Income of £171k.

Savings Targets

4.33 The Council had £2.342m total savings targets in 2025/26 (including prior year carry forwards). The Council has delivered £1.751m of these savings in Q3. These are shown in the table below:

	2025/26 £m	**Adjusted 2025/26 £m**	**Total 2025/26 £m**	**Savings YTD**	
Service Reviews	(0.405)	0.405	0		Consolidated corporately
Finance Vacancies	(0.100)	0.100	0		Consolidated corporately
Environmental Service Partnerships	(0.050)	0.050	0		Consolidated corporately
Move to all out elections	(0.170)		(0.170)	0	Unlikely to be met
Town Hall	(0.400)		(0.400)	0	Work ongoing
2023/24 Items	**(1.125)**	**0.555**	**(0.570)**	**0**	
In year corporate target		(1.522)	(1.522)	(1.536)	£1.386m from vacancy management and £0.150m efficiencies
Directorate savings		(0.250)	(0.250)	(0.215)	There is an expected outturn of £215k in savings
2025/26 Items	**0**	**(1.722)**	**(1.772)**	**(1.751)**	
Total Savings	**(1.125)**	**(1.217)**	**(2.342)**	**(1.751)**	

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Cash Management

4.34 Borrowing

- As of the 31st December 2025, there were no short-term borrowings. The Council has long-term borrowings of £103.9m.

4.35 Investments

- On 31st December 2025 there were £5.2m short-term investments held.

Capital Monitoring

4.36 A capital programme of £8.082m was approved in the Budget for 2025/26 in February 2025. This has been fully reviewed as part of the MTFP using actual data as at the end of December 2024. The table below and detail in **Appendix A** set out the Capital Programme schemes that are approved for the MTFP time horizon.

4.37 Many of these schemes are already in partial delivery in the 2025/26 financial year. By approving this list, the Council also agreed sums not spent in 2024/25 (and 2023/24 by default if schemes originated earlier than 2024/25 as sums have been carried forward through to the 2024/25 MTFS Report) to be carried forward into 2025/26. The table also splits amounts by funding source, Council or third party.

Year	**Total Programme**		Council Funded	Grant Funded
2024/5	**20,114,366**	**32,428,717**	4,792,886	15,036,480
Carry Fwd	**12,314,351**			
2025/6	**8,082,320**		3,176,213	4,906,107
2026/7	**3,923,362**		3,217,498	705,864
2027/8	**2,559,172**		1,853,308	705,864
2028/9	**2,064,490**		1,364,490	700,000
2029/30	**2,496,248**		1,790,384	705,864

4.38 The Council also have the following Grant Funded Schemes which are being delivered in 2025/26:

- The Town Deal schemes – the Innovation Centre and Public Realm improvements which are funded via £15.6m of Government Funding.

- For the Innovation Centre
  - Speller-Metcalfe have been appointed as the design and build contractor up to Stage 4 design with an option to extend into delivering the development in full.
  - The value engineering (VE) exercise has been concluded, with costs based on contractor prices rather than QS estimates. Stage 4 design work is now advancing rapidly. Whilst further VE will take place throughout Stage 4, we have reached a

point where the project can be delivered on budget. Note that VE savings have been achieved without the need to reduce the building in size, or compromise on overall quality.
  - MHCLG have confirmed the deadline to spend Town Deal funding has been extended until end of March 2028, providing additional time if needed.
  - Planning permission was granted on December 11th. We are now working through pre-commencement and other conditions as needed.
  - The extension of time from MHCLG however allows further market testing to be undertaken with construction sub-contractors. The Town Deal Board have been consulted and support this approach in order to maximise cost certainty with quotes based on final specifications. This will take an additional 2 months (estimated) with construction now profiled to commence June 2026.
  - The final business case for GBS LEP funding was signed off by Birmingham City Council on 20th January 2026. The grant funding agreement for £2.425m will now be put in place.

- For the Public Realm Scheme

  - All works to Unicorn Hill and Church Green West have been completed. The new traffic regulation order (TRO) came into place on the 14 August. Public comms around the new TROs have been circulated on social media and local papers.
  - Additional public realm works have been paused so that remaining Town Deal funding can be utilised as contingency for the Innovation Centre. Public realm works to Church Green East have been costed at and will proceed in the event that sufficient contingency remains unutilised.
  - The extended timescales allow public realm works to be delayed until we can be certain that remaining Town Deal (contingency) funds are not required for the Innovation Centre**.**

4.39 In December 2024, the Government announced that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) would be extended by 6 months. No additional funding has been provided but the 2025/26 allocation of £818,536 (of which £152,000 is capital) now needs to be completely spent by the 30/9/26. These funds are being spent in line with the approved UKSPF Investment Plan with £360,316 defrayed to the end of Q3.

4.40 The outturn spend is £6.776m against an original in year capital budget totalling £8.082m and is detailed in **Appendix A**. It should be noted that carry forwards of £23.673m will be rolled forward from 2024/25 into 2025/26 to take account of slippage from 2024/25.

Housing Revenue Account

4.41 The table below details the financial position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the period April - December 2025. The major variances are due to the following:

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- Dwelling Rents – a higher than anticipated, however the timing of purchase of properties under the Right to Buy scheme has reduced the income received level. This was due a backlog of approvals.
- Repairs and Maintenance – has been an increase in the incidence of repairs required.
- Supervision and Management – the variance is predominantly due to vacant posts as a consequence of a service review within Housing Services. A new structure will be implemented and posts recruited in quarter 3.

	2025/26 Original Budget £'000	2025/26 Working Budget £'000	2025/26 Budget Apr - Dec £'000	2025/26 Actual + comm Apr - Dec £'000	2025/26 Variance Apr - Dec £'000	2025/26 Projected Outturn £'000	2025/26 Projected Variance £'000
INCOME							
Dwelling Rents	-28,169	-28,169	-21,713	-21,151	563	-28,051	118
Non-Dwelling Rents	-534	-534	-412	-476	-64	-534	-0
Tenants' Charges for Services & Facilities	-724	-795	-613	-645	-32	-794	1
Contributions towards Expenditure	-127	-155	-119	-109	11	-146	9
Total Income	**-29,553**	**-29,653**	**-22,858**	**-22,380**	**477**	**-29,525**	**128**
EXPENDITURE							
Repairs & Maintenance	7,844	8,011	6,009	6,688	680	8,152	141
Supervision & Management	9,249	9,387	7,040	3,182	-3,858	9,260	-127
Rent, Rates, Taxes & Other Charges	576	576	432	770	338	788	211
Provision for Bad Debts	517	519	389	0	-389	400	-119
Depreciation & Impairment of Fixed Assets	7,296	7,296	5,472	0	-5,472	7,296	0
Interest Payable & Debt Management Costs	4,179	4,179	3,134	-134	-3,269	4,179	0
Total Expenditure	**29,662**	**29,968**	**22,476**	**10,506**	**-11,970**	**30,075**	**107**
Net cost of Services	**108**	**315**	**-381**	**-11,874**	**-11,493**	**550**	235
Net Operating Expenditure	**108**	**315**	**-381**	**-11,874**	**-11,493**	**550**	**235**
	0	0					
Interest Receivable	-211	-211	-159	0	159	-211	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Planned use of Balances	103	-104	540	0	-540	-339	-235
Transfer to Earmarked Reserves	0		0	0	0	0	0

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In HRA Capital:

Project	Project Description	2025/26 Full Year Budget £	2025/26 Budget to Date Apr - Dec £	2025/26 Actuals & Comm Apr - Dec £	2025/26 Variance Apr - Dec £	2025/26 Forecast Outturn £	2025/26 Projected Variance £
Various	Housing 1-4-1 Purchases/Build	3,000,000	2,250,000	1,688,997	-561,003	3,000,000	0
100053	Asbestos General	125,000	93,750	187,501	93,751	140,000	15,000
100054	Structural Repairs	15,000	11,250	212,491	201,241	75,000	60,000
100055	Electrical Upgrade	200,000	150,000	293,848	143,848	400,000	200,000
100056	Boiler Replacement	720,000	540,000	445,377	-94,623	735,000	15,000
100058	Window Replacement	500,000	375,000	406,632		400,000	(100,000)
100059	Disabled Adaptations	500,000	375,000	328,584	-46,416	350,000	(150,000)
100060	Environmental Enhancement	100,000	75,000	85,447	10,447	100,000	0
100062	Stock Condition Survey	150,000	112,500	122,208	9,708	150,000	0
100063	Housing Management System		-	212,662	212,662	220,000	220,000
100066	Capitalised Salaries	750,000	562,500	-	-562,500	750,000	0
100067	Door Entry/CCTV	350,000	262,500	294,768	32,268	350,000	0
100068	HRA Hard Wire S	200,000	150,000	127,941	-22,059	150,000	(50,000)
100074	Balcony Replacement	300,000	225,000	304,286	79,286	300,000	0
100083	HRA Compartmentation	1,500,000	1,125,000	797,164	-327,836	800,000	(700,000)
100084	Major Voids Works	1,000,000	750,000	2,658,519	1,908,519	2,500,000	1,500,000
100098	HRA-Energy Efficiency	1,000,000	750,000	1,849,314	1,099,314	1,500,000	500,000
100115	HRA Stock Remodelling	275,000	206,250	245,991	39,741	150,000	(125,000)
100116	HRA Estates Garages	300,000	225,000	11,000	-214,000	20,000	(280,000)
110001	Internal Refurbishment	3,000,000	2,250,000	2,529,199	279,199	2,500,000	(500,000)
110003	High Trees Project	800,000	600,000	1,152,037	552,037	1,000,000	200,000
110004	Disrepair Cases	100,000	75,000	820,597	745,597	650,000	550,000
110005	External Refurbishment	500,000	375,000	168,533	-206,467	200,000	(300,000)
110042	Lift Replacement	150,000	112,500	156,757	44,257	160,000	10,000
110045	Vehicle Replacement	900,000	675,000	900,000	-	900,000	0
		16,435,000	**12,326,250**	**15,999,851**	**3,416,969**	**17,500,000**	**1,065,000**

4.42 Across the HRA Capital Investment Programme issues have arisen that are summarised below in relation to progress in priority areas, or where they require variances to the budget lines for the following reasons.

4.43 **Fire Doors and Compartmentation** - The fire door upgrade and compartmentation programme is improving fire safety across council housing with additional works from Fire Risk Assessments also in progress. Meanwhile, caretakers help ensure no combustible materials remain in communal areas.

4.44 **Housing 1-4-1 Purchases** – These occur on a reactive basis and as such budget estimating can be difficult, in the current year we have identified £2.4m of Persimmon properties together with buybacks.

4.45 **Structural Repairs** – These repairs are essentially reactive, and the value of each occurrence is unknown. To date a pressure of £60k has be identified.

4.46 **Housing Management System** – The core functions are complete, with upcoming modules set to enhance ASB case tracking. Key fax, the repairs diagnostic tool, will improve work identification accuracy. Total expenses are £56k.

4.47 **Major Voids Works** – Void repairs are carried out as required. An additional £1,050k in funding will be necessary for completion within the current year. Furthermore, there will be a significant financial impact from extensive Buyback refurbishment costs.

4.48 **Disrepair Cases** – We have experienced increased levels of Disrepair Cases over the last two financial years which has now resulted on a pressure to carry out corrective works to affected properties.

Earmarked Reserves

4.49 The updated position, taking account of the now submitted draft accounts for 2024/25, are set out in **Appendix B**. As part of the MTFP all reserves were thoroughly reviewed for their requirement and additional reserves set up as per that report. At the 31 December 2025, based on the present MTFP that was approved by Council on the 19th February, the Council holds £17.957m of Earmarked Reserves and is forecasting to hold £17.294m by 31 March 2026.

Ward Budgets

4.50 This report is the quarterly report to show what has been spent to date on Ward budgets. Each Ward Member has £2,000 to spend on Ward Initiatives subject to the rules of the Scheme which were approved by Council. As of the 31st December there have been applications from 21 Members approved totalling £32,100, £21,900 is still to be allocated. This year's funding allocations must be spent by the 31st March 2026. Full detail is set out in **Appendix C.**

Balance Sheet Monitoring Position

4.51 There has been the request from Audit Committee that the Council include Balance Sheet Monitoring as part of this report.

4.52 This initial balance sheet reporting is set out as the Q3 Treasury Report which is attached as **Appendix D**. This report sets out the Councils debt and borrowing position for Q3 2025/26. Included in this is how the Council is using its working capital as well as measurement of the Councils Prudential Indicators, this appendix will need to be noted and approved that Council note the position.

Procurement Pipeline

4.53 The Procurement pipeline is shown in **Appendix E**. The Council's Procurement Pipeline includes details of contracts expected to be reprocured and new procurement projects expected to be undertaken in the future. Those happening in the next 12 months and over £200k will need to be put on the Forward Plan. The pipeline is refreshed quarterly.

- There are 25 contracts that are over the key decision threshold of £200k
- There are 8 contracts procured by Redditch Borough Council on behalf of Bromsgrove District Council.

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Collection Fund

4.54 The Council acts as collecting authority for itself, other major preceptors and the parishes for Council Tax. The Council also collects business rates on behalf of central government, the County Council and for itself. The Council's own precept accounts for just under 12% of monies collected from Council tax and about 40% of business rates collected after paying government levies, additional tariff to central government and 10% across to Worcestershire County Council.

4.55 The Council aims to collect 98.5% of Council Tax receipts (national average is 95.8%) which equates to a total sum of £60.748 million. Performance against this target for this financial year is shown in the table below:

	Target %age (cumulative)	Actual %age (cumulative)	Amount collected (cumulative) £ millions
Quarter 1	28.68	27.99	22.963
Quarter 2	55.61	55.36	34.144
Quarter 3	84.28	82.52	50.838
Quarter 4	98.5		

4.56 Due to the use of ten monthly collections the percentage for each quarter is not a simple 25%. Government reforms are proposing enforcing a move to monthly collections (in twelfths).

4.57 The Council aims to collect 98.0% of business rate receipts (national average is 95.8%) which equates to a total sum of £39.408 million. Performance against this target for this financial year is shown in the table below:

	Target %age (cumulative)	Actual %age (cumulative)	Amount collected (cumulative) £ millions
Quarter 1	25.78	25.29	10.310
Quarter 2	54.36	51.53	20.723
Quarter 3	80.95	77.06	31.222
Quarter 4	98.0		

Benefits

4.58 Benefit claim statistics are summarised in the table below:

New claims	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3		Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3

Average processing time	18 days	15 days	15 days	Number processed this quarter	105	222	75
Changes to claims							
Average processing time	8 days	7 days	6 days	Number processed this quarter	1380	2647	1211

4.59 Recent changes to benefits has meant that many of the simpler claims have been transferred to DWP, leaving the more complex cases with local authorities – this has impacted on average processing time. DWP expect new claims to be processed within a 30-day timeframe.

4.60 The Pride in Place funding is confirmed as £19,660,000 (capital £12,470,000 and revenue £7,190,000) over 10 years and includes the current year's capacity fund of £150,000, which has already been received.

4.61 The figures for the current year and years 1-4 are below:

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Capital		£120,000	£670,000	£1,460,000	£1,460,000
Revenue	£150,000	£270,000	£690,000	£690,000	£770,000
Total	£150,000	£390,000	£1,360,000	£2,150,000	£2,230,000

4.62 The first 4 years of funding are guaranteed, but the latter years are subject to future spending reviews.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 These are contained in the main body of the report.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 No Legal implications have been identified.

7. Strategic Purpose Implications

Relevant Strategic Purpose

7.1 The Strategic purposes are included in the Council's corporate plan and guides the Council's approach to budget making ensuring we focus on the issues and what are most important for the borough and our communities. Our Financial monitoring and strategies are integrated within all of our Strategic Purposes.

Climate Change Implications

7.2 The green thread runs through the Council plan. The Financial monitoring report has implications on climate change, and these will be addressed and reviewed when relevant by climate change officers to ensure the correct procedures have been followed to ensure any impacts on climate change are fully understood.

8. Other Implications

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

8.1 None as a direct result of this report.

Operational Implications

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

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 Items identified in the Finance monitoring is included in a number of the Corporate Risks. These are listed below. The mitigations to these risks are set out in the Risk Report, of which the Quarter 3 Report is reported to Audit, Governance and Standards Committee in July:

- COR10 - Decisions made to address financial pressures and implement new projects.
- COR16 - Management of Contracts.
- COR17 - Resolution of the Approved Budget Position.
- COR19 - Adequate Workforce Planning.
- COR20 - Financial Position Rectification.
- COR22 - Delivery of Levelling Up and UK SPF Initiatives
- COR23 - Cost of Living Crisis
- COR25 - The new Environment Bill

10. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Capital Outturn
Appendix B - Reserves Position
Appendix C - Ward Budget Position
Appendix D - Treasury Management Position
Appendix E - Procurement Pipeline

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Appendix A - Capital Outturn

Capital Project	Description	2025/26 Total (Original) £	2025/26 Total (Incl C/F's) £	2025/26 Spend £
	Large Schemes			
	Towns Fund			
200053	- Innovation Centre	1,000,000	7,091,046	
200053	- Innovation Centre	1,948,000	1,948,000	482,334
100133	- Digital Manufacturing & Innovation Centre Digital Manufacturing & Innovat	0	-159,306	
200054	- Library	0	2,320,634	
200055	- Public Realm	0	3,777,926	
200055	- Public Realm	0	439,000	
100102 100108 100111	Town Hall Redevelopment	0	5,123,121	1,481,971
	Schemes Agreed to Continue in Tranche 1			
100004	Car Park Maintenance	150,000	212,672	50,459
110036	Footpaths	75,000	47,264	70,855
100007	Disabled Facilities Grant	1,185,745	1,332,340	201,539
100008	Energy & Efficiency Installs.	0	209,345	
100009	GF Asbestos	0	75,467	63,467
100014	Improved Parking Scheme (includes locality funding)	0	400,000	
100026	Morton Stanley Play, Sport and Open Space Improvements (General)	0	1,500	
100032	Public Building	250,000	139,324	282,090
100035	Fleet Replacement new line	0	1,960,669	994,983
100037	Removal of 5 weirs through Arrow Valley Park	0	414,000	
100040	Sports Contributions to support improvements to Outdoor facilities at Terry	0	3,000	
100043	Wheelie Bin purchase	100,000	210,635	73,163

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Capital Project	Description	2025/26 Total (Original) £	2025/26 Total (Incl C/F's) £	2025/26 Spend £
100044	New Digital Service	0	-119,732	
100088	Improvement Holly trees childrens centre	0	6,000	
100089	Greener Homes	0	-8,925	
100010	Grassland Mitigation measures- recreating and monitoring grassland habita	5,864	11,727	
100011	Hedgerow Mitigation measurres by restoration and hedge laying with assoc	0	21,500	
100012	HMO Grants	25,000	86,500	
100013	Home Repairs Assistance	40,000	160,000	
100018	Improvement to original Pump Track at AVCP	0	56,364	
100045	Replacing 3 fuel pumps and upgrading tank monitoring equipment	0	25,000	
110018	Cisco Network Update	47,339	53,273	
110019	Server Replacement Est(Exact known Q2 2022)	18,500	196,000	67,038
110020	Laptop Refresh	5,000	37,775	4,909
100140	Cyber Security Updats	25,000	50,000	
100141	Morgan Stanley Footpaths	0	16,500	
110021	New Cemetary Provision-Ipsley road	195,000	635,963	
100127	Provide the Crossgate Depot site with a new and Compliant Deisel Fuel insta	0	56,000	
100097	Widen access road to Arrow Valley Country park	0	-9,074	
100136	Lifeline Improvements	0	120,000	
100144	PRS Housing ICT System	0	30,000	
100119	Play Areas - Surface Replacement	10,000	-79,994	
100147	AVCP - Parking Bays near Visitor Centre	0	12,000	
100121	AVCP - Car Park Extension 25 Spaces	0	-15,745	
100148	Increased Building Mainenance Costs	150,000	300,000	
100134	Arrow Valley Car Park	0	63,840	
100135	Arrow Valley park Visitor Centre Improvements	0	193,251	223,482
100143	Fleet Costs	26,000	611,000	
100137	Final Play Area Changes	191,477	435,576	155,200
100139	Movement of ICT Cyber Capital Works Forward	0	-50,000	
100142	Hedge and Shrub Removal	40,000	80,000	
110007	Forge Mill and Bordelsey Open Space Improvements	0	5,859	
110009	MUGA at Greenlands Sports Pitches. 2018/169/FUL Land off Green Lane	0	43,078	
110012	Play Area improvements at Birchfield Road,/Headless Cross Rec Ground. 1	0	7,575	
110013	Play area (£34,583.39), Open space (£12,001.36) and Sport (£8,516) impro	0	1,172	
100001	Arrow Valley Country Park - Play, Open Space and Sports Improvements.	0	-4,500	
100146	Play Area Changes - Pre Audit	0	382,000	
100146	Play Audit funding	191,447	454,833	
100020	Improvement to Sports Pitches infrastructure in Morton Stanley Park	0	23,002	
100112	Fire compartmentation works in Corporate buildings	250,000	240,157	205,366
110044	New Food Waste Collection - DEFRA Funding	766,498	785,955	
	Abavus Software Integration	30,000	30,000	
	Abavus Licensing	10,200	10,200	
	Update Town Hall Fire Wall	16,250	16,250	
	Replacement Track - Abbey Stadium	300,000	300,000	
	Energy Performance Certificate Requirements	100,000	100,000	
	Abbey Stadium Roof Replacement	250,000	250,000	
	Abbey Stadium - refurbish indoor Chaging Rooms and Toitets	300,000	300,000	
	Forge Mill - New outdoor Kiosk and Toilet Replacement	90,000	90,000	
	PitcherOak, refurbish Male Changing and bebuild 2nd Green	90,000	90,000	
	Salary Capitallisation	200,000	200,000	
		8,082,320	**19,920,931**	**6,775,619**

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Appendix B - Earmarked Reserves

	Balance at 31/3/25	Transfers in 2025/26	Transfers out 2025/26	Balance at 31/3/26	Transfers to general fund at 31/03/2026	Transfers from general fund at 31/03/2026	Balance at 31/3/26
General Fund	**6,866**	(2,662)	338	**4,542**	10,576	(7,589)	**7,529**
General Fund Earmarked Reserves:							
Business Rates Retention Scheme	**4,560**		(260)	**4,300**	(2,150)		**2,150**
Community Development	**74**	73		**147**			**147**
Community Safety	**211**	450		**661**			**661**
Corporate Services	**2,594**			**2,594**	(1,937)		**657**
Customer Services	**183**			**183**			**183**
Economic Growth	**841**			**841**			**841**
Electoral Services	**63**			**63**			**63**
Environmental Vehicles	**29**			**29**	(29)		**0**
Equipment replacement	**25**			**25**			**25**
Financial Services	**460**	260		**720**			**720**
Finance Revenues Reserve	**0**						**0**
General Risk reserve	**45**			**45**	(45)		**0**
Housing Benefit Implementation	**270**			**270**			**270**
Council Tax Benefit	**605**			**605**			**605**
Essential Living Fund	**135**			**135**			**135**
Homelessness	**12**			**12**			**12**
Homelessness Prevention	**519**			**519**			**519**
Universal Credit	**56**		(18)	**38**	(38)		**0**
Gypsy and Traveller Assessment	**67**			**67**	(67)		**0**
Mortgage Rescue Scheme	**24**			**24**	(24)		**0**
Land Charges	**9**			**9**			**9**
Land Drainage	**129**			**129**			**129**
Parks & Open spaces	**8**			**8**	(8)		**0**
Planning Services	**465**			**465**	(465)		**0**
Business Improvement District	**209**			**209**			**209**
Town Centre	**7**			**7**	(7)		**0**
Warmer Homes	**16**			**16**			**16**
Transformational Growth	**123**			**123**	(123)		**0**
Pensions	**201**			**201**	(201)		**0**
Regeneration Income	**603**	18		**621**	(68)		**553**
Restarts Grant	**2,924**			**2,924**	(2,924)		**0**
Covid-19 (General)	**2,435**			**2,435**	(2,435)		**0**
Financial Resilience Reserve				**0**			**0**
EPR Funding Allocation		814		**814**			**814**
EPR Comms Funding				**0**			**0**
Ward Budgets		180	(60)	**120**			**120**
Covid-19 (Collection Fund)	**55**			**55**	(55)		**0**
Starting Well		178		**178**			**178**
Ukrainian Support		232		**232**			**232**
Local Plan Professional Fees Underspend		457		**457**			**457**
New Reserves - MTFP 2026							
Health and Safety Capital Works						603	**603**
Town Hall Works Reserve						1,000	**1,000**
Library Work - Town Hall Write Off						667	**667**
Planning Reserve for planning applications						100	**100**
Insurance costs for non-adopted roads						100	**100**
Risk and Resilience Reserve						2,500	**2,500**
LGR Reserve						1,000	**1,000**
Community Investment Fund						1,600	**1,600**
Legal Costs for Skerry, Boultons Lane						19	**19**
Total General Fund Earmarked Reserves	**17,957**	**2,662**	**(338)**	**20,281**	**(10,576)**	**7,589**	**17,294**

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Appendix C – Ward Budget Spending Q3 – Funds Allocated to 31 December

Councillor Ward Fund Balances – 25/26

Activity	Spend	Balance £2,000
Cllr Joe Baker	2,000.00	0
Cllr Juliet Barker-Smith	800.00	1,200.00
Cllr Juma Begum	1,450.00	550.00
Cllr William Boyd	1,200.00	800,00
Cllr Brandon Clayton	2,000.00	0
Cllr Claire Davies	1,200.00	800.00
Cllr Matthew Dormer	0	2,000.00
Cllr James Fardoe	0	2,000.00
Cllr Andy Fry	650.00	1,350.00
Cllr Bill Hartnett	2,000.00	0
Cllr Sharon Harvey	1,950.00	50.00
Cllr Chris Holtz	1,000.00	1,000.00
Cllr Joanna Kane	2,000.00	0
Cllr Sid Khan	0	2,000.00
Cllr Wanda King	2,000.00	0
Cllr Alan Mason	2,000.00	0
Cllr Sachin Mathur	0	2,000.00
Cllr Gemma Monaco	0	2,000.00
Cllr David Munroe	1,600.00	400.00
Cllr Rita Rogers	1,500.00	500.00
Cllr Gary Slim	2,000.00	0
Cllr Jen Snape	2,000.00	0

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Activity	Spend	Balance **£2,000**
Cllr Jane Spilsbury	1,050.00	950.00
Cllr Monica Stringfellow	2,000.00	0
Cllr Craig Warhurst	500.00	1,500.00
Cllr Ian Woodall	0	2,000.00
Cllr Paul Wren	1,200	800
Total	**32,100.00**	**21,900.00**

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Appendix D – Treasury Management Position

1. SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to set out a quarterly update on the Council's Capital and Treasury Management Strategies, including all prudential indicators.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet are asked to:

- **Note the Council's Treasury performance for Q3 of the financial year 25/26.**
- **Note the position in relation to the Council's Prudential indicators.**

3. BACKGROUND

Introduction

3.1 The Authority has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve, as a minimum, treasury management semi-annual and annual outturn reports.

3.2 This quarterly report provides an additional update and includes the requirement in the 2021 Code of quarterly reporting of the treasury management prudential indicators. The non-treasury prudential indicators are incorporated in the Authority's normal quarterly revenue report.

External Context

3.3 **Economic background:** Early in the first quarter was dominated by US trade tariffs and the negative impact on equity and bond markets. While this was reversed somewhat in the second quarter with equity markets making gains, it also saw a divergence in US and UK government bond yields. UK yields persisted at higher levels as investors demanded higher returns in the form of term premia due to the more uncertain UK fiscal and economic position.

3.4 The latter part of the period included the government's November autumn Budget. Despite much speculation and drip-feeding of potential policies in the weeks leading up to the event, what was ultimately announced was generally deemed more muted than had been anticipated, helping ease investors' fears of significantly higher government borrowing.

3.5 UK consumer price inflation (CPI) inflation was 3.2% in November 2025, down from 3.6% in the previous month and lower than the 3.5% expected, but still well above the Bank of

England (BoE) target. Core CPI eased to 3.2% from 3.4%, against forecasts of it staying at 3.6%.

3.6 According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the UK economy expanded by 0.7% in the first quarter of the calendar year, by 0.3% in Q2 and by 0.1% in Q3. Of the subsequent monthly figures, the ONS estimated that GDP fell by 0.1% In October.

3.7 The labour market continued to ease over the period as unemployment rose, vacancies fell and inactivity remained flat. In the three months to October 2025, the unemployment rate rose to 5.1%, higher than the level previously expected by the BoE, while the employment rate slipped to 74.9%.

3.8 The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted 5-4 to cut Bank Rate to 3.75% in December 2025, as was expected. Policymakers wanting a cut judged that disinflation was established while those preferring to hold Bank Rate at 4% argued that inflation risks remained sufficiently material to leave it untouched at this stage.

3.9 The November BoE Monetary Policy Report projected GDP would expand by a modest 0.2% in calendar Q4 2025. Estimates of inflation in the report were quickly out of date when CPI fell quicker than expected in November. Predictions of a modestly growing economy were echoed by the Office for Budget Responsibility in its Economic and Fiscal Outlook published with the Autumn Statement which revised down its estimate of annual GDP to around 1.5% between 2025 and 2030.

3.10 Arlingclose, the authority's treasury adviser, held a central view that Bank Rate would be cut further in 2025/26 with most BoE policymakers remaining more worried about weak GDP growth than higher inflation. In line with Arlingclose's central forecast, Bank Rate was reduced to 3.75% in December. Further cuts are expected in 2026, with the central forecast being that Bank Rate will be eased to around 3.25%.

3.11 The US Federal Reserve continued cutting rates, reducing Fed Funds Rate target range by 0.25% at its December meeting to 3.50%-3.75%. The meeting minutes noted that most policymakers judged that further rate cuts would be likely in 2026 if inflation continues to ease, however they were still divided in their assessment of the risks between inflation and unemployment.

3.12 The European Central Bank (ECB) held its key interest rates in December for a fourth consecutive meeting, maintaining the deposit rate at 2.0% and the main refinancing rate at 2.15%. The ECB maintained that future policy decisions will remain data-dependent, that inflation is close to its 2% target and that the euro area economy continues to

expand despite a challenging global environment, including heightened geopolitical risks and trade tensions.

3.13 **Financial Markets:** After declining sharply early in the period, sentiment in financial markets has been mostly buoyant, but risky assets remained volatile. Bond yields initially declined early in the period, but increasing uncertainty around the UK's economic and fiscal outlook caused medium and longer yields to rise. Yields remained elevated until the third quarter when the potential negative impact of the UK Budget were deemed less than expected and yields eased modestly.

3.14 Equity markets gained the previous declines seen in the April sell-off and have continued to rise, even in the face of ongoing uncertainty around the existence of an AI-related 'bubble' and concentration in US and global stock markets.

3.15 Over the period, the 10-year UK benchmark gilt yield started at 4.65% and ended at 4.48%. However, these nine months saw significant volatility with the 10-year yield hitting a low of 4.39% and a high of 4.82%. It was a similar picture for the 20-year gilt which started at 5.18% and ended at 5.11% with a low and high of 5.05% and 5.55% respectively. The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 4.10% over the nine months to 31st December.

3.16 **Credit review:** Arlingclose maintained its recommended maximum unsecured duration limit on most of the banks on its counterparty list at 6 months. The other banks remain on 100 days.

3.17 Earlier in the period, Fitch upgraded NatWest Group and related entities to AA- from A+ and placed Clydesdale Bank's long-term A- rating on Rating Watch Positive. Fitch later upgraded Clydesdale Bank and HSBC, but downgraded Lancashire CC and Close Brothers.

3.18 In May, Moody's downgraded the United States sovereign long-term rating to Aa1 and affirmed OP Corporate's rating at Aa3. Moody's later upgraded Transport for London, Allied Irish Banks, Bank of Ireland, Toronto-Dominion Bank, DZ Bank, Nordea and HSBC and downgraded Close Brothers.

3.19 S&P upgraded Clydesdale Bank, Allied Irish Banks and Bank of Ireland, and assigned Warrington Council a BBB+ rating.

3.20 After spiking in April following the US trade tariff announcements, UK credit default swap (CDS) prices trended down before picking up modestly in October and November. They

declined again in December and ended the year in line with levels seen in the first half of the year and most of 2024.

3.21 European banks' CDS prices have generally been flatter and lower compared to the UK, as have Singaporean and Australian lenders while some Canadian bank CDS prices have remained elevated since the beginning of the period in part due to ongoing trade tensions with the US.

3.22 At the end of the period CDS prices for all banks on Arlingclose's counterparty list remained within limits deemed satisfactory for maintaining credit advice at current durations.

3.23 Financial market volatility is expected to remain, and CDS levels will be monitored for signs of ongoing credit stress. As ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by Arlingclose remain under constant review.

Local Context

3.24 On 31st December 2025, the Authority had £29.49m net borrowing arising from its revenue and capital income and expenditure. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while balance sheet resources are the underlying resources available for investment. These factors are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary

	30.9.25 Actual £m	31.12.25 Actual £m
General Fund & Regeneration CFR	28.82	28.82
HRA CFR	127.60	127.60
Total CFR	**156.42**	**156.42**
External borrowing**	103.93	103.93
Internal borrowing	**52.49**	**52.49**
Less: Usable reserves	-18.10	-18.10
Less: Working capital	-4.90	-4.90
Net borrowing	**29.49**	**29.49**

* Finance leases, PFI liabilities and transferred debt that form part of the Authority's total debt

** shows only loans to which the Authority is committed and excludes optional refinancing

3.25 The treasury management position at 31st December and the change over the quarter is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Treasury Management Summary

	30.9.25 Balance £m	Movement £m	31.12.25 Balance £m	30.12.25 Rate %
Long-term borrowing				
- PWLB	98.93	0	98.93	3.35%
- LOBOs				
- Other	5.00	0	5.00	4.71%
Short-term borrowing				
Total borrowing	103.93	0	103.93	4.03%
Long-term investments				
Short-term investments	5.80	-0.60	5.20	4.72%
Cash and cash equivalents				
Total investments				
Net borrowing	**98.73**	**-0.60**	**98.13**	

Borrowing Strategy and Activity

3.26 As outlined in the treasury strategy, the Authority's chief objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriately risk balance between securing lower interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required, with flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change being a secondary objective. The Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. At the present time short term interest rates are higher than long term interest rates.

3.27 Policy interest rates have risen substantially since 2021 although they have largely plateaued over the last year. Over the last quarter gilt yields have risen slightly overall, having had a number of peaks and troughs. There has been downward pressure from lower inflation figures, but also upward pressure from unexpectantly positive economic data. Data from the US continues to impact global markets including UK gilt yields.

3.28 The PWLB certainty rate for 10-year maturity loans was 5.38% at the beginning of the period and 5.34% at the end. The lowest available 10-year maturity certainty rate was 5.17% and the highest was 5.62%. Rates for 20-year maturity loans ranged from 5.71% to 6.30% during the period, and 50-year maturity loans from 5.46% to 6.14%. The cost of short-term borrowing from other local authorities has been similar to Base Rate during the period at 4.0% to 4.5%.

3.29 CIPFA's 2021 Prudential Code is clear that local authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return and that it is not prudent for local authorities to make any investment or spending decision that will increase the capital financing requirement and so may lead to new borrowing, unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the Authority. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield unless these loans are for refinancing purposes. The Authority has no new plans to borrow to invest primarily for financial return.

3.30 **Loans Portfolio:** On 31st December, the Authority held £103.93m of loans, as part of its strategy for funding previous and current years' capital programmes. Outstanding loans on 31st December 2025 are summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Borrowing Position

	30.9.25 Balance £m	Net Movement £m	31.12.25 Balance £m	31.12.25 Weighted Average Rate %	31.12.25 Weighted Average Maturity (years)
Public Works Loan Board	98,93		98,93	3.35%	23
Banks (LOBO)					
Banks (fixed term)	5.00		5.00	4.71%	25
Local authorities (long-term)					
Local authorities (short-term)					
Total borrowing	**103.93**		**103.93**		

Treasury Investment Activity

3.31 The CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes (revised in 2021) defines treasury management investments as investments that arise from the organisation's cash flows or treasury risk management

activity that ultimately represents balances that need to be invested until the cash is required for use in the course of business.

3.32 The Authority does not hold any invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the period, the Authority's investment balances ranged between £5.3 and £11.0 million due to timing differences between income and expenditure. The investment position is shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Treasury Investment Position

	30.9.25 Balance £m	Net Movement £m	31.12.25 Balance £m	31.12.25 Income Return %	31.12.25 Weighted Average Maturity days
Banks & building societies (unsecured) Banks & building societies (secured deposits) Covered bonds (secured) Government Local authorities and other govt entities Corporate bonds and loans Money Market Funds	5.8	-0.6	5.2	2.9%	30
Total investments	**5.8**	**-0.6**	**5.2**	**0.0**	**0.0**

3.33 Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the optimum rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.

3.34 As demonstrated by the liability benchmark in this report, the Authority expects to be a long-term investor and treasury investments therefore include both short-term low risk instruments to manage day-to-day cash flows and longer-term instruments where limited

additional risk is accepted in return for higher investment income to support local public services.

3.35 Bank Rate was reduced to 3.75% in December 2025 and remained at that level through the rest of the quarter. Short-term interest rates largely followed this trend, staying close to the Bank Rate. The rates on DMADF deposits have been constant at 3.95%.

Non-Treasury Investments

3.36 The definition of investments in the Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Authority as well as other non-financial assets which the Authority holds primarily for financial return. Investments that do not meet the definition of treasury management investments (i.e. management of surplus cash) are categorised as either for service purposes (made explicitly to further service objectives) and or for commercial purposes (made primarily for financial return).

3.37 Investment Guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Welsh Government also includes within the definition of investments all such assets held partially or wholly for financial return.

Treasury Performance

3.38 The Authority measures the financial performance of its treasury management activities both in terms of its impact on the revenue budget and its relationship to benchmark interest rates, as shown in table 5 below.

Table 5: Performance

	Actual £m	Budget £m	Over/ under
PWLB Maturity Loan 1	15.00		
PWLB Maturity Loan 2	25.00		
PWLB Maturity Loan 3	40.00		
PWLB Maturity Loan 4	18.93		
Barclays Loan	5.00		
Total borrowing	**103.93**	**175.00**	**-71.07**
Short-term Investments	5.20	10.00	-4.80
Total treasury investments	**5.20**	**10.00**	-4.80

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MRP Regulations

3.39 On 10th April 2024 amended legislation and revised statutory guidance were published on Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The majority of the changes take effect from the 2025/26 financial year, although there is a requirement that for capital loans given on or after 7th May 2024 sufficient MRP must be charged so that the outstanding Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) in respect of the loan is no higher than the principal outstanding less the Expected Credit Loss (ECL) charge for that loan.

3.40 The regulations also require that local authorities cannot exclude any amount of their CFR from their MRP calculation unless by an exception set out in law. Capital receipts cannot be used to directly replace, in whole or part, the prudent charge to revenue for MRP (there are specific exceptions for capital loans and leased assets).

Compliance

3.41 The Director of Resources and Section 151 officer reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the quarter complied fully with the principles in the Treasury Management Code and the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy. Compliance with specific investment limits is demonstrated in table 6 below.

Table 6: Investment Limits

	2025/26 Maximum	**31.12.25 Actual**	**2025/26 Limit**	**Complied?** Yes/No
Any single organisation, except the UK Government	**£4m each**			
UK Central Government	**Unlimited**			
Unsecured investments with banks and building societies	**£2.5m in total**			
Loans to unrated corporates	**£1m in total**			
Money Market Funds	**£20m in total**	**5.2m**		Yes
Foreign countries	**£5m per country**			
Real Estate Investment Trusts	**£2.5m in total**			

3.42 Compliance with the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for external debt is demonstrated in table 7 below.

Table 7: Debt and the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary

	2025/26 Maximum	31.12.25 Actual	2025/26 Operational Boundary	2025/26 Authorised Limit	Complied? Yes/No
Borrowing	175.00	103.93	170.00	180.00	Yes
PFI and Finance Leases	1.50	0	1.50	1.50	Yes
Total debt	**176.50**	**103.93**	**171.50**	**181.50**	

3.43 Since the operational boundary is a management tool for in-year monitoring it is not significant if the operational boundary is breached on occasions due to variations in cash flow, and this is not counted as a compliance failure

Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

3.44 As required by the 2021 CIPFA Treasury Management Code, the Authority monitors and measures the following treasury management prudential indicators.

Liability Benchmark

3.45 This indicator compares the Authority's actual existing borrowing against a liability benchmark that has been calculated to show the lowest risk level of borrowing. The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. It represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level of £2m required to manage day-to-day cash flow

	31.3.25 Actual	31.3.26 Forecast	31.3.27 Forecast	31.3.28 Forecast
Loans CFR	149.26	153.79	158.21	159.98
Less: Balance sheet resources	-21.80	-22.10	-23.20	-22.90
Net loans requirement	**127.46**	**130.69**	**135.01**	**137.08**
Plus: Liquidity allowance	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20
Liability benchmark	**127.66**	**130.89**	**135.21**	**137.28**
Existing borrowing	**103.93**	**113.22**	**116.87**	**117.54**

3.46 Following on from the medium-term forecast above, the long-term liability benchmark assumes capital expenditure funded by borrowing of £118m, minimum revenue provision on new capital expenditure based on a 40-year asset life and income, expenditure and reserves all increasing by inflation of 2.0% p.a. This is shown in the chart below together with the maturity profile of the Authority's existing borrowing. Presently borrowing has been delivered through the use of internal resources and the Council has no long-term borrowing.

Maturity Structure of Borrowing

3.47 This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of all borrowing were:

	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	31.12.25 Actual	Complied?
Under 12 months	50%	0%	0%	Yes
12 months and within 24 months	50%	0%	0%	Yes
24 months and within 5 years	50%	0%	0%	Yes
5 years and within 10 years	50%	0%	0%	Yes
10 years and above	100%	0%	0%	Yes

3.46 Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

Long-term Treasury Management Investments

3.47 The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The prudential limits on the long-term treasury management limits are:

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	No fixed date
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£0.5m	£0.5m	£0.5m	£0.5m
Actual principal invested beyond year end	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Complied?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

3.48 Long-term investments with no fixed maturity date include strategic pooled funds, real estate investment trusts and directly held equity but exclude money market funds and bank accounts with no fixed maturity date as these are considered short-term.

Additional indicators

Security**:**

3.49 The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

	2025/26 Target	31.12.25 Actual	Complied?
Portfolio average credit rating	A	UK Govt	Yes

Liquidity**:**

3.50 The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three-month period, without additional borrowing.

	31.12.25 Actual	2025/26 Target	Complied?
Total cash available within 3 months	Nil	Nil	Yes
Total sum borrowed in past 3 months without prior notice	Nil	Nil	Yes

Interest Rate Exposures:

3.51 This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk.

Interest rate risk indicator	2025/26 Target	31.12.25 Actual	Complied?
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise in interest rates	500,000	0	Yes
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% fall in interest rates	500,000	0	Yes

3.52 For context, the changes in interest rates during the quarter were:

	30/09/25	31/12/25
Bank Rate	4.00%	3.75%
1-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.58%	4.37%
5-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.95%	4.78%
10-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	5.53%	5.34%
20-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	6.14%	5.88%
50-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	5.98%	5.71%

3.53 The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investment will be replaced at new market rates.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

4.1 A number of statutes governing the provision of services covered by this report contain express powers or duties to charge for services. Where an express power to charge does not exist, the Council has the power under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 to charge where the activity is incidental or conducive to or calculated to facilitate the Councils statutory function.

Service / Operational Implications

4.2 Monitoring is undertaken to ensure that income targets are achieved, with Treasury Management activities taking place on a daily basis.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

4.3 The only impact of treasury transactions is in respect of ethical investment linked to the Councils investment counterparties. Presently the Council has a limited counterparty list based on financial risk to the Authority.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 There is always significant risk in relation to treasury transactions, this is why Councils appoint Treasury advisors, which in the case of Redditch is Arlingclose. In addition, there is the requirement in this area to provide an Annual Strategy report containing indicators/limits that must be met, a quarterly update and closure report all of which must be reported to full Council.

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6. APPENDICES

None

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

MTFP 2025/26 – February 2025 which contains this year's Capital Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy and MRP Policy.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Appendix E - Procurement Pipeline

Title	Council	Contract Value £
DMIC Build	Redditch	10,000,000
Retrofit WAVE 3 Contractor	Redditch	6,000,000
Fleet Replacement	Redditch	5,895,000
Fire Safety Works Contrct - CLC Renewal	Redditch	4,500,000
Fleet Replacement	Redditch	1,950,000
Remodel - Auxerre House	Redditch	1,500,000
Civil Engineering Works	Redditch	1,500,000
Loxley Close - Development	Redditch	1,300,000
Retrofit WAVE 3 Assessor and Designer	Redditch	1,000,000
Retrofit WAVE 3 Co-ordinator	Redditch	1,000,000
Void Contract	Redditch	1,000,000
Communal Boiler Replacement	Redditch	700,000
External Staircase	Redditch	500,000
Refurbishment of the Anchorage	Redditch	500,000
Roofing Repairs and Replacement	Redditch	500,000
Nicrosoft Licences	Redditch	483,000
Fgire Alarm and Emergency Lighting Servicing, Repairs and Installation	Redditch	430,000
Commercial Heating Systems Servicing, Naintenance and Installations	Redditch	350,000
Lift Installation and Refurbishment	Redditch	300,000
Data SIMS	Redditch	300,000
Door Entry, Access Control Planned , Responsive Maintenance	Redditch	300,000
Supply of HVO Fuel	Redditch	300,000
Refuse and Recycling Products	Redditch	250,000
Fencing and Groundworks	Redditch	250,000
Vehicle Hire	Redditch	200,000
Domestic Food Collection	Joint	23,000,000
Hybrid Mail Solution - Sending Letters	Joint	2,500,000
Corporate Building Electrical Contract	Joint	2,500,000
Food Caddy Purchase and Delivery	Joint	1,300,000
Public Space CCTV Maintenance	Joint	400,000
Fire Alarm, Extinguisher Contract	Joint	380,000
Lifeline Call Handling	Joint	200,000
eFinancials RTU Extension	Joint	208,598

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Redditch Borough Council
Working together for our communities

Executive Committee

Tuesday, 21st April, 2026

MINUTES

Present:

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

Officers:

Debra Goodall, John Leach, Guy Revans and James Walton

Democratic Services Officers:

Eve Davies

124. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

125. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

126. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader extended a welcome to James Walton on his appointment as the new Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer.

Additionally, Members were asked to note that there were two agenda packs for this meeting, the contents of which were clarified.

127. MINUTES

Prior to consideration of the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 17th March 2026, the Leader announced that there was additional wording provided by the Interim Section 151 Officer following the publication of these minutes. It was suggested that the following wording be included for the Quarter 3 2025/26 Finance Monitoring Report:

- Paragraph four – ‘In particular, reference was made to pressures within the Housing Revenue Account relating to the ability to fast track expenditure on fire doors, which represented a Health and Safety requirement it was noted this

was an area for review the outcome of which would be reported to members in due course.'

- Paragraph seven – 'Reassurance was provided that service pressure requests affecting the current years financial position had been included within the new budget and that additional financial resources had been made available identified to support capacity in capital delivery if required.'

RESOLVED that

subject to the amendment detailed in the preamble above, the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 17th March 2026 be approved.

128. VAT RECOVERY UPDATED POSITION

The Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer presented the VAT Recovery Updated Position report for the Executive Committee's consideration.

The report set out the current position in relation to longstanding VAT issues affecting both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils. Members were advised that, between April 2021 and October 2024, the Council had been unable to submit periodic VAT returns for a number of reasons, including:

- Incorrect configuration of the cash receipting back office.
- Incorrect inter-entity processing within the TechOne Enterprise Resource Planning system.
- Incorrect payment and bank statement file processing.
- Failure to align work processes with the configuration of the TechOne VAT module.
- Staff turnover and a consequent period of lack of internal VAT expertise.
- Weak reconciliation processes.

The Committee was informed that an approach had been agreed with His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) whereby the Council would submit nil returns for each outstanding period, followed by Error Correction Notices to reflect the returns that ought to have been submitted. It was noted that required reconciliations were being processed manually.

Officers reported that a repayment of £20,616,650 had been received from HMRC which, once offset against existing payments made, resulted in an overall net cash gain of £19,889,753 to the

Council. While the improvement in the Council's cash position was welcomed, Members were advised that the underlying accounting transactions had already been recognised in the relevant prior financial years.

In respect of penalties, the Committee was notified that HMRC had agreed to suspend the financial penalties that would normally be applied in the event an organisation failed to submit timely and accurate VAT returns. This suspension was subject to the Council meeting a number of specified conditions, which were outlined to Members. As part of the proposed arrangements, it was requested that the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee provide oversight to ensure the appropriate delivery of those conditions.

Members were also updated on the Council's current VAT return process. It was reported that monthly VAT returns were now being submitted on time and that independent reviews of each return were undertaken prior to submission. The results of these reviews were presented to the Section 151 Officer or Deputy Section 151 Officer to confirm agreement to submit the return. Escalation procedures and sanctions were in place should these controls not be followed. Members were reassured that these arrangements represented a strengthened control environment and increased organisational resilience.

In concluding the presentation, officers summarised that the VAT position had been rectified, the Council had received substantial repayment from HMRC, and improved statutory compliance was now in place.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance welcomed the report and commented that the outcome would significantly reduce risk in both the short and long term, while also increasing confidence in financial projections for future years. He expressed his personal thanks to the Finance team for their work.

During consideration of the item, a question was raised regarding the length of time taken for VAT to be recovered from HMRC, given that returns had been submitted in December 2024. Officers explained that, due to the substantial sums involved, HMRC had undertaken extensive assurance checks. In addition, much of the VAT return process was manual, which required significant work to respond to HMRC queries and provide the necessary evidence. It was therefore clarified that completing the assurance process was inherently time-consuming.

The Committee also placed on record its thanks to the System Implementation Support Consultant in recognition of his contribution in assisting the Council to resolve the VAT issues.

RESOLVED that

1) The resolutions of the outstanding VAT matters be noted;

2) The net cash gain position of £19,889,753 recovered by the Council following the HMRC repayment £20,616,650 received on the 3rd April 2026 offset by payments and receipts already made and received to/from HMRC of £726,897 be noted;

3) The mitigation of the cashflow risk be noted and the corporate risk register duly updated to reflect the positive change to the Council's cash holding position;

4) The penalty suspension conditions with HMRC be noted; and

5) The Audit committee is requested to maintain oversight of the delivery of the actions to satisfy the agreed penalty suspension conditions.

129. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16th March 2026 and in doing so noted that there were no outstanding recommendations requiring consideration on this occasion.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16th March 2026 be noted.

130. 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.

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

There was no urgent business for discussion at the meeting.

132. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that

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

• Minute Item No. 133 – HRA Business Plan Update to Enhance the Delivery of the Housing Improvement Plan

133. HRA BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE TO ENHANCE THE DELIVERY OF THE HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Executive Director for Environment and Communities presented the HRA Business Plan Update to Enhance the Delivery of the Housing Improvement Plan report.

The Committee was reminded that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was a ring-fenced account, primarily funded through rental income and associated service charges. In February 2023, the Executive had approved a thirty-year HRA Business Plan which established the long-term framework for managing and investing in social housing stock. The long-term capital forecasts within the plan had been informed by an independent Stock Condition Survey.

It was reported that Redditch Borough Council had received its regulatory judgement in July 2025 and had been issued with a C3 rating, indicating that substantial improvements were required. The judgement identified significant areas of weakness, including outstanding fire safety remedial actions, backlogs in repairs, gaps in transparency and oversight of performance reporting, and the absence of effective tenant scrutiny arrangements. Officers explained that these findings demonstrated the need for an

accelerated approach to delivering the Council's Housing Improvement Plan.

Members were updated that Savills UK Limited had been commissioned to review the HRA Business Plan to identify any immediate headroom for additional investment, with a focus on expediting high-priority safety works, and to explore options for future growth.

Officers expressed the view that refreshing the Business Plan, followed by annual reviews, would provide the opportunity to increase investment. It was explained that income growth remained dependent on effective rent policy implementation, rent collection and the management of voids and arrears, all of which would be key considerations in future reviews of the Business Plan.

Members were also advised that refreshed data from rolling stock condition surveys would inform future planning. Given that a number of HRA loans were due to mature in the near future, scenario planning was required to manage these risks effectively.

The Committee was then informed of the next steps moving forward. Savills UK Limited would use a revised financial modelling tool to optimise affordable borrowing in order to accelerate delivery of the plan, expedite fire remediation works, and increase the size of the HRA's housing portfolio. A review of options would be undertaken to identify headroom and capacity to respond to repairs and maintenance demands. The aim was to accelerate the delivery of affordable social housing while maintaining regulatory compliance.

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

- The Portfolio Holder for Housing thanked the Executive Director for Environment and Communities for securing the value for money report from Savills UK Limited and welcomed the measures being taken to protect the HRA. It was noted that the Council held a unanimous position in support of the HRA and that Redditch Borough Council was the only authority in the county to have one.
- Members discussed the key highlights of the report.
- It was noted that a loan repayment of fifteen million pounds was due in 2027, reinforcing the need to invest in property acquisition to generate additional income. This would also increase the supply of homes for residents on the housing

register, with Members emphasising the importance of providing long-term, safe and warm housing for residents.

- Members highlighted the need for wider education to improve understanding of the HRA and the associated debt position. While the level of borrowing could appear high, it was noted that the HRA generated approximately twenty-six million pounds in income annually.
- Members welcomed the standard of the report from Savills UK Limited.
- It was noted that the Council would need to report to the Strategic Authority that it had a clear plan for delivering new homes.
- Members queried whether officers felt there was flexibility in the local housing market to act quickly. Officers stated that the Strategic Housing team believed this was the best approach to increase housing stock.
- Members expressed the view that the Regulator would regard the report positively, particularly in terms of strengthened governance arrangements.
- Members asked how costs would be controlled and how capacity would be increased to secure external funding. Officers confirmed that robust budget management was in place and acknowledged wider sector pressures, particularly rising repair costs.
- Further questions were raised regarding internal cost-control mechanisms and the identification of potential “quick wins”. Officers advised that an Internal Audit review of the Housing service was scheduled for later in 2026 and that this issue could be included within its scope. It was also noted that the Total Mobile system would provide improved data, including schedules of rates and quantities, to support stronger oversight.
- Clarification was sought on assumptions within the thirty-year plan regarding roof replacements. Officers confirmed that survey work had been undertaken and that the majority of roofs were identified to require repair or no work rather than complete replacement. This work formed part of the rolling stock condition survey programme, which would provide improved insight into future maintenance requirements.
- Members queried the robustness and flexibility of the financial modelling. Assurance was provided that officers were confident in the work undertaken by Savills UK Limited, although flexibility within the model would be reviewed

further, particularly in light of the current geopolitical and economic climate.

- Members requested clarification as to why HRA debt could be viewed positively. Officers explained that HRA borrowing funded asset acquisition or creation, enabling the Council to grow both its housing stock and income. New properties were expected to have lower maintenance costs, while additional rental income would enable further investment in existing stock. The Section 151 Officer added that the durability of the income stream offset the associated borrowing risk, highlighting the balance between risk and opportunity.
- Changes to the Right to Buy scheme were discussed, with Members noting that lower discounts and longer qualifying periods were likely to reduce future applications. The Council had received an initial increase in requests following the announcement of the changes.
- Members commented that significant changes had occurred since the original Business Plan was approved and welcomed the proposed review as a positive step toward achieving objectives more quickly.
- Members queried progress in relation to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) standards. Officers advised that an ongoing programme of improvement was in place, with progress being made, and that external funding was being sought to accelerate delivery where possible.
- The Committee welcomed the review of the Business Plan, noting that it was particularly appropriate given the C3 regulatory judgement, the Housing Improvement Plan, staffing changes, and increased investment. Members agreed that this represented a further step toward ensuring tenants lived in safe, high-quality homes.

RECOMMENDED that

1) The 30 year HRA Business Plan and associated Financial Model are reviewed, updated and as appropriate recalculated utilising modelling that ensures the Council's Housing Stock Portfolio is able to benefit from and perform to the highest standards possible;

2) The high-level findings and risks identified in the report are reviewed and a revised HRA Business Plan is included in a future report; and

3) An annual review of the HRA Business Plan is undertaken and reported to Council.

(During the 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 relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 7.26 pm

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Agenda Annex

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

Document is Restricted

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee 21st April 2026

HRA Business Plan Update to Enhance the Delivery of the Housing Improvement Plan

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Hartnett and Councillor Woodall (*Councillors Hartnett and Woodall were the relevant Portfolio Holders on the date of the Executive Committee meeting*)
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Simon Parry
Report Author	Job Title: Simon Parry Contact email: simon.parry@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 3201	
Wards Affected		ALL
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		No
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.		
This report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph(s) 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee RECOMMEND that: -

1) **The 30 year HRA Business Plan and associated Financial Model are reviewed, updated and as appropriate recalculated utilising modelling that ensures the Council's Housing Stock Portfolio is able to benefit from and perform to the highest standards possible.**
2) **The high-level findings and risks identified in the report are reviewed and a revised HRA Business Plan is included in a future report.**
3) **An annual review of the HRA Business Plan is undertaken and reported to Council.**

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a ring-fenced account used to manage the Council's landlord activities and is funded primarily through rental income and associated service charges, which must be spent for the benefit of council housing tenants. While legislation prevents direct subsidy flowing between the General Fund and the HRA, a

well-understood, lawful and balanced relationship between the two remains important and mutually beneficial, supporting effective corporate governance, value for money and the sustainable delivery of council services.

2.2 In February 2023, Executive approved a 30-year HRA Business Plan, which set out the Council's long-term approach to the management, maintenance and investment of its social housing stock. The Business Plan provided the strategic and financial framework for delivering landlord services, maintaining financial sustainability, and supporting a planned programme of capital investment.

2.3 The Business Plan was developed alongside a refreshed HRA Asset Management Strategy, ensuring that investment decisions were informed by stock condition data and aligned to the Council's objectives for providing homes that are safe, warm and of a good standard. This was reflected through the Council's five-year Housing Capital Programme.

2.4 Long-term capital forecasts within the 30-year Business Plan were informed by an independent Stock Condition Survey undertaken in 2019/20, covering the Council's housing stock, garages and parking sites. The survey concluded that the housing stock was generally in a reasonable state of repair, with relatively low levels of immediate 'catch-up' work required. However, it also identified the need for continued and sustained investment over the life of the Business Plan to maintain standards and address longer-term asset condition.

2.5 The Business Plan was underpinned by a series of financial and operational assumptions, including:

- Changes in stock numbers, right-to-buy levels and voids.
- Rent and service charge increases.
- Management and maintenance costs; and
- Borrowing costs associated with capital investment requirements.

2.6 These assumptions were designed to be reviewed, with appropriate HRA reserves maintained to provide resilience against cost pressures or changes in circumstances. In line with best practice, business plans are based on long term assumptions, refreshing these assumptions regularly in the light of actual or changing events is critical.

2.7 Considering strengthened regulatory requirements, the expectations set out within the Council's Housing Improvement Plan, and the fact

that the HRA Business Plan is now three years old, it is both prudent and necessary to undertake a review to assess opportunities to accelerate the delivery of actions identified through the Improvement Plan. This will support improved service delivery and ensure residents are kept safe in line with the Council's legislative, compliance and regulatory obligations.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 The housing sector has undergone significant change in recent years, particularly from a regulatory perspective. This includes the strengthening of the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) and the introduction of increased legislative requirements, driven largely by the response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy and subsequent reforms to building safety and consumer regulation.

3.3 As part of these reforms, the Regulator now has enhanced powers to proactively inspect social housing providers. Redditch Borough Council received its regulatory judgement in July 2025, at which point it was issued with a C3 rating. A C3 rating means that "there are serious failings in the landlord's delivery of the outcomes of the consumer standards and significant improvement is required".

3.4 The regulatory judgement identified significant areas of weakness, including outstanding fire safety remedial actions, backlogs in repairs, gaps in transparency and oversight of performance reporting, and the absence of effective tenant scrutiny arrangements. These findings highlight the need for a clear, credible and accelerated approach to delivering the Council's Housing Improvement Plan and restoring regulatory assurance. The relationship between the major repairs programme and the capital programme is critical to securing best value. Effective alignment ensures that investment decisions are planned in a co-ordinated way, preventing duplication, avoiding abortive revenue spend, and targeting resources where they deliver the greatest whole-life benefit. By coordinating major repairs with planned capital works, the Council can optimise asset condition, extend component lifecycles, improve long-term value for money, and ensure that limited resources are deployed strategically rather than reactively.

3.5 Refreshing the Business Plan provides the opportunity to review whether the HRA can prudently and sustainably support additional borrowing, accelerate delivery of new council homes where viable, and increase investment in existing properties to address stock condition

and compliance issues, improve energy efficiency and long-term asset sustainability and ensure ongoing compliance with current and emerging regulation.

3.6 The updated assumptions reflected in this report have been tested against Long-term HRA affordability and sustainability Impacts on rents and service charges; Exposure to financial risk, including interest rate movements and inflation; and Alignment with the Council's capital and treasury strategies.

3.7 To undertake this work the Council commissioned sector experts Savills UK Limited. To consider the business plan in 2 phases

1) to identify immediate potential headroom for investment to expedite the housing improvement plans focussed on high priority safety works

2) to explore the scope for future growth in housing stock through a full review of capital financing options.

3.8 This review has two objectives:

(i) to secure a sound and efficient approach to the £15million repayment of the subsidy debt, due in March 2027

(ii) to maximise capacity for additional stock via a low-risk growth strategy the focus is on low-risk, high-value delivery options. This includes prioritising Section 106 acquisitions and limiting exposure to open-market sales, which reduces financial risk and market dependency. The approach also maximises flexibility in tenure mix, allowing homes to be allocated across social rent, affordable rent, or other tenures as needs change. This ensures the Council can respond effectively to the greatest housing pressures while maintaining value for money and delivery confidence.

3.9 Following a review of the 2022/23 Redditch HRA Business Planning financial model, Savills have produced a report (Appendix 1) utilising their own model thereby recreating the plan using an agreed combination of assumptions, with the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) providing the basis for the majority of these. This report presents important findings and risks at a high level. A summary is provided below, with further details included in the Executive Summary starting on page 2 of Appendix 1.

3.10 *Overview of Key Themes and Issues*

3.10.1 Financial Viability and Assumptions

The HRA business plan was originally assessed as viable and capable of supporting modest growth without additional borrowing. However, since the baseline was established, there have been significant changes in the economic climate, housing regulation, building safety expectations and energy standards. These changes place increased pressure on the plan and require a more dynamic approach to financial modelling, with regular refreshes to ensure assumptions remain realistic and affordable in practice.

3.10.2 Income Growth, Rent Policy and Collection Risk

The plan assumes that rental and other income streams grow at a faster rate than operating costs over the full 30-year period. Operationally, this places increased importance on effective rent setting decisions, robust rent collection performance, and active management of voids and arrears.

Key income risks relate to the implementation of rent convergence, the use of rent flexibilities on re-lets, and the accuracy of assumptions around void loss and bad debt provision. While these offer opportunities to strengthen HRA income, they also require clear policy decisions, system capability, and ongoing monitoring to ensure that assumed income levels are achievable and sustainable.

3.10.3 Service Charges and Cost Recovery

Service charge income is assumed to increase significantly in the medium term as services are better identified and recharged. Operationally, it is necessary to enhance cost allocation, maintain transparent communication with tenants and leaseholders, and demonstrate that charges are both reasonable and recoverable. There are also opportunities to review discretionary services currently funded through the HRA and consider whether separate charging would improve fairness and maximise income recovery.

3.10.4 Stock Investment, Compliance and Data Quality

The level of capital investment assumed for the existing stock is lower than sector benchmarks and is currently based on outdated stock

condition information. This creates operational risk, particularly as the Council responds to ongoing regulatory changes, and wider consumer regulation expectations. Until stock condition data is refreshed and compliance requirements are fully quantified, there remains uncertainty around the true scale, timing and prioritisation of investment needed, increasing the risk of reactive rather than planned intervention. The model and initial review were based on stock condition data from 2020 surveys, since then a rolling programme of surveys have been undertaken and refreshed data will be used in the next phase of this review.

3.10.5 Borrowing Profile and Refinancing Exposure

The HRA benefits from historically low interest rates on existing borrowing; however, loans begin to mature from 2027 onwards. Operationally, this creates a refinancing risk that is not fully reflected in the current plan. Given limited capacity to repay principal at maturity, future borrowing is likely to be at higher rates, which could place pressure on revenue budgets and investment capacity unless mitigated through early planning and scenario testing.

3.10.6 Depreciation Policy and Revenue Flexibility

While day-to-day management and repairs costs remain broadly in line with sector benchmarks, the Council's approach to depreciation results in a relatively high transfer of resources into the Major Repairs Reserve. A review of depreciation policy could allow greater discretion in how revenue resources are deployed, particularly to manage emerging pressures or support delivery of priority works.

3.10.7 Development Programme Delivery and Risk Management

The development programme included in the MTFP improves the long-term position of the HRA, provided it is delivered within cost and timescale assumptions. In the early years of the plan, borrowing levels are relatively high against indicative prudential benchmarks, increasing the importance of strong project management, cost control, and delivery discipline.

There is potential to accelerate delivery, particularly if Homes England grant funding is secured, but this would require careful consideration of additional borrowing in a high interest-rate environment. Similarly, an acquisition-based strategy would increase stock levels in advance on land-based developments undertaken by the Council.

3.11 The next stage of the HRA Business Plan review will explicitly consider the range of options identified above to maximise borrowing headroom and investment capacity. This will include the impact of rent convergence and available flexibilities, a review of asset lives, and the integration and alignment between the capital programme, major works and responsive repairs. These options will be assessed alongside the potential move towards component accounting, ensuring that depreciation more accurately reflects asset performance and supports longer-term financial sustainability.

3.12 In parallel, the review will incorporate a clear investment strategy that prioritises acquisition in the early years of the Business Plan, followed by a shift towards land-led development in later years. This phased approach is intended to deliver the greatest impact on housing growth and investment delivery, enabling the Council to increase stock numbers quickly in the short term while building capacity for more complex development activity over time.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The objective of the next stage is to apply, subject to approval, a new financial modelling tool, with specialist support, where required, to optimise the profile of affordable borrowing within the HRA. This will seek to increase borrowing headroom for investment in the early years of the Plan, when delivery pressures are most acute, while smoothing the current exponential rise in headroom projected in later years. This approach will support earlier delivery of priority investment, provide greater financial resilience, and strengthen the overall deliverability of the Housing Improvement Plan and growth ambitions.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 In November 2020, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) issued guidance on the operation of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) ring-fence. The guidance emphasised the need for fairness to both tenants and council taxpayers, with costs apportioned transparently and appropriately between the HRA and the General Fund.

5.2 The Localism Act 2011 reformed council housing finance by ending the former HRA subsidy system and introducing self-financing

arrangements, enabling local authorities to retain rental income to support the management and investment of council housing.

5.3 The removal of the HRA borrowing cap in October 2018 provided local authorities with greater flexibility to borrow against future rental income, subject to compliance with the CIPFA Prudential Code, ensuring borrowing remains affordable, prudent and sustainable.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

6.1 Housing functions remain statutory (homelessness, allocations, landlord duties for stockholding councils). For councils with HRAs, the HRA and landlord obligations continue, similarly Consumer regulation continues regardless of LGR with The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) inspecting and issuing judgements under the new regime.

Relevant Council Priority

6.2 Accelerating delivery will support the Council Plan objectives, strengthen long-term income generation within the Housing Revenue Account, and increase the supply of good-quality, affordable homes for local residents. The immediate priority is to speed up delivery of the Housing Improvement Plan, with clear emphasis on essential health and safety works, including fire safety remedial actions. Once these critical risks are addressed and the position is stabilised, the Council will be able to move forward confidently into a programme of sustainable housing growth.

6.3 Key housing-related activities and commitments within the Council Plan include:

- *Increasing the supply of council and affordable homes* to reduce housing waiting lists and meet local need, including delivering new homes directly and making best use of existing stock.
- *Ensuring homes are safe, warm and well-maintained**,*** with a strong focus on compliance with building safety requirements, fire safety, and emerging legislation such as Awaab's Law.

- *Tackling damp and mould proactively,* with investment already committed ahead of legislative requirements to improve health, safety and living conditions for tenants.
- *Improving the quality and condition of existing housing stock,* supported by sustained capital investment, planned maintenance programmes and evidence-led asset management.

Climate Change Implications

6.4 The Council continues to invest in improving the energy efficiency of its existing housing stock, supported by secured Government funding, including Warm Homes programmes. This investment supports national objectives to improve energy performance, reduce fuel poverty and contribute towards long-term net zero targets.

6.5 Ongoing programmes include upgrades to heating systems, electrical installations and lighting, alongside works to improve insulation and thermal performance. These measures will reduce carbon emissions, lower energy consumption and improve comfort and affordability for tenants, particularly those experiencing fuel poverty.

6.6 New council homes delivered through the housing growth programme will be built to high energy-efficiency standards and will utilise low-carbon heating solutions, supporting wider climate change commitments.

6.7 Improving the energy efficiency of council homes is central to tackling fuel poverty, reducing household energy bills and improving tenants' quality of life, while also supporting the Council's Climate Change Strategy and carbon reduction ambitions.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.8 The findings from opportunities identified through a review of the HRA Business Plan, which may create headroom and thus facilitate investment in new or existing stock, will result in an Equality Impact Assessment being conducted.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 This report does not introduce any new or additional risk. Rather, the proposed review of the HRA Business Plan is intended to proactively identify and mitigate a range of existing and emerging risks, including

financial sustainability, regulatory compliance, data quality, and the Council's capacity to deliver its Housing Improvement Plan effectively.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1- Savills HRA Business Plan Review Report

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee 21st April 2026

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Woodall Cllr Hartnett	1/4/2026
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Guy Revans	10/4/2026
Financial Services	Julie Lorraine	10/4/2026
Legal Services	Sarah Sellars	1/4/2026
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	N/A	
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	N/A	

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Redditch Borough Council
Working together for our communities

Executive Committee

Tuesday, 9th June, 2026

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer (Chair), Councillor Craig Warhurst (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Brandon Clayton, Gemma Monaco and Ashley Monk

Officers:

Neil Batt, Jess Bayley-Hill, Amanda Delahunty, Rachel Egan, Jonathan Elger, Georgina Harris, John Leach, Helen Mole, Katie Sharp-Fisher and Judith Willis

Democratic Services Officers:

Eve Davies

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillor Wanda King.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader asked Members to note that at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8th June 2026, Members had pre-scrutinised the following items:

- Minute Item no. 7 - Shared Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2026-2031
- Minute Item no. 14 - Quarter 4 Update and 2026/27 Housing Improvement Plan
- Minute Item no. 13 - Q4 2025-26 Housing Performance incorporating Tenant Satisfaction Measures Results
- Minute Item no. 17 - Construction of Redditch Innovation Centre

Following their discussions, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had endorsed the recommendations contained within the reports.

Chair

In addition, amendments to the recommendations for the 'Construction of Redditch Innovation Centre' report had been proposed which were contained within the 'Additional Papers 2' pack.

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

4. 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.

5. SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

The Principal Democratic Services Officer presented the Shareholders Committee Annual Report 2025/26.

The Committee was advised that it was a constitutional requirement for the Shareholders Committee, as a sub-committee of Executive Committee, to produce an annual report.

It was noted that a draft version of the report had been considered at a meeting of the Shareholders Committee in April 2026. Feedback had been provided at that meeting, with Members requesting additional information on work delivered by Rubicon Leisure during the previous year in line with the business plan, as well as the inclusion of further images. These amendments had been incorporated into the final version of the report presented.

The Principal Democratic Services Officer explained that, subject to any comments from the Committee, the report would be presented at the next Council meeting by the former Chair of the Shareholders Committee, Councillor Sharon Harvey.

In considering the report, a query was raised regarding the historical structure of the Shareholders Committee, which had previously been a cross-party Committee reporting to Council. Members were advised that, following a review of the governance structure and the seeking of external legal advice, it had been determined that the Shareholders Committee should operate as a sub-committee of the Executive Committee in line with best practice. Reassurance was provided that Group Leaders would

continue to be invited to attend Shareholders Committee meetings and participate in debates if they so wished.

RECOMMENDED that

the Shareholders Committee Annual Report 2025/26 be noted.

6. APPOINTMENTS TO THE SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE 2026/27

The Principal Democratic Services Officer presented a report on appointments to the Shareholders Committee 2026/27.
The Committee was advised that, as the Shareholders Committee was a sub-committee of the Executive Committee, it was their responsibility to appoint Members to serve on the Committee, including the appointment of a Chair and Vice-Chair. Only members of the Executive Committee could be appointed.

RESOLVED that

1) **The following Councillors be appointed to serve on the Shareholders Committee during the 2026/27 municipal year:**

    - **Councillor Brandon Clayton**
    - **Councillor Matthew Dormer**
    - **Councillor Gemma Monaco**
    - **Councillor Ashley Monk**
    - **Councillor Craig Warhurst**

2) **Councillor Matthew Dormer be appointed as the Chair of the Shareholders Committee in the 2026/27 municipal year; and**

3) **Councillor Gemma Monaco be appointed as the Vice Chair of the Shareholders Committee in the 2026/27 municipal year.**

7. SHARED HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2026-2031

The Housing Development and Strategy Manager presented a report on the Shared Homelessness Strategy for 2026-2031.

It was highlighted that an earlier version of the Action Plan had been included in the report in error. Members were advised that the correct version of the Action Plan was also contained within the

report and it was clarified which version they were being asked to approve.

The Committee was informed that Redditch Borough Council had worked in partnership with Bromsgrove District Council, Malvern Hills District Council, Wychavon District Council and Wyre Forest District Council to develop the strategy. It was noted that the Homelessness Act 2002 required all housing authorities to have a homelessness and rough sleeping strategy in place, based on a review of all forms of homelessness within their area.

Members were advised that a consultation had been undertaken and that the responses received had been considered and incorporated where appropriate.

In relation to measurable outcomes, the Committee was informed that the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government had provided the required metrics for the Local Outcomes Framework. The core outcome measures were outlined as:

- The rate of households with children in temporary accommodation (per 1,000 households)
- The number of families in Bed & Breakfast accommodation for over six weeks
- The percentage of duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved
- The number of people sleeping rough on a single night
- The number of people sleeping rough over the month who were long-term rough sleepers

The financial implications of the strategy were outlined and it was explained that the new Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant would provide funding to support delivery. The Committee was advised that a separate report had already been presented to Members detailing spending priorities for the subsequent three years.

It was reiterated that the Council had a statutory duty under the Homelessness Act 2002 to produce a homelessness strategy, alongside compliance with the Homelessness Reduction Act, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and the Renters Right Act 2025.

In considering the context of Local Government Reorganisation, Members were reassured that the strategy had been developed to be adaptable for incorporation into either one or two unitary

authorities, pending the development of a new single strategy based on a fresh homelessness review as required by the Homelessness Code of Guidance.

An Equality Impact Assessment had been completed, which demonstrated a positive outcome, and it was reported that officers would continue to monitor impacts to ensure no adverse effects arose.

Members were advised that failure to approve the strategy would result in the Council not being legally compliant and could lead to potential increased use of bed and breakfast accommodation, higher levels of rough sleeping within the Borough, and negative impacts on physical and mental health, educational attainment and residents' ability to work.

RECOMMENDED that

The Shared Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2031 be approved.

8. QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Performance and Improvement Manager presented a report on Quarter Four performance.

The Committee was informed that a stable position had been reported for the quarter. The key highlights were outlined, including that one hundred per cent of major planning applications had been determined, there had been improvements in housing pressures and fly-tipping response rates had remained operationally stable. Areas identified for continued focus included recycling rates and complaints.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance welcomed the progress made and advised that, moving forward, there would be a greater focus on driving improvement in Council Tax collection and Business Rates. Concerns were raised that, whilst fly-tipping incidents had increased, enforcement activity had decreased, and it was noted that further work was required in relation to enforcement action.

In considering the report, Members also noted that it contained a typographical error, which referred to the previous Portfolio Holder as having been consulted.

RESOLVED that

The overview of Quarter 4 performance for the period January to March 2026 against the Council Plan priorities be noted.

9. ENFORCEMENT AND CIVIL PENALTIES NOTICES POLICY

The Private Sector Housing Manager presented a report on the Enforcement and Civil Penalty Notice Policy.

The Committee was advised that the aim of the policy was to improve housing standards across the Borough by establishing a proportionate and robust approach. It was noted that the policy applied solely to private sector housing and did not extend to housing stock owned by Redditch Borough Council.

Members were informed that the policy aligned with national best practice to ensure consistency with other local authorities across England and covered areas including housing standards, landlord behaviour, illegal eviction and harassment and the regulation of Houses in Multiple Occupation. In line with the Regulator's expectations, the policy took into account risk, harm and tenant vulnerability, as well as evidential standards. The objective was to ensure consistency in officer decision-making, improve housing standards across the Borough and reduce health and safety risks, whilst ensuring that any enforcement action taken was legally robust and defensible.

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

- Members welcomed the use of civil penalties outlined in the policy.
- Queries were raised regarding capacity and resources for the collection of fines, including whether additional support would be required from the Finance Team. Officers advised that civil penalty processes were already established, as fines had been collected for a number of years, and that the policy extended the scope for issuing penalties. It was confirmed that legislation was in place to address unpaid fines through escalation procedures. Officers clarified that no additional resources were anticipated to be required.
- A typographical error relating to the named Portfolio Holder within the report was identified and noted for correction.
- Concerns were raised regarding the potential impact on the private rented sector, including whether the policy might

discourage landlords and increase pressure on Council housing stock. Officers advised that this concern had been raised with central Government and reassured Members that enforcement would not be targeted at minor infractions, but rather at landlords who persistently failed to comply with legislation and placed tenants at risk.

- Members expressed concern that the service should not be perceived as being driven by income generation through fines. Officers confirmed that no targets would be set and that the Council would not be financially disadvantaged if no fines were issued. It was reiterated that the purpose of the policy was to ensure landlord compliance and to protect tenants. The Chief Executive added that the intention was to raise housing standards while supporting responsible landlords.
- The process for identifying non-compliant landlords. Officers advised that a national landlord database was being introduced, alongside proactive annual inspections, intelligence gathering and external referrals to identify landlords who were not registered. It was noted that it would be important to promote available support so that residents were aware of how to seek assistance where required.
- Members queried the level of funding expected from central Government. Officers explained that New Burdens Funding had been provided to support preparation for the new legislation, including computer system updates, staff training and administrative changes. It remained unclear whether any further funding would be made available; however, officers advised that income from civil penalties was expected to offset additional costs. It was further noted that, once teams were fully trained, no further funding would be required unless there was a significant and unanticipated increase in workload.

RESOLVED that

1) **The Private Sector Housing Enforcement and Civil Penalty Policy be approved and delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director Community & Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to update the Policy in line with any legislative or government guidance updates.**

RECOMMENDED that

2) The Scheme of Delegations be amended to incorporate: -

a. Enforcement powers under the Renters Rights Act 2025 in accordance with the wording set out in Appendix 2

b. Enforcement powers under the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Sector (England) Regulations 2020 and under Section 126 and Schedule 9 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 as set out in Appendix 3

10. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION SERVICE DELIVERY

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund Manager presented a report on Economic Development and Regeneration Service Delivery.

The Executive Committee was informed that business support and employment initiatives had previously been funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). However, the Council had received its final allocation for 2025/26 and no replacement funding had been forthcoming, resulting in a lack of external funding for economic development activities.

It was reported that the Council held an earmarked reserve for Economic Growth, with a balance of £841,000 as at 31st March 2026. Of this, £300,000 had already been allocated within the budget to continue delivery of the Innovation Lighthouse business support programme, leaving a balance of £541,000 available which could be used to support the continuation of business support and Youth Hub activity in Redditch.

Given the absence of replacement UKSPF funding, officers had been engaging with Worcestershire County Council and the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (WLEP) to explore options for the continued delivery of services.

Members were advised that officers were of the view that the proposed use of earmarked reserves to fund economic development and regeneration activity through Worcestershire Growth Hub and the Redditch Youth Hub represented good value for money. It was also noted that discussions with WLEP in relation to the Betaden programme were ongoing and subject to negotiation.

Following presentation of the report, Members had detailed discussion on a number of points:

- It was queried how many businesses had accessed the Betaden programme. Officers advised that six businesses had used the service over the previous three years, with five of those businesses registering for the Incubate programme.
- Members questioned whether there were projections for the number of young people who would be supported by the Youth Hub. Officers reported that 493 young people had been supported since its launch in April 2024 and that numbers were expected to increase, particularly as an outreach programme was to be funded. It was noted that youth unemployment was rising, and additional resources were therefore being recommended. Discussion also took place regarding targeting support, with clarification that this related to the level of intervention required to support individuals into employment. Officers would ensure that the intended level of support would be clearly defined within funding agreements and reported back to Members.
- Members welcomed that the funding would be utilised within the Borough to support local residents.

RESOLVED that

1) Earmarked reserves be released to fund economic development and regeneration activities as follows:
   a. Worcestershire Growth Hub - £140,000
   b. Redditch Youth Hub - £120,000

2) Up to £70,000 of earmarked reserves be released to fund the Betaden programme with authority to agree the final contribution and associated outputs delegated to the Assistant Director for Regeneration and Property Services following consultation with the Leader of the Council.

11. HOUSING TENANT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

The Neighbourhood and Tenancy Manager presented a report on the Housing Tenant Engagement Policy.

The Committee was advised that the policy was intended for tenants and leaseholders of Redditch Borough Council. It was reported that a restructure within the Housing Team had taken place in the previous year, resulting in the establishment of a Tenant Experience Team. This team would work collaboratively with the wider housing service to facilitate constructive engagement, provide information to tenants and liaise with the Regulator of Social Housing.

Members were informed that the aim of the policy was to increase tenant engagement. This would include enabling tenants to review policies, contribute to the development of strategies, consider the outcomes of significant complaints and participate in meetings. The approach sought to maximise opportunities for tenants to engage with the housing service, with proactive feedback being gathered to inform service improvement.

A focus on transparency and accountability was highlighted. It was noted that, whilst the Council already undertook a range of engagement activities, these had largely been ad hoc. The introduction of the policy would support a more structured approach and enable improved data collection regarding engagement activity and outcomes.

The Committee was informed that the policy represented a starting point for the development of a broader engagement strategy, which engaged tenants would help to shape. It was noted that tenant engagement was a regulatory requirement; however, the Council was also committed to this approach as a means of driving service improvement and positive change.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Local Services commented that the policy represented a positive step forward in strengthening tenant engagement.

The Chair requested that officers ensure efforts were made to engage with a representative cross-section of residents from across the Borough.

RECOMMENDED that

1) The Tenant Engagement Policy be approved and delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director Community & Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to update the Policy in line with any recommendations arising from consultation with tenants and legislative or government guidance updates.

12. ANNUAL HOUSING COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT

The Neighbourhood and Tenancy Manager presented the Annual Housing Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report.

Members' attention was drawn to the self-assessment form submitted to the Housing Ombudsman, which was used to assess the Council's progress. It was explained that approval was being sought to amend the Complaints Policy in response to feedback received from the Housing Ombudsman.

The Committee was advised that all local authorities registered as providers of social housing were required to be members of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme and to maintain robust complaints handling systems. The Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report was a mandatory requirement to demonstrate compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. Officers emphasised the importance of being open and transparent with both tenants and the Housing Ombudsman, providing an honest self-assessment to ensure fairness, consistency and the appropriate handling of complaints.

Members were informed that officers were continually reviewing practices and embedding learning from complaint outcomes to improve service delivery. It was acknowledged that, where issues arose, these would be addressed to prevent recurrence. The Neighbourhood and Tenancy Manager noted that complaints could be viewed positively as they provided valuable feedback to inform service improvements.

The report outlined the number of complaints received during 2025/26 and provided a breakdown of these cases. It was noted that response times had improved, although further improvement was required. The report also detailed the learning outcomes from serious complaints and it was emphasised that complaints handling should operate in conjunction with tenant engagement activity.

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

- Concerns were raised regarding increases in several key complaint indicators, including Stage One complaints received, complaints escalated to Stage Two, Stage One complaints upheld and Housing Ombudsman requests. Officers advised that improvements had been made to the Council's website to support residents in submitting complaints and additional information on the complaints process was being included in correspondence. It was clarified that these changes had made it easier for tenants to raise complaints. It was also noted that there was now a

clearer understanding of the distinction between service requests and formal complaints.

- A query was raised regarding benchmarking with other local authorities. Members requested information on the national median for Stage One complaints. Officers advised that this information would be provided following the meeting.
- The nature of complaints received was discussed. Members were informed that the highest proportion of complaints related to repairs and maintenance, followed by issues concerning anti-social behaviour and nuisance.

RESOLVED that

1) The Annual Housing Complaints and Service Improvement Report be approved;

2) The Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code Self Assessment be approved; and

3) The Housing Complaints Policy be approved and;

NOTED that

4) The reports referred to at resolutions 1 to 3 above, be published on the Council's website.

13. QUARTER 4 2025/2026 HOUSING PERFORMANCE INCORPORATING TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES RESULTS

The Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services presented a report on Quarter Four 2025/2026 Housing Performance incorporating Tenant Satisfaction Measures Results.

The Committee was informed that the Regulator of Social Housing had established the 'Tenant Satisfaction Measures' (TSM) which placed a responsibility on all social housing landlords in England to return performance information so that each provider could be assessed for how well they were providing good quality homes and services.

It was reported that performance during Quarter Four had been positive although a number of key areas remained below target. The highest volume of complaints continued to relate to repairs and maintenance. While performance in this area was improving, it remained below the required target at 77 per cent, Members were advised that proposals were in place to address this.

Key statistics were highlighted, including safety compliance, with fire safety checks at 88 per cent. In relation to anti-social behaviour, it was reported that there had been an increase in hate-related crime; however, this was attributed to improved reporting as such incidents had historically not been recorded.

The TSM demonstrated year-on-year improvement, which was reflected in increased tenant confidence.

A Member raised a query regarding gas safety checks, noting that the report referred to 134 tenanted properties where the gas supply had been capped. Officers explained that this figure included a combination of void properties, properties where tenants had refused access for gas safety inspections and properties where tenants had chosen not to have a gas supply.

RESOLVED that

1) The Council's Quarter 4 2025/6 Housing Performance in respect of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (Landlord) be noted; and

2) The results of the Tenant Participation Surveys covering 2025/6 be noted.

14. Q4 UPDATE AND 2026/27 HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services presented the Quarter 4 Update and 2026/27 Housing Improvement Plan report.

The Committee was reminded that, following an inspection in July 2025, the Regulator of Social Housing had identified that Redditch Borough Council required significant improvements in several areas, including repairs, maintenance, fire safety, tenant engagement and stock condition surveys.

The report demonstrated the progress made since that judgement, with eighteen actions having been completed. It was noted that work had also been undertaken in collaboration with the Regulator across the consumer standards, with relevant actions having now been completed.

Members were informed that the introduction of a tenant portal was intended to support residents by providing access to self-service options. It was also noted that the Housing Annual Report for 2026/27 would be shared with tenants and leaseholders by the end of July.

The Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services acknowledged that the formatting of the Housing Improvement Plan (HIP) had been difficult to read due to the small font size and advised that this would be improved in future reports.

The revised HIP aimed to improve gap analysis and ensure that the Council could respond in a flexible and effective manner to ongoing and emerging priorities.

RESOLVED that

1) The Housing Improvement Plan Quarter 4 2025/26 Update, which includes actions to address areas for improvement, confirmed as part of the Regulator of Social Housing inspection process, be noted.

2) The 2026/27 Housing Improvement Plan, which includes actions to address areas for improvement identified across the Consumer Standards be approved.

3) Delegation be given to the Assistant Director Environment & Housing Property and Assistant Director Community & Housing, following consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder, to revise the 2026/27 Housing Improvement Plan, in response to requirements raised by the Regulator for Social Housing, as part of their Provider Improvement Process, and in response to legislative changes.

15. MINUTES

The Chair explained that there was a typographical error in the minutes from the Executive Committee meeting which took place on 2nd March 2026. Under 'Council Tax Resolutions 2026/27' item the minute should have stated recommended rather than resolved.

RESOLVED that

Subject to the amendment detailed in the preamble above, the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 2nd March 2026 and 21st April 2026 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

16. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that

Under S100 A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting

for the following matters on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 of the said act, as amended.

- **Minute Item No. 17 – Construction of Redditch Innovation Centre**

17. CONSTRUCTION OF REDDITCH INNOVATION CENTRE

The Regeneration Project Manager presented a report on the Construction of Redditch Innovation Centre.

In relation to timescales, it was reported that construction was due to commence in Summer 2026 and that there was an anticipated seventy-week construction period with building works due to be completed by the end of 2027.

Speller-Metcalfe had been appointed to work alongside the Design team to complete the stage four designs for the Innovation Centre. Members were informed that extensive value engineering had been undertaken.

The Chair informed Members that recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been proposed at a meeting held on 8th June 2026. Details of the recommendations were tabled at this meeting.

Following presentation of the report, Members had detailed discussion and commented on several points:

- The impact any delays to the approval of the recommendations would have on the project.
- Members expressed that they would like to see the project progressed quickly.
- Members asked whether a number of contractors had been contacted for quotations.
- Members expressed that they were pleased with the service from Spellar-Metcalfe and that they employed local residents.
- It was confirmed that the risk register was currently being updated and that Members would be given sight of the updated document.

RECOMMENDED that

1. **The Council utilise all available underspend from within the Town Deal programme for construction of the Innovation Centre.**
2. **The Council accept the £2,425,000 Enterprise Zone funding from Birmingham City Council for the construction of the Innovation Centre and incorporate it into the Council's Capital Programme.**
3. **Subject to the agreement of recommendations 1 and 2, authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Regeneration & Property Services, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, and following consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to enter into the necessary contracts and legal agreements required to implement the recommendations within this report.**

(During the 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 relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

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

There was no urgent business for discussion at the meeting.

The Meeting commenced at 6.31 pm
and closed at 8.00 pm

Agenda Annex

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

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Redditch Borough Council

Shareholders Committee

Annual Report 2025 - 2026



Chair's Foreword

As Leader of Redditch Borough Council and Chair of the Rubicon Shareholders Committee I am pleased to be able to present this annual report.

Rubicon is a key asset for our Council, delivering many of our commitments to leisure and recreation in the Borough.

We have seen Rubicon grow and develop commercially, with increasing numbers of customers using these services.

The positive trajectory is testament to the commitment of the Rubicon Leisure Limited Board, supported by a wealth of professional staff and a host of dedicated volunteers as well as Council officers.

Moving closer to Local Government Reorganisation our intention is for Rubicon to continue as a highly effective organisation. Rubicon should be considered as an exemplar which will continue to deliver leisure services for many years to come.

The Shareholders Committee forms an essential layer of governance in the Rubicon model. Accountability and transparency are essential parts of our ethos, and we are proud of the robust oversight we have provided in terms of financial reports and the aspirational business plan for 2026/2027.

I would like to thank my colleagues who have served on the Committee this year alongside me: Councillors Ian Woodall, Juliet Barker Smith, Bill Hartnett and Jane Spilsbury.

I commend this Annual Report to Council.



Councillor Sharon Harvey
Chair, Shareholders Committee
Redditch Borough Council

Introduction

The annual report outlines the work undertaken by Redditch Borough Council's Shareholders Committee in the 2025 – 2026 municipal year. This is the second annual report to have been prepared on behalf of the Shareholders Committee, as this was a new requirement introduced at the Annual Council meeting in May 2024.

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

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

Matters reserved to the Shareholders Committee include:

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

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

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

Membership

The Members of the Shareholders Committee are all Members of the Executive Committee. In 2025/26, the membership of the Committee was as follows:



Councillor Sharon Harvey (Chair)



Councillor Ian Woodall (Vice-Chair)



Councillor Juliet Barker Smith



Councillor Bill Hartnett



Councillor Jane Spilsbury

Members of the Committee

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

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

Meetings of the Committee in 2025/26

Meetings of the Shareholders Committee were scheduled to take place in August, December, February and April. The February meeting was postponed, following consultation with the Chair, and was rescheduled to take place in March 2026.

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

- Quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports, which detailed the performance of Rubicon Leisure Limited during the previous quarter of the Financial Year. These performance reports highlighted Performance in relation to the range of services and activities provided by Rubicon Leisure Limited across the different leisure venues. Members welcomed positive feedback on improving performance, including in respect of increasing numbers of customers using services managed by the company.

- Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports, which provided updates to Members on the financial performance of the company, including of specific venues managed by the company. These reports also highlighted any budget pressures as they emerged. The Committee welcomed the positive trajectory of the financial performance of the company compared to previous years.



Figure 1: Forge Mill Needle Museum, 1940s Day (May 2025) – The Violettes

- Updates on Council support to Rubicon Leisure Limited were provided for Members' consideration at every meeting of the Committee. As Rubicon Leisure Limited is a Council company, the authority continues to provide some support services to Rubicon Leisure Limited through Service Level Agreements (SLAs). The Council is also a source of finance, including capital finance, to the company to enable it to grow and expand its offering and information relating to this support was highlighted for the Committee's consideration.

The Committee was particularly pleased to learn about progress during the year at a number of venues managed by Rubicon Leisure Limited, although the Committee was proud of and grateful for the hard work of staff and volunteers at all of these venues.

Forge Mill Needle Museum has held a number of exciting events during the year that were well attended and the Committee welcomed the growth in visitor numbers. The Committee recognised that the new food and beverage offer at the museum had also attracted new visitors and Members expressed hopes that this positive trajectory would continue in 2026/27.

The Boathouse at the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre was also welcomed by the Committee and Members felt that this had positively enhanced the experience of visitors to the Arrow Valley Country Park. Members also welcomed news that the Boathouse was shortlisted in the New Tourism Business of the Year Category in the Visit Worcestershire Awards 2025/26.

In addition, the Committee was pleased to note the positive contribution that venues and facilities provided by Rubicon Leisure Limited contributed to the health and wellbeing of residents living in the Borough. In particular, fitness and swimming opportunities at the Abbey Stadium were identified as making a positive contribution to the health and wellbeing of local residents.



Figure 2: The Boathouse, Arrow Valley Visitor Centre

In line with the reserved matters for the Committee, Members considered and approved the company's annual Business Plan in March 2026. This business plan details the targets and aspirations for the company in 2026/27.

An annual budget report, detailing the company's budgetary plans for 2026/27, was also considered and approved at the meeting of the Committee held in March 2026.

No recommendations were made by the Shareholders Committee to the Executive Committee in 2025/26.



Figure 3: Fitness equipment in use at the Abbey Stadium

Informal Meetings of the Shareholders Committee with Rubicon Board

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

In 2025/26, informal meetings were arranged which was welcomed by Members.

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

Looking to the Future

The Shareholders Committee has received a lot of positive feedback regarding the performance and financial management of Rubicon Leisure Limited during the 2025/26 municipal year. However, the Committee recognises that it is important to continue to monitor the work of the company closely to ensure that best value is achieved in the deliver of leisure services within the Borough.

The last Annual Report from the Shareholders Committee was published at the start of the Local Government Reorganisation process and this has continued to progress in Worcestershire in 2025/26. There have been two submissions made to the Government in respect of Local Government Reorganisation. Whichever Unitary Authority model is introduced in Worcestershire, Rubicon Leisure Limited will not be the only Council company in the county to be impacted by these changes. Consideration will need to be given to the governance structure(s) for local authority companies that will be implemented as part of the move to Unitary Authority status.



Figure 4: Sounds in the Grounds, Arrow Valley Visitor Centre, August 2025.

Conclusion

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

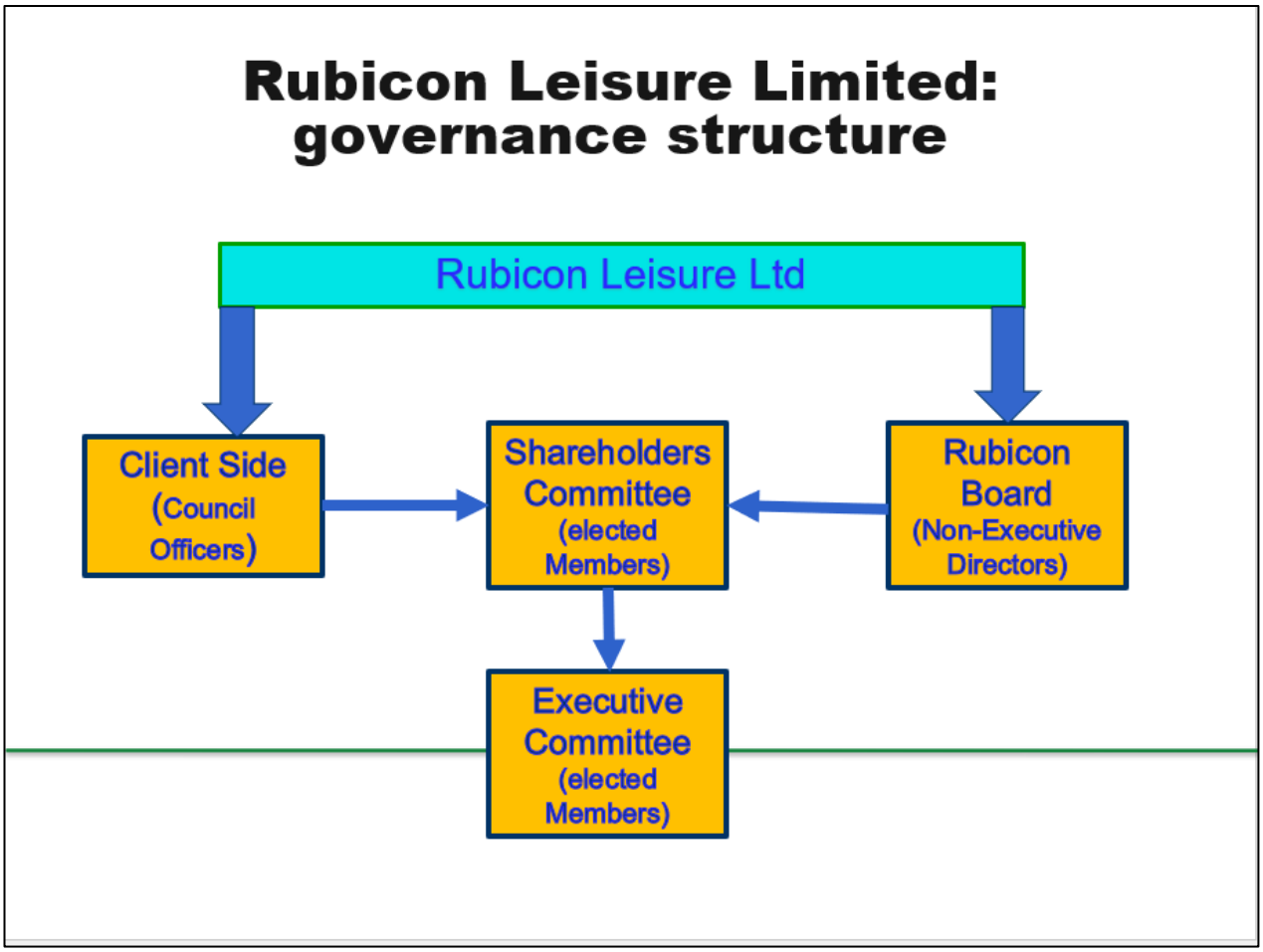
Members have welcomed positive updates on the performance of the services delivered by the company. The Committee is keen for this positive trajectory to continue, to the benefit of local residents who use the leisure and cultural services provided by Rubicon Leisure Limited.

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



Figure 5: The Redditch Pantomime, Aladdin, at the Palace Theatre, 2025/26.

Appendix 1 – Governance Structure



Appendix 2 – Expressions of Gratitude

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

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

- Ruth Bamford, Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Culture Services
- Sarah Casserley, Head of Marketing and Events, Rubicon Leisure Limited
- Ben Clawson-Chan, Managing Director, Rubicon Leisure Limited
- Debra Goodall, Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services
- Julie Lorraine, Interim Director of Finance

The Committee would like to thank all the staff and volunteers who work for Rubicon Leisure Limited and recognises the importance of their hard work to the ongoing provision of services by the company that meet the needs of local communities.

All images in this report have been provided courtesy of Rubicon Leisure Limited. The Shareholders Committee would like to thank the company for providing these images for inclusion in the report.

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive 9th June 2026

Shared Homelessness Strategy 2026-2031

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

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive is requested to RECOMMEND that: -

1) The Shared Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2031 (Appendix A) be approved.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 On the 17th March 2026 members resolved that :

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

2.2 As previously reported the Homelessness Act 2002 requires all housing authorities to have a homelessness & rough sleeper strategy in place which is based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their local authority area.

2.3 It is intended that this Strategy will sit under the existing Worcestershire Strategic Housing Board Plan. Worcestershire Strategic Housing Board will receive monitoring and updates will be provided regularly to the Portfolio Holder for Housing.

2.4 The consultation responses have been considered and included where appropriate. MHCLG have reviewed the strategy and provided separate feedback. They are satisfied that the action plan covers all the main areas and sets out clear and consistent actions and measures.

2.5 MHCLG has also provided the metrics required for the Local Outcomes Framework. These are now included, with the exception of the metric on successful prevention and relief outcomes for individuals with three or more support needs, which is the only metric not currently published. The Strategy will be updated to reflect this once it is published and the metrics below reported under the heading of Shared Homelessness Strategy 2026-2031 via the Corporate Performance monitoring process:

2.6 **Core outcome measures (metrics)**

The framework uses a small set of **national outcome indicators** (largely from MHCLG statutory data) to assess performance:

- Rate of households with children in temporary accommodation (per 1,000 households)
- Number of families in Bed & Breakfast accommodation for over 6 weeks
- Percentage of duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved
- Number of people sleeping rough on a single night (snapshot count)
- Number of people sleeping rough over the month who are long-term rough sleepers

These will be the primary performance indicators used nationally to judge whether local areas are reducing homelessness and rough sleeping.

2.7 We have ensured that our action plan includes targets against each of the metrics in the Outcomes Framework, and a description of how, working with partners, those targets will be achieved. The key numerical targets are achieving less than 6 week hotel placements for families and halving monthly long term rough sleeping numbers by 50% by the end of this parliament. The other targets relate to successful prevention and relief outcomes increasing while rough sleeping and families in temporary accommodation reduce.

2.8 Above universal prevention, we have included reference to the supply of affordable housing and the effective use and allocation of social housing stock.

2.9 We have reviewed our approach to rough sleeping and single homelessness. This is to ensure that services move away from verification as a way to access services and ensure a robust approach to assessment, identifying people at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness or rough sleeping quickly and assessing risk and need in order to direct services.

2.10 In respect of children and young people we have strengthened our approach to partnership working with Children's Services and the Care Leavers Team. This is to prevent homelessness legislation from being used as a pathway to house care leavers following the end of a Looked After Child Placement and ensuring more support is provided to care leavers in their transition to adulthood and independent living.

2.11 We have strengthened our approach to the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Duty where B&B is not considered suitable or safe accommodation so that we strive to end the use of B&B in these cases.

2.12 In regard to temporary accommodation we have included a requirement to develop a policy to ensure temporary accommodation is suitable to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

2.13 We have placed greater emphasis on tenancy sustainment and budgeting support as part of efforts to prevent repeat homelessness.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 The delivery of the Shared Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy actions will be overseen by the Housing Strategy Team and will sit under the existing Worcestershire Housing Board Plan.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council has a duty under the Homelessness Act 2002 to conduct a review of the nature and extent of homelessness in its District every 5 years and to develop a strategy setting out how services will be delivered in the future to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

5.2 The Homelessness Reduction Act came into force in April 2018, and places new legal duties on local housing authorities so that everyone who is homelessness or at risk of homelessness will have access to early meaningful help, irrespective of their priority need status, so long as they are eligible for assistance.

5.3 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requires local authorities to collaborate with Tier One authorities to provide safe and supported accommodation for victims/survivors of domestic abuse.

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

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Re-organisation

6.1 LGR does not alter the statutory homelessness duties set out under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and Housing Act 1996, including prevention (s.195), relief (s.189B), interim accommodation (s.188) and the duty to provide free advice and information (s.179).

6.2 The Government's National Plan to End Homelessness sets out a cross-government expectation that homelessness cannot be reduced without multi-agency integration

6.3 Both the National Plan to End Homelessness and the Homelessness Code of Guidance stress the need for coordinated arrangements across the below areas,

- health
- social care
- children's services
- criminal justice
- and domestic abuse services

and it is considered that the most appropriate method is to have a shared strategy approach across as much of Worcestershire to ensure

there is a coherent approach to our homelessness duties until the results of LGR are provided.

6.4 A single Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy must be produced for any new authority, and this strategy and action plan has been produced so that it is able to be incorporated into either one or two unitary authorities until a new single strategy for the new area, based on a fresh homelessness review is completed as required by the Homelessness Code of Guidance

Relevant Council Priority

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

Climate Change Implications

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

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.4 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken as the strategy seeks to deliver a range of services for homeless households and draws on ways to improve the work of the Council in developing services and preparing links, pathways and referrals between services to prevent homelessness in the first place or minimise its impact when it happens.

6.5 The design of services which tackle the root causes of homelessness such as poverty, health inequalities and adversity in childhood will include ensuring that providers have appropriate policies and training in place to make sure that there is no adverse impact on equalities groups with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 If the strategy is not approved the Council will not be legally compliant. Furthermore, it is likely that more households who are threatened with homelessness, or who are in housing need, will have limited options for support to sustain their accommodation or find alternative suitable accommodation that meets their needs. If they have to make a homeless approach this could lead to the following negative outcomes:

- Increased B&B costs
- Increased rough sleeping in the District
- Impacts on physical and mental health, educational achievement, ability to work and similar through increased homelessness

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix A – Shared Homelessness Strategy
Appendix 1 – Action Plan

Background Papers

Report to Executive Committee March 2026–REPORT TITLE

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Ashley Monk Portfolio Holder for Housing	28th May 2026
Lead Director / Head of Service	Judith Willis Assistant Director Community and Housing Services	13 May 2026
Financial Services	James Walton, Director of Finance	13th May 2026
Legal and Democratic Services	Nicola Cummings – Principal Solicitor – Governance and Jess Bayley-Hill, Principal Democratic Services Officer	13th May 2026
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Hannah Corredor - Assistant Director - Corporate Services and Transformation	13th May 2026

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive 9th June 2026

Climate Change (if climate change implications apply)	Matthew Bough Strategic Housing & Business Support Manager	N/A

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Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

2026 - 2031

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

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Foreword

Chair of Worcestershire Housing Board

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

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

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

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

Universal prevention: tackling the root causes of homelessness across the whole population.
Targeted prevention: providing tailored support to people who are more likely to face homelessness.
Preventing crisis: early identification of people who need help and putting in place personalised interventions that meet their needs.
Improving emergency responses: to ensure that if people do become homeless, they receive high quality support and that homelessness is brief.
Recovery and preventing repeat homelessness: helping people rebuild their lives with the right support.

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

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

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

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

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



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

1. Introduction

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

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

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

1.1 Achievements of the last strategy

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

- Established a **countywide Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Group**.
- Developed a **Prison Leavers Protocol** and the pre-release homeless panel.
- Developed **stakeholder involvement and People With Lived Experience (PWLE) in reviewing services** through regular countywide meetings, bespoke focus groups, and questionnaires.
- Quarterly **reviews of data collection and deep dives into client groups** to inform decision making and share learning.
- **Joint training** in homelessness, Mental Capacity Act, psychologically informed environments, Care Act 2014, Complex Adults Risk Management framework, self-neglect etc.
- Support for those with mental health illnesses through development of **Mental Health Link Worker posts** and non-medical interventions
- **Delivery of the Rough Sleeper initiative** (target 563 p.a):
    - 2024/25 – **637 people supported**
    - 2023/24 – **837 people supported**
    - 2022/23 – 713 people supported
- **Housing and support plans developed for the Target Priority Group (TPG)** (the most complex rough sleepers)
- **Cost of living plans, welfare assistance and bespoke support** to reduce homelessness developed across the county
- **Safe accommodation units set up for survivors of domestic abuse**
- **Supported provision of domestic abuse support services** including through the Domestic Abuse Support Service (West Mercia Women's Aid), Sanctuary Scheme and Domestic Abuse Coordinator and specialist Housing Officers (all councils)

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

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

1.2 The current situation: homelessness review

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

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



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

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

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

1. Universal prevention: tackling the root causes of homelessness across the whole population.
2. Targeted prevention: providing tailored support to people who are more likely to face homelessness.
3. Preventing crisis: early identification of people who need help and putting in place personalised interventions that meet their needs.
4. Improving emergency responses: to ensure that if people do become homeless, they receive high quality support and that homelessness is brief.
5. Recovery and preventing repeat homelessness: helping people rebuild their lives with the right support.

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

1.4 Strategy structure

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

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

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

1.5 Partnership working to codesign the strategy

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

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

2.1 Increasing the supply of social and affordable housing

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.3 Supported housing

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

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

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

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

2.4 Private rented sector accommodation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.5 Maximising income, financial inclusion and welfare assistance

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

Some councils involved in this strategy also have specialist Financial Inclusion Officers who work directly with people making homeless approaches due to rent arrears who are struggling with the cost of living. Their role is to ensure that their income is maximised through ensuring they are receiving correct benefit entitlements, assistance to apply for benefit back payments and working with local services to increase their income through quality employment. Help is also provided by tenancy sustainment or support workers on issues like budgeting and maximising benefit entitlement,

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

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

3.1 Collaboration to prevent homelessness

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

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

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

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

3.2 Addressing barriers to accessing services

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

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

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

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

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

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

3.3 Interventions to prevent homelessness for higher risk groups

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

3.3.1 Single people

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

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

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

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

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

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

3.3.2 Prison leavers

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

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

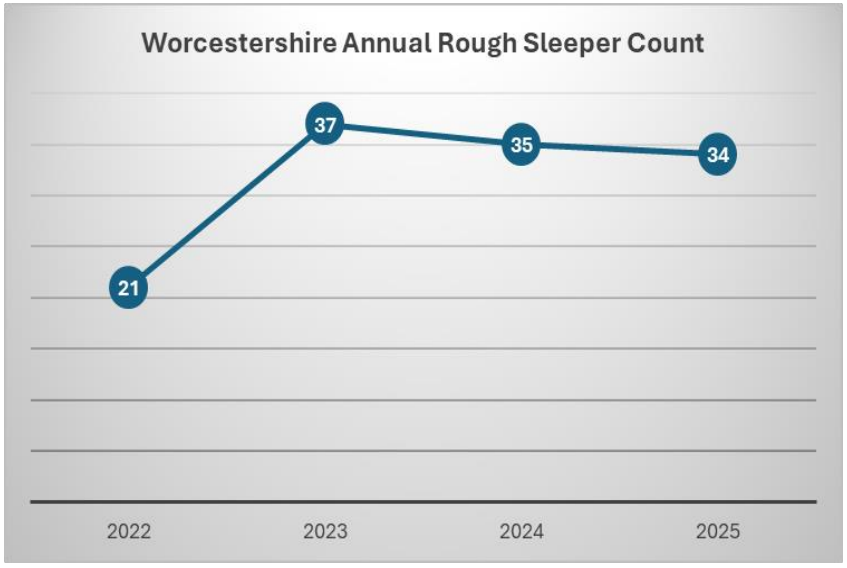
Recalls from this accommodation remain a concern (circa 50%) and a

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

3.3.3 Rough sleepers/those at risk of rough sleeping

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

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



Rough sleeper data is collated each week improving our local intelligence of the flow, return, and stock of individuals and the reason behind their homelessness. Regular rough sleeper/prevention meetings and multi-agency meetings are held at a local level enables the co-ordination of services and information sharing to develop partnerships with all organisations and individuals committed to ending rough sleeping and homelessness. This includes a consideration of any safeguarding issues that need to be flagged with partners or referred to the Adult Safeguarding Team. All five councils have rough sleeper outreach teams providing intensive support and routes into accommodation such as No First / No Second Night Out, Housing First/Led and other services.

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

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

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

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

3.3.4 Young people and care leavers

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

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

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

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

3.3.5 Families with children

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

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

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

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

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

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

3.3.6 Survivors of domestic abuse

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

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

Data and Trends

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

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

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

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

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

Sanctuary Schemes and Safe Accommodation

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

Sanctuary Scheme Referrals (September 2024 - August 2025):

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

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

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

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

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

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

3.3.7 Veterans

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

3.3.8 Refugees and migrant homelessness

Worcestershire has provided a sanctuary to refugees from Ukraine, Syria and Afghanistan through the government's resettlement schemes, including Homes for Ukraine, the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) and Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP), as well as a small number of arrivals through the Community Sponsorship Scheme. Accommodation has been provided by a combination of private hosts, the private rented sector and, where appropriate, social housing.

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

Once asylum has been granted, a refugee is required to leave their Home Office accommodation, with notice to quit currently at 42 days from the date of decision. A process is in place for information to be shared with the local housing authority of notice to quit local Home Office accommodation, to ensure housing advice can be provided.

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

3.3.9 Hospital discharge, substance use and Adult Social Care support

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

their health deteriorates further and makes them even more vulnerable." A National Plan to End Homelessness, MHCLG, 2025.

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

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

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

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

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

3.3.10 Neurodivergence and homelessness

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

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

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

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

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

4.1 Preventing homelessness at the earliest stage

'Too often, households are known to one service, such as a voluntary or community organisation, without that information being shared with the council or other relevant partners. To deliver truly coordinated and preventative support, everyone must work together, with clear referral pathways and shared responsibility for identifying and responding to risk early.'
A National Plan to End Homelessness, MHCLG, 2025

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

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

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

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

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

4.2 Accessing the right support at the right time

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

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

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

4.3 Person-centred support to prevent rough sleeping

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

For all the councils the most used type of temporary accommodation is Bed and Breakfast but the amount this is used varies from 46% of all placements in Redditch to 59% in Wyre Forest in 2024/25.There has been a decrease in use of Bed and Breakfast between 2023/24 and 2024/25 in all of the councils except Bromsgrove where the percentage of placements in B&B have increased from 42% to 48%.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

6.1 Ensuring people don't experience homelessness more than once

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

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

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

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

6.2 Tackling long term rough sleeping

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

6.4 Community support and services

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

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

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

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

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

7. Governance arrangements

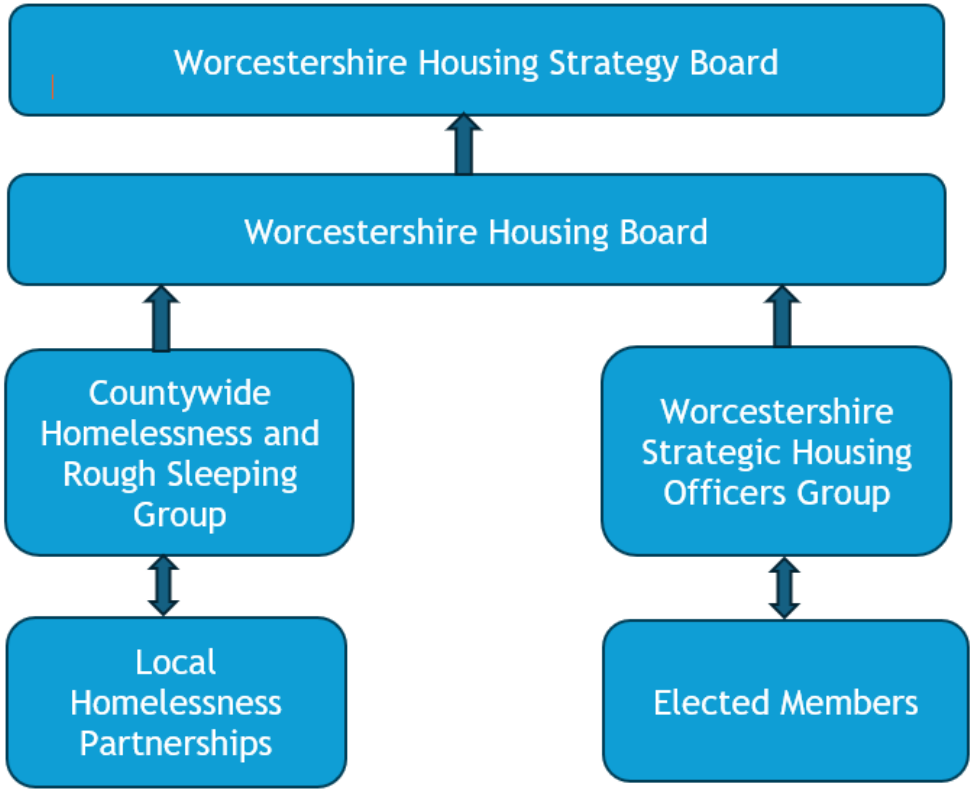
7.1 Oversight, delivery and monitoring

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

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

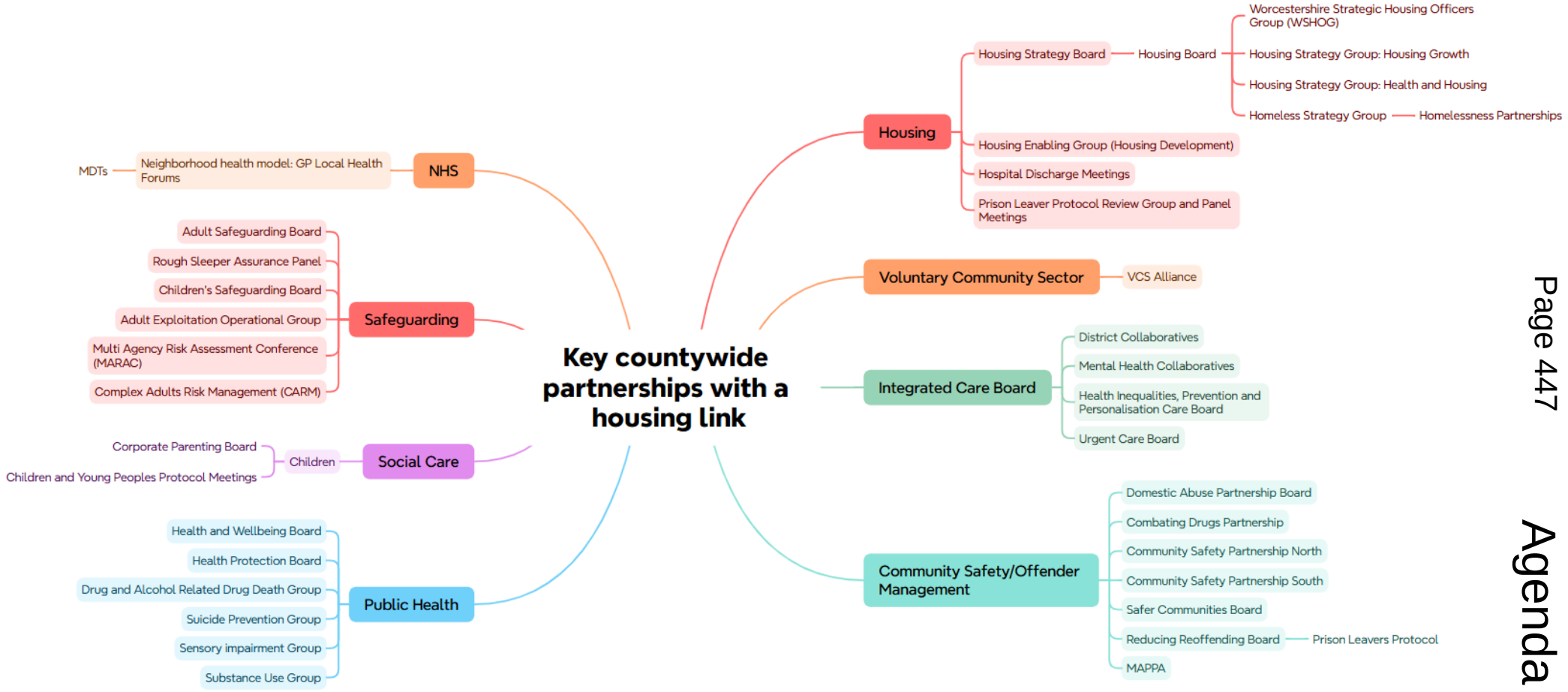
Each LHA has its own local homelessness partnership, consisting of local statutory and voluntary partners which will oversee and deliver on homelessness services and the strategy at a local level and feed into the Countywide Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Group.

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



8. Partnerships

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

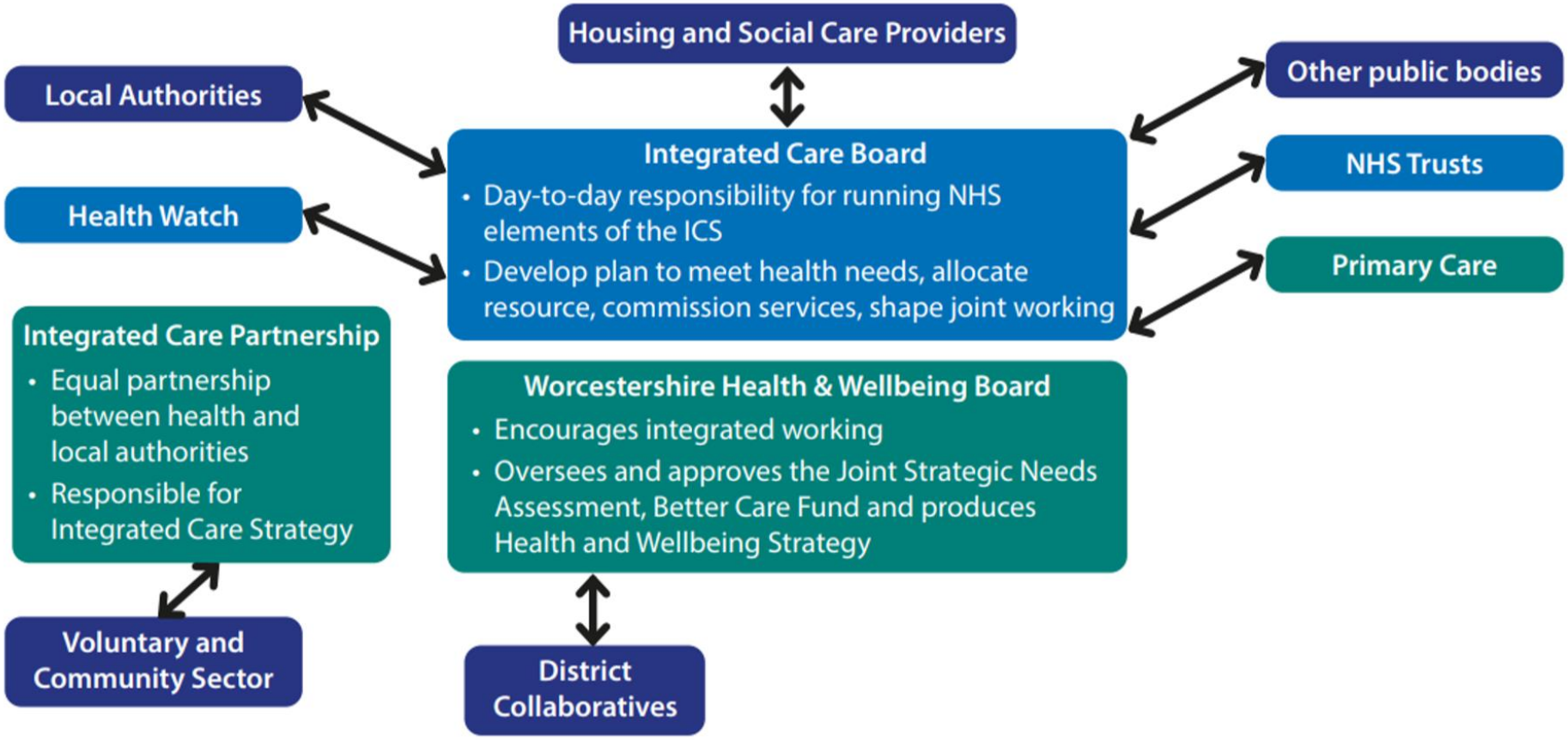


This is not a definitive or exhaustive list of all partnerships but highlights some key groups and inter-relationships. There are also localised partnership and strategic groups within each LHA that are not included in this section.

ICB and health partnerships

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

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



Reducing Re-offending Group & MAPPA Strategic Management Board

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

Adult Safeguarding Board and the Assurance Panel

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

Corporate Parenting Board (CPB)

The CPB provides leadership and a governance structure for corporate parenting to drive forward the outcomes for looked after children and care leavers. It oversees the Board's strategy and promotes the voice of children and young people. It also provides challenge and scrutiny to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for children in care and care leavers. LHAs are represented at CPB by officers from WSHOG.

Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (DAPB)

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

Agenda Item 14.9

Appendix 2 - Funding the strategy

Homelessness Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant, & New Burdens Funding for Renters Rights Act

Our targets are based on national targets to create a step change in our approach to work upstream and prevent homelessness wherever possible. These are to:

- **increase the proportion of people who are supported to stay in their own home or helped to find alternative accommodation when they approach their local council for support**
- **eliminate the use of B&B accommodation for families, other than very short-term use in emergencies**
- **halve the number of people sleeping rough long-term**

Total Three Year Funding Allocation 2026-2029

Local Authority	Homelessness Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant	Of Which, funding for Homelessness and Rough Sleeping	Funding for Renters Rights Act 2025 New Burdens	Funding for Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Grant
Bromsgrove	£ 1,636,130.00	£ 1,474,318.00	£ 50,497.00	£ 111,315.00
Malvern Hills	£ 1,414,759.00	£ 1,310,533.00	£ 42,799.00	£ 104,226.00
Redditch	£ 2,477,421.00	£ 2,294,301.00	£ 72,088.00	£ 111,032.00
Wychavon	£ 2,627,008.00	£ 2,552,442.00	£ 76,082.00	£ 104,565.00
Wyre Forest	£ 2,485,740.00	£ 2,307,923.00	£ 70,660.00	£ 107,157.00
Total	**£ 10,641,058.00**	**£ 9,939,517.00**	**£ 312,126.00**	**£ 538,295.00**

The Local Authorities will utilise the funding strategically to meet deliver on our targets and respond to local need. We will measure the outcomes below with a view to improving performance year on year.

- number of households with children in temporary accommodation
- number of families in B&B over 6 weeks
- percentage of duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved
- percentage of duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved for those with 3 or more support needs
- number of people sleeping rough on a single night
- number of people sleeping rough over the month who are long-term

We will ensure that we have a policy in place for ensuring suitability of temporary accommodation, following an assessment, including procuring sufficient units of temporary accommodation and allocating them.

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

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

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

Household Support Fund (2025/26)

HSF 7 Allocation April 25 - March 26

District Council 12 month allocation	General allocation	Food/warm space allocation	Total
Bromsgrove	£171,321.39	£18,000.00	£189,321.39
Malvern Hills	£235,312.23	£18,000.00	£253,312.23
Redditch	£329,900.14	£18,000.00	£347,900.14
Wychavon	£230,918.03	£18,000.00	£248,918.03
Wyre Forest	£328,625.52	£18,000.00	£346,625.52
Total	**£1,296,077**	**£90,000.00**	**£1,386,077**

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

Discretionary Housing Payments (2025/6)

Housing Authority	Grant (£)
Bromsgrove District Council	62,332
Malvern Hills District Council	75,651
Redditch Borough Council	79,296
Wychavon District Council	112,099
Wyre Forest District Council	110,242
Total	**439,620**

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

Appendix 3 - Glossary of terms

CAS3 : Community Accommodation Service 11
DAPB: Domestic Abuse Partnership Board 24
DRIVE: A domestic abuse partnership that protects victims by disrupting, challenging and changing the behaviour of those who are causing harm..... 14
LGR: Local Government Reorganisation 2
LHAs: Local Housing Authorities 4
MHCLG: Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government..... 9
MARAC: Multi agency risk assessment conference..... 14
PWLE: People with Lived Experiencee 4
RPs: Registered Housing Providers 6
TPG: Target Priority Group (most complex rough sleepers)..... 4
WSHOG: Worcestershire Strategic Housing Officers Group..... 26

Appendix 1 – Action Plan

The Action Plan below sets out the actions that specifically relate to preventing and relieving homelessness, however, in recognition of the Government's commitment to build 1.5 million homes backed by £39 billion investment, and consistent with the national homelessness strategy and wider housing policy, the local authorities recognise that local prevention efforts must be supported by sufficient affordable housing and effective allocation of social stock. Without this, demand for crisis interventions and temporary accommodation will continue to rise. The councils will ensure alignment with the Worcestershire Housing Strategy in order to support the increase in the supply of new affordable and high-quality homes and to address the need for greater diversity in the housing stock through the development of the supported housing strategy. Performance against delivery of new build housing is monitored through the Worcestershire Housing Board.

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

Action	Measure	Target	Lead	Timescale
1.1 Prevent homelessness from private rented sector tenancies by building relations with landlords to identify those at risk of homelessness at an earlier stage, utilising funding where appropriate and available and take action to sustain tenancies.	Homelessness arising from the ending of private rented sector tenancies are reduced through measures including; - Landlord forum and prevention panel established. - "Help to Stay" scheme established in areas without one. - Tenancy Sustainment Officers in place (funding dependent). - Utilise funding such as the Crisis Resilience Fund and homeless funding to sustain tenancies	- Collect the number of evictions for rent arrears in 2026/27 to establish the baseline in year one - Increase the number of cases taken to prevention panels/Housing Advice teams for rent arrears from Landlords by 20% in year 2	- Housing Advice Team Leaders - Housing Strategy Officers - Private Sector Housing Teams	Year 1 / 2
1.2 Ensure m**ore legal support i**s available **for tenants facing eviction** by expanding partnerships with organisations who already undertake this work so that services have sufficient resource, knowledge, expertise and capacity to robustly defend evictions based on grounds under Renters Rights Act.	The teams are able to advise and refer households for support around the Renters Rights Act; - Training on Renters' Rights Act undertaken for LHA staff. - Established referral mechanisms are in place with the Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service	- Collect the number of evictions for rent arrears in 2026/27 to establish the baseline in year one - Increase the number of cases taken to prevention panels/Housing Advice teams for rent arrears from Landlords by 20% in year 2 - 5% increase in tenancies sustained for twelve months in the private rented sector following intervention.	- Housing Advice Team Leaders - Housing Strategy Officers - Private Sector Housing Teams	Year 1 / 2
1.3 Develop an integrated tenancy sustainment approach, bringing together housing, community organisations/hubs, employment and financial	- "Tenancy at Risk" protocol with Registered Providers is explored.	- Collect the number of evictions for rent arrears	- Housing Advice Team Leaders/Housing Strategy Officers	Year 2

inclusion partners and develop stronger links to online support, to identify tenancies at risk and deliver coordinated support.	- Coordinated support packages in place including income maximisation, debt advice, financial literacy training, and flexible crisis prevention/ discretionary welfare funding.	in 2026/27 to establish the baseline in year one. - Increase the number of cases taken to prevention panels/Housing Advice teams for rent arrears from Landlords by 20% in year 2	- Community Services	
1.4 Review the Duty to Refer data and prepare for the new Duty to Collaborate to ensure that any potential homeless cases are referred to the local housing teams by partner agencies at the earliest opportunity.	Referrals from mandatory duty to refer organisations is increased where there is a low number currently.	- 10% increase in the number of Duty to Refer referrals from organisations with low referral levels. - 10% increase in the proportion of cases approaching for homelessness assistance at prevention stage/ earlier from wider partner agencies included in the Duty to Collaborate.	- Housing Strategy Officers/All statutory agencies required to refer	Year 2 Year 3
1.5 Use data and lived experience to track and evaluate progress against the strategy (and inform service delivery) using key performance indicators and regular reviews. Consider how we can implement "big picture" reporting to demonstrate and understand homelessness prevention activity across all sectors/organisations.	Improved opportunities for learning from data and those with lived experience and People With Lived Experience (PWLE) attending/providing feedback to the Homelessness Strategy Group.	- Summary reporting mechanism developed to show homelessness prevention work across all sectors/organisations. - Data dashboard and baseline statistics developed and monitored at countywide homelessness strategy meetings. - Minimum of 2 lived experience sessions held a year.	- Research and Intelligence Officer - Housing Strategy Officers	Year 2
1.6 Improve shared understanding of the work of all partner agencies in preventing homelessness through promoting the Community Services Directory, and joint training and awareness sessions.	Customers are able to access information and know where to go if they are in housing difficulties. All homelessness prevention services are	- Promote the CSD at min of one homelessness forum in each district, explore what services are	- County Council, - Housing Advice Team Leaders/Housing Strategy Officers	Year 2

	signed up to the community services directory	available and allow for the identification of any gaps in services. - Districts organise one joint training session per annum with the VCSE and/or stat orgs for increased awareness of roles and responsibilities	- Homelessness Partnerships	
1.7 Develop and implement clear referral guidance and processes between agencies (housing, health, education, social care) for early identification of at-risk individuals.	Referral guidance and process defined and promoted and this supports a reduction in the number of individuals are released from institutions into homelessness.	- 10% increase in the number of Duty to Refer referrals from health and social care settings. - 10% reduction in homelessness from institutions	Housing Strategy Officers, Health, Education and Social Care Leads	Year 3 Year 4
1.8 Explore opportunities to develop and deliver homelessness education programmes in schools	To improve the level of understanding of young people around homelessness and how to prevent it.	Service offered by Nightstop in WF are reviewed and roll out across other district (funding dependent)	Housing Strategy Officers	Year 3
1.9 Make better use of existing social housing by exploring opportunities to better match disabled households with adapted housing and by tackling under occupation of larger properties	The councils make best use of existing stock including fully utilising adapted housing	- Current adapted stock within RP provision is mapped - Identify current levels of demand for adapted homes - Consider how the stock is identified and prioritised for those who need those adaptations following best practice	Housing Strategy Officers	Year 2

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

Action	Measure	Target	Lead	Timesca
2.1 Explore the feasibility of a predictive homelessness risk model that pulls data from a range of sources to identify and target support to people at greatest risk of becoming homeless before they reach crisis point.	Developing a business case for funding to develop a predictive homelessness risk model to increase homeless preventions and decrease the number of temporary accommodation placements required.	1. Stakeholder mapping with a multi-disciplinary steering group including adult social care 2. Completion of a Data protection impact assessment (DPIA)	Research and Intelligence Officer	Year 3

		3. Data inventory and matching across partners 4. Business case for delivery if there is a feasible solution.		
Rough sleepers and single homeless households:				
2.2 Review and strengthen the rough sleeper support/accommodation options (All services and interventions that tackle rough sleeping) and commission or directly deliver services required utilising the new multi-year homelessness funding arrangements. Ensuring safety, accessibility and positive move on options.	A fully implemented, trauma informed rough sleeping pathway that increases successful tenancies and ensures rough sleeping is not recurring.	- Complete a cross sector review of all current provision, - Carry out a needs assessment and develop a Supported Housing Strategy - Re-allocate funding or remodel services based on findings	- WSHOG - Housing Advice/strategy Teams, - Outreach Services, - Rough Sleeper Co-Ordinator	Year 2
2.3 Investigate the ability to provide bespoke funding for RS and single homeless Outreach teams and the Rough Sleeper Coordinator to develop tailored solutions for individuals who have previously been unable to secure or maintain accommodation, subject to funding.	- Reduction in rough sleeping through the use of interventions and meaningful activities. - Overcome the barriers into housing so more Rough Sleepers are accommodated through building relationships with Registered Providers	- Number of individuals housed through the funding - Tenancy sustainment 6 months + - Number of individuals supported through the funding to address unmet needs - Reduction in repeat rough sleeping of 10%	- Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator - Outreach Services - Housing Advice/Strategy Teams	Year 2 (pending funds)
2.4 Expand the online multi-agency work on Target Priority Group rough sleepers Implement outreach and support services TPG online group across all districts to improve cross-boundary coordination and case management. Learning from good practice and promoting joined up working.	Cross-boundary cases are successfully resolved through online multi-agency TPG group working effectively across boundaries+.	- Reduction in the number of TPG rough sleepers. - Increase in TPG rough sleepers accessing services and accommodation - All districts consistently using the TPG platform	- Rough Sleeper Co-Ordinator/Housing Advice Teams	Year 1
2.5 Extend the Mental Health & Homelessness Group to all districts to enable discussion/referrals into mental health services for those at risk of or experiencing rough sleeping	Mental Health and Homelessness group expanded across all districts to ensure consistent access to mental health services and a joined up approach in those with mental health issues facing homelessness which leads to an increase	- Districts holding a minimum of 2 Mental Health and Homelessness groups per annum in each area.	- Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Rough Sleeper Co-Ordinator	Year 1

	in access to mental health support for rough sleepers			
2.6 Understand factors leading to returns to rough sleeping Using data to identify repeat patterns, implement targeted interventions, and redesign support offers, subject to funding.	Have an enhanced support offer in place for those who return to rough sleeping including through tenancy sustainment to enable them to access housing.	- Reduction in repeat rough sleeping of 10% - Number of individuals receiving enhanced support - Reduction in number of people refused social housing due to poor tenancy history with Registered Providers (baseline established in Year One)	- Rough Sleeper Co-Ordinator - Outreach Services - Housing Advice/Housing Strategy Teams	Year 2
2.7 Set up a Lived Experience involvement process to ensure people who have experienced rough sleeping or homelessness are able to put forward ideas or feedback. Use this feedback to make changes to services and improve everyday practice, subject to funding.	People with lived experience are involved in service development and improvement with their feedback collected and recorded.	- Number of people with lived experience taking part (in a way that meets their needs) - Minimum of 1 RS lived experience session held a year.	- Rough Sleeper Co-Ordinator - Outreach Services - Research and Intelligence Officer	Year 1
Children, young people and care leavers:				
2.8 Support the pilot(s) of the "Upstream" model in partnership with schools, specialist youth and family support services e.g. Centrepoint model (should funding be available). This would include a review of family intervention and mediation services. Initial pilot to commence in Wyre Forest and Bromsgrove.	The causes of youth homelessness and what interventions can be made to sustain accommodation and positive relationships with family/friends are better understood and prevention initiatives developed across the Councils leading to a reduction in youth homelessness.	- Number of secondary schools actively participating. - Percentage of identified 'at risk' students successfully engaging with family mediation or respite services to maintain stable housing.	- Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - WF & SW Nightstop - The Basement Project - Children's Services -Youth Services -Schools	Year 2
2.9 Review the Care Leavers Protocol in light of new legislative requirements that state that care leavers will no longer be deemed intentionally homeless in the case of accommodation breakdown.	Care leavers protocol updated to ensure positive pathways into accommodation avoiding a homelessness route through a bespoke approach to meeting their needs which will include options to stay put and access to higher education	5% reduction in number of Care Leavers being accepted under the homeless duty.	- Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Children's Services	Year 1
2.10 Agree a Memorandum of Understanding/Protocol with providers of young persons supported accommodation to facilitate movements to alternative supported accommodation	Memorandum of Understanding/Protocol in place across providers to respond to potential homelessness situations where the relationship with and between	- Number of positive moves or sustained accommodation as a	- Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders	Year 3

where relationships between residents have broken down	residents has broken down to lead to fewer crisis situations in which a suitable move cannot be found.	result of utilising the MofU/protocol	- Supported Housing Providers	
2.11 Work with partner organisations (e.g. DWP) to explore services provided to address youth unemployment and ensure they can be connected with prevention/mediation/budgeting/debt advice services.	More young people managing their money and able to live independently through accessing education, employment and training opportunities	- 10% Reduction in youth homelessness	- Housing Advice Team Leaders - DWP	Year 2
2.12 Work with partners to understand the links between homelessness and neurodiversity in young people and how homelessness prevention services can meet their needs.	Officers trained to ensure that neurodivergence is recognised and services are adapted to meet needs.	- 10% Reduction in youth homelessness where neurodivergency is a significant factor	- Housing Advice Team Leaders - County Council	Year 1
Families with children:	-		-	
2.13 Identify the key risk factors in families that lead to homelessness to ensure targeted intervention at the earliest stage	Review and utilise best practise around early intervention and prevention for families including risk factor identification to increase homelessness prevention where data is available.	- Increase in the percentage of successful outcomes at preventing or relieving homelessness (5%)	- Housing Advice Team Leaders /Housing Strategy Officers - Research and Intelligence Officer	Year 2
Homelessness and health:				
2.14 Commission a homelessness and health audit to understand the health needs of homeless households, reduce health inequalities for rough sleepers and improve life expectancy.	The health needs of homeless households are understood and services commissioned or adapted to meet need and prevent homelessness. Health inequalities experienced by rough sleepers are reduced and life expectancy is increased.	- Undertake a homeless and health audit and consider implications from this for future actions.	- WSHOG	Year 1
2.15 Improve joint working across housing, health and social care to: (i) Prevent unnecessary hospital admissions for those who are homeless/at risk of homelessness (ii) remove barriers to hospital discharge for those who cannot return to their home or who are homeless (iii) Develop and implement the Duty to Collaborate for hospital admission, discharge, and step-down care that ensure a housing plan is in place before discharge.	Improved pathway into accommodation to ensure that discharges are planned in partnership with housing options services and that appropriate support is in place.	- No individuals discharged from hospital to the street. - Reduction in avoidable hospital admissions/ readmissions among the homeless cohort. - Reduced delays in hospital discharge for homeless households	-WSHOG -Integrated Care Board -NHS - Hospital discharge team / officer	Year 2 Year 3

2.16 Explore opportunities to provide a flexible approach to medical appointments with GPs to meet the needs of those with complex needs/chaotic lives and ensure follow up care is provided– example of health care worker in local day centres.	All rough sleepers have access to a GP and substance use services where appropriate.	Adopt a formalised, flexible healthcare access protocol that reduces missed appointments and ensures continuity of treatment. Ensure housing officers check with all Households entering temporary accommodation that they are registered with a GP	-WSHOG -Integrated Care Board -NHS - Housing Advice Team Leaders	Year 1
2.17 Enhance the collaborative approach with partners to effectively manage the risk to those with complex and multiple needs in temporary accommodation.	Greater understanding of service user needs and risks and management of these in collaboration with other agencies to reduce the number of serious incidents in unsupported TA/housing. Existing support and ongoing care and support processes are reviewed.	- 100% of residents with complex needs in temporary accommodation are identified and risk assessments completed – A co-produced multi agency safety plan in place within five working days of placement.	- Worcestershire Housing Board - WSHOG	Year 2
2.18 Integrate mental health services more deeply into homelessness prevention and intervention strategies. E.g. outreach teams should have improved access to mental health professionals to provide immediate support to those in crisis, and ongoing support is provided for those in unsupported temporary accommodation.	Improved access to mental health services for those in Temporary Accommodation through the mapping of current mental health services (and their capacity) with, gaps identified. If gap identified secure funding to meet needs.	- Develop dual diagnosis outreach screening tool - Number of joint casework reviews undertaken for high risk individuals	- Housing Advice / Outreach Teams - Mental Health Services	Year 3
2.19 Develop more fully accessible permanent and temporary housing through Disabled Facilities Grant, Health funding and Homes England Funding (dependent on funding)	An increase in healthy and accessible new build and temporary housing to meet needs.	- % increase in number of accessible temporary accommodation units from Year one baseline. - Number of new build social rent properties meeting M4(3) accessibility standard	-WSHOG -Worcestershire Housing Adaptations Service - Planning	Year 4
2.20 Investigate the ability to provide flexible budgets to prevent homelessness families and single people facing severe mental health issues.	Increase in homelessness prevention for this cohort to inform future service delivery.	Feasibility report, data collection on what works and pilot evaluation carried out which establishes a framework for	-Housing Advice Team Leaders/Housing Strategy Teams	Year 4

		funding.		
Domestic abuse				
2.21 Sustain and expand safe accommodation options (funding dependent) to eliminate the use of inappropriate B&B for DA survivors.	The use of inappropriate B&B is eliminated for DA victims/survivors	- % increase in the number of safe accommodation options. - % reduction in B&B use for DA survivors.	-DA Coordinator -Public Health -Housing Providers	Year 2
2.22 Review best practice in preventing homelessness due to domestic abuse at an earlier stage through early interventions with households at risk of homelessness due to DA.	Those are risk of homelessness and experiencing domestic abuse approach for homelessness assistance at an earlier stage e.g. prevention stage, not relief/crisis stage and are able to take up preventative options including the Sanctuary Scheme.	- % Decrease in homelessness approaches due to DA - % Increase in the use of Sanctuary Scheme.	- DA Coordinator - DA Housing Officers - Research and Intelligence Officer	Year 1
2.23 Develop a protocol for Registered Providers to access relevant survivor information (with consent) to deliver trauma-informed housing offers and minimise re-traumatisation.	Improved suitability of accommodation offers due to greater understanding of needs and risk.	- % Reduction repeat homelessness for DA survivors (below 30%) - Increased accommodation sustainment for survivors of DA	- DA Coordinator - Registered Housing Providers - DA Housing Officers	Year 2
2.24 Develop dedicated housing pathways for survivors with multiple needs and those with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)	Improved partnership working with adult social care, schools and health and holistic support available to whole family.	Reduced homelessness levels due to DA Referral pathway developed for those DA survivors who have NRPF.	- DA Coordinator - DA Housing Officers	Year 3
2.25 Strengthen communication and engagement with schools and health professionals (with consent) to support safeguarding and ensure children affected by domestic abuse are linked to appropriate support services.	Processes are defined and embedded within housing teams, education and health professionals to support early identification.	- Increase in number of children being referred for support into commissioned services by Domestic Abuse Housing Officers (DAHO). - Number of schools engaged with - Number of health organisations engaged with	- DA Coordinator - DA Housing Officers	Year 2
Prison leavers:				
2.26 Review supported and transitional accommodation capacity and barriers to accommodation to ensure that there are pathways into accommodation prior to release.	Reduced homelessness due to leaving prison onto the street or unsuitable accommodation where the prison leaver has a local connection	- Reduction of 10% of individuals with a local connection discharged from custody to the	- Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders	Year 2

		streets or into unsuitable emergency accommodation.	- Prison and Probation Service	
2.27 Improve data capture: referrals to Prison Release meetings and homeless assessments before release. Understand the accommodation pathways data including CAS3 accommodation.	Improved understanding of housing needs by Housing Teams through improved data collection from Prisons to provide increased accommodation options for prison leavers	- Reduction of 10% of individuals with a local connection discharged from custody to the streets or into unsuitable emergency accommodation.	- Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Prison and Probation Service	Year 1
2.28 Increase the number of housing assessments undertaken within prisons to identify a housing solution before release.	Increased upstream working to identify accommodation options thereby improving process for prison leavers and reducing homelessness.	- Number of housing assessments undertaken prior to release.	- Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Prison and Probation Service	Year 2
2.29 Work with partner housing providers to develop a positive pathway from CAS3 accommodation	More individuals moving on from CAS3 into settled or supported accommodation because RPs understand and can meet needs	- Set up joint meeting with RPs to discuss barriers to rehousing prison leavers and ways to overcome them	- Strategic Housing Officers	Year 1
2.30 Review Worcestershire Criminal Justice Housing and Support Protocol	Protocol is updated to reflect current legislation and service provision	- Protocol updated and signed off. - Reduction of 10% of individuals with a local connection discharged from custody to the streets or into unsuitable emergency accommodation.	- Strategic Housing officers	Year 2
Asylum seekers and refugees:				
2.31 Collaborate with community, voluntary, and faith organisations to develop tailored, culturally appropriate information and guidance for asylum seekers, refugees and those with No Recourse to Public Funds, enabling them to access necessary support.	Comprehensive and culturally appropriate guidance developed.	- meetings held with community, voluntary and faith orgs - guidance developed and shared (if relevant) - links from council websites to relevant websites like Shelter /NRPF network	-Homelessness Partnerships	Year 2
Veterans:				
2.32 Continue to work with the Worcestershire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership to ensure that	- Armed Forces Covenant embedded in housing services (where relevant) so	Number of housing staff received training on the	-WSHOG / Armed Forces Covenant Group	Year 1

there is a good understanding of the Armed Forces Covenant in housing and that organisational policies reflect the needs of the Covenant	there is an improved response to those approaching for housing who are, or have been, armed forces personnel.	Armed Forces Covenant.		

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

Action	Measure	Target	Lead	Timescale
3.1 Use the findings of the Homelessness Review Service Mapping and Supported Housing Needs Assessment to explore funding services required (to be commissioned or directly provided by LHAs) to sustain accommodation.	More homelessness cases are prevented from becoming homeless through tailored response that meets needs funded by the LHAs or funding bids	- Gaps are defined - Business case developed for supported housing (if relevant).	Housing Advice Team Leaders / Housing Strategy Officers	Year 3
3.3 Utilise funding to ensure services such as accommodation, floating support, and help with housing costs are all targeted to reduce homelessness through prevention	-Number of households prevented from becoming homeless increases	Increase in the percentage of successful outcomes at preventing or relieving homelessness (5%)	Housing Advice Team Leaders /Housing Strategy Officers	Year 1
3.4 Make use of the government toolkits to aid prevention of homelessness (when available)	-Number of households prevented from becoming homeless increases	Increase in the percentage of successful outcomes at preventing or relieving homelessness (5%)	Housing Advice Team Leaders /Housing Strategy Officers	Year 2

Pillar 4: Improving Emergency Responses – improving temporary accommodation and making people's experiences better

Action	Measure	Target	Lead	Timescale
4.1 Increase the number of high-quality, self-contained, TA units for families with children through working with Registered Housing Providers and considering options such as leasing or purchasing accommodation (funding dependent). Minimise the use of B&B, and other forms of shared accommodation and out of area placements for families with children.	Increase in the number of suitable self-contained TA units within Districts and homeless prevention undertaken to reduce the use of unsuitable, out of area or long term placements in TA to support families in moving on with their lives as quickly as possible. -	- No families placed in shared facility/B&B accommodation for more than 6 weeks. - Increase in No of self-contained temporary accommodation.	Housing Advice Team Leaders / Housing Strategy Officers	Year 2
4.2 Improve the transition of households moving out of TA and into settled accommodation by providing an assessment of support needs and referring families into the appropriate support. This would include sharing the needs assessment with housing providers (with consent) so they can provide a trauma informed housing offer.	Ensure a smooth transition for households between homelessness and being settled permanently.	Number of move-ons from TA sustained for 6 months.	Housing Advice Team Leaders /Housing Strategy Officers	Year 3
4.3 Create family-centred TA solutions: reevaluate the model for families in TA, ensuring that placements consider the impact on children's	Increase in the number of suitable self-contained TA units within Districts and homeless prevention undertaken to reduce	- Review the Temporary Accommodation	Housing Strategy Officers	Year 1

schooling, health, and support networks and help children, families and young people in TA to maintain connections to services and support networks.	the use of unsuitable, out of area or long term placements in TA to support families in moving on with their lives as quickly as possible.	Procurement and Placement policies. - Reduction of the number of households with children in temporary accommodation per 1000 - Ensure no one is in temporary accommodation for more than 12 weeks by the end of the strategy	Housing Advice Team Leaders Housing Advice Team Leaders	Year 2 Year 1 - 5
4.4 Jointly review social housing allocations policies once government's new guidance is available to try to prevent the need for TA or move people on into settled accommodation more quickly if they do need to access TA.	Increase the number of households directly accommodated into a permanent housing solution to reduce the need for temporary accommodation.	- Reduction of the number of households with children in temporary accommodation per 1000 - Review of social housing policies	Housing Advice Team Leaders	Year 2 Year 4
4.5 **Develop a resilience plan** to address the impacts of rising temporary accommodation use, accommodation costs, and the anticipated loss of grant funding. This will include a review of block booking contracts, introduce dynamic purchasing and reduce the use of spot purchasing.	Improve the cost effectiveness of temporary accommodation used.	- Reduction in temporary accommodation costs - PWLE feedback from families who have experienced TA is gathered and analysed minimum of once per annum - % increase in number of self-contained units of accommodation	Housing Strategy Officers	Year 2 Year 3
4.6 **Work with PWLE** to analyse the barriers to accessing temporary accommodation and implement solutions e.g. increased security measures, provisions for pets.	Barriers to TA are understood and action taken to overcome barriers	Collect data and analyse the reasons for rejection of TA offers	Housing Strategy Officers	Year 4

Pillar 5: Recovery and Preventing Repeat Homelessness – ensuring people don't experience homelessness more than once and having long term rough sleeping

Action	Measure	Target	Lead	Timescale
5.1 Take action to tackling long term rough sleeping through reviewing: Accommodation-based and floating support/Rough sleeper outreach and intensive support/Rent deposits	All activities to prevent and tackle rough sleeping locally are reviewed and defined, gaps identified and services commissioned to lead to a reduction in rough sleeping.	- Reduction in repeat homelessness of rough sleepers	- Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders	Year 1

and rent in advance/No First Night Out Accommodation/Furniture projects		- Reduction in the number of people sleeping rough over the month who are long term (10%)	- Rough Sleeper Co-Ordinator	
5.2 Review opportunities to develop and implement community and peer support models	To have an increase in tenancy sustainment and the engagement of service users.	- 10% increase Rough Sleepers engaging in services who are currently not engaging. - Reduction in the number of people sleeping rough over the month who are long term (10%)	- Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Rough Sleeper Co-Ordinator	Year 3
5.3 Review opportunities to strengthen advocacy services: increase the availability of independent advocates, particularly for vulnerable groups like young people, those with mental health issues, and DA survivors.	Advocacy services are defined and strengthened to give good quality advice to vulnerable groups.	Meetings with providers in place and pathway to advocacy established.	- Housing Advice/Strategy Team Leaders - Outreach Services - Housing Advice	Year 2
5.4 Investigate with PWLE why there is a high level of repeat homelessness in certain homeless cohorts e.g. DA survivors, rough sleepers, families with complex support needs.	Repeat homelessness is minimised and the drivers of repeat homelessness are understood and minimised	Reduction in repeat homelessness of rough sleepers	- Research and Intelligence Officer	Year 2
5.5 Develop mechanisms for referring temporarily accommodated households (with consent) to medical professionals, schools etc (subject to Government guidance)	Repeat homelessness is minimised and households are safeguarded	More statutory partnerships involved with homeless households.	- WSHOG	Year 1

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

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee 9th June 2026

Private Sector Housing Enforcement & Civil Penalty Notice Policy

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Ashley Monk
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Assistant Director Community and Housing Services
Report Author Katie Sharp-Fisher	Job Title: Private Sector Housing Manager Contact email:k.sharp-fisher@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881437	
Wards Affected		ALL
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		Community and Housing
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee RESOLVE that:-

1) **The Private Sector Housing Enforcement and Civil Penalty Policy (Appendix 1) be approved and delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director Community & Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to update the Policy in line with any legislative or government guidance updates**.

The Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that: -

2) **The Scheme of Delegations be amended to incorporate: -**
   a. **Enforcement powers under the Renters Rights Act 2025 in accordance with the wording set out in Appendix 2**
   b. **Enforcement powers under the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Sector (England) Regulations 2020 and under Section 126 and Schedule 9 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 as set out in Appendix 3.**

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 This report follows on from the previous report to Executive regarding the Renters Rights Act dated the 17th March 2026. The Private Sector Housing Enforcement and Civil Penalty Notice Policy has been reviewed and re- written in response to the Renters Rights Act 2025, which received Royal Assent on the 27th October 2025, with Phase 1 commencing on the 1st May 2026. This represents a significant update

to the Council's enforcement framework in response to the expanded statutory duties and regulatory burdens introduced by the Renters' Rights Act 2025.

2.2 The revised Enforcement and Civil Penalty Notice Policy ("the policy") incorporates new enforcement duties arising from the Renters Rights Act 2025. It does not however alter the Council's overarching approach to how and when the Council decides to take enforcement action. It clarifies and strengthens how existing and statutory powers will be exercised ensuring that enforcement activity remains: -

- Proportionate
- Evidence-based
- Risk-led
- Consistent with the Regulators Code

2.3 The Policy provides a consistent framework for the Council's enforcement functions across a wide range of housing and associated legislation, including primary housing statutes, landlord and tenant law, environmental protection and relevant regulatory regimes such as: -

- Housing Act 2004
- Protection from Eviction Act 1977
- Renters Rights Act 2025
- Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property)(England and Wales) Regulations 2015
- Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020

2.4 The Policy aligns with national best practice, including the Association of Chief Environmental Health Officers (ACEHO) model enforcement and Civil Penalty policy, and establishes a clear, consistent and legally robust framework for enforcement decision making and the application civil penalties.

2.5 Approval of the Policy ensures the Council can lawfully and effectively discharge its regulatory responsibilities. Failure to adopt the updated policy would result in: -

- A lack of alignment with new statutory duties
- Increased risk of inconsistent or unlawful enforcement
- Reduced ability to respond to emerging risks in the private rented sector
- Increased exposure to legal challenge

2.6 This Policy applies to all private sector housing-related enforcement functions exercised by the Council, including private rented housing, owner-occupied housing, empty homes, Houses in Multiple Occupation

and relevant site-based accommodation, where statutory powers apply. The Policy does not relate to Redditch Borough Council owned housing stock.

2.7 The Policy recognises that most landlords operate responsibly and therefore prioritises advice, engagement and support where appropriate. Formal enforcement is targeted at landlords and managing agents who fail to comply with their legal obligations, ensuring a fair and proportionate regulatory approach.

2.8 The Policy establishes a clear framework for decision making, ensuring that enforcement action is based on consistent assessment of risk, harm, vulnerability and evidence. This supports transparency and ensures that cases are progressed in a structured manner.

2.9 The policy makes clear that civil financial penalties are not fixed or automatic and must be assessed on a case by case basis. In determining the level of any penalty, officers have regard to statutory guidance, the seriousness of the breach, culpability, harm caused, any aggravating or mitigating factors, and the need for proportionality. Maximum penalties will be reserved for the most serious or deliberate cases of non-compliance.

3. Key Policy Changes

3.1 The Policy reflects the Council's expanded enforcement responsibilities under the Renters Rights Act 2025 and associated housing legislation. It sets out the Council's approach to enforcing statutory requirements relating to, among other matters: -

- misuse of possession grounds
- unlawful rent practices, including rent bidding
- failure to provide prescribed tenancy information
- discriminatory letting practices
- compliance with the Private Rented Sector Database (when in force)

3.2 The Policy adopts the enforcement principles and formalises decision making through: -

- defined investigation thresholds
- evidential and public interest tests
- proportionality assessments
- clear case closure criteria

3.3 It establishes a more robust and intelligence-led approach to enforcement enabling the Council to address serious and systematic non-compliance including: -

- Portfolio-wide investigations of landlords where systemic non-compliance is identified
- Targeted enforcement based on harm, vulnerability and risk
- Co-ordinated action across multiple properties where landlords or agents demonstrate repeated non-compliance.

3.4 The Policy confirms that civil penalty income is ringfenced and it must be reinvested into private sector housing enforcement in accordance with statutory requirements and internal financial governance arrangements. This supports the long term sustainability of the service and potentially reduces the reliance on core Council funding.

3.5 The policy provides clarity for residents, landlords and managing agents and partners organisations by confirming that: -

- the Council acts as a statutory regulator, not an arbitrator of private contractual disputes
- enforcement action is undertaken only where statutory breaches are identified
- resources are focused on matters that pose the greatest risk of harm

3.6 The implementation of this policy is expected to contribute to improve housing conditions, reduced health risks and increased tenancy security and within the Borough.

4. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

4.1 The Renters Rights Act 2025 significantly expands the Council's regulatory responsibilities, introducing new enforcement duties relating to landlord conduct and tenancy compliance alongside existing Housing Act 2004 duties. The policy complements existing duties in relation to the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), including mandatory action where Category 1 hazards are identified and discretionary action for Category 2 hazards.

4.2 The Council anticipates an increase in enforcement activity arising from the use of civil financial penalties. The effective use of civil financial penalties requires a high evidential threshold. Officers must ensure that cases meet the relevant legal tests, including sufficient evidence and public interest considerations, and that all enforcement action is supported by clear and auditable evidence. This includes a higher volume of cases requiring formal investigation, evidence gathering and decision-making to the required legal standard, particularly where penalties must be justified and capable of being defended at appeal.

4.3 There is an increased risk of appeals to the First-tier Tribunal where civil penalties are imposed. This requires that all notices, calculations and decision-making processes are legally robust, proportionate and clearly documented to withstand external scrutiny.

4.4 The policy establishes a structured and consistent approach to determining civil penalty levels. This requires officers to assess each case individually, taking into account factors including culpability, harm, aggravating and mitigating circumstances, and the need for proportionality. This approach ensures fairness but increases the time and complexity associated with decision-making.

4.5 The implementation of the policy requires effective case management systems to support the administration of enforcement action, including the preparation of notices of intent, final notices, representations, and appeals. Accurate record keeping is essential to ensure transparency and consistency.

4.6 The recovery of civil financial penalties presents an operational challenge. Payment is not guaranteed and may require additional enforcement action, including debt recovery processes and legal intervention. This introduces additional administrative and financial considerations for the Council.

4.7 The policy requires officers to exercise discretion in determining when to pursue civil penalties as opposed to alternative enforcement options. This necessitates consistent decision-making across the service to ensure that enforcement action is proportionate, targeted and aligned with the Council's wider regulatory objectives.

Implications for the Scheme of Delegations

4.9 As noted at paragraph 3.1 above, under the Renters Rights Act 2025 the scope of the Council's enforcement powers has been expanded. To ensure that officers are able to utilise these powers it will be necessary for some additional delegations to be added to the Officer Scheme of Delegations. Members are referred to the wording at Appendix 2 which sets out the additional delegations sought.

4.10 In preparing the new enforcement policy it has come to officers attention that delegations already granted by Members following two previous reports on private sector housing enforcement need to be formally added into the Scheme of Delegations. These relate to the following reports: -

- Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector – Executive 7th September 2021

- Introduction of Civil Penalties for Failure to comply with standards in the private rented sector – Executive 11th June 2019

4.11 In summary the first report related to measures granted to local authorities to bring enforcement action against landlords regarding electrical safety standards. The second report brought into effect the option under Schedule 9 of the Housing Act 2004 that when bringing enforcement action for certain specific breaches of that act the Council can impose a financial penalty as an alternative to bringing a prosecution. Members are asked to note that these are not new delegations and this is simply a tidying up exercise to ensure that all the relevant powers available to the officers are properly recorded in the Scheme of Delegations. For ease of reference, the specific wording that will be added to cover these provisions is set out in Appendix 3.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The implementation of the Renters Rights Act 2025 and the associated Enforcement and Civil Penalty Notice Policy introduces additional financial demands on the Council. These relate primarily to increased enforcement activity, including investigation, case management, legal support, and the administration of civil financial penalties.

5.2 New Burdens Funding of £60,000 has been allocated to the Council by Central Government in recognition of the additional duties and responsibilities arising from implementation of the Renters Rights Act 2025. This includes increased activity relating to enforcement of tenancy reforms, illegal eviction and harassment investigations, reporting requirements and wider private rented sector enforcement activity.

5.3 At this stage, detailed allocation of funding is still being developed as part of the Council's wider implementation planning arrangements. However, it is anticipated that the funding will support areas such as officer training, legal and governance support, operational readiness, case management system improvements, reporting system improvements, enforcement procedure development and costs associated with enforcement activity and appeals. These measures are intended to ensure that enforcement activity remains consistent, auditable and legally robust.

5.4 Government guidance accompanying the funding allocation indicates that the funding is intended to support implementation activity and additional enforcement capacity associated with the new regulatory regime. At the present time, no additional permanent staffing commitments have been approved specifically in relation to this policy and staffing implications will continue to be reviewed as operational

demand becomes clearer. The Private Sector Housing service is currently operating within existing approved budgets.

5.5 Whilst the current funding allocation relates to 2026/27, future enforcement demand, appeal activity and staffing pressures are likely to create additional ongoing financial pressures which will be actively managed through normal budget monitoring arrangements.

5.6 Civil financial penalties provide a mechanism for cost recovery and service sustainability. Any income generated from civil penalties must be ringfenced and reinvested into private sector housing enforcement functions in accordance with statutory requirements and internal financial governance arrangements. Government guidance accompanying the funding allocation indicates that authorities are expected to offset a proportion of enforcement costs through the use and recovery of civil financial penalties where appropriate. This reinforces the importance of maintaining robust enforcement, debt recovery and financial governance arrangements.

5.7 Income from civil penalties is variable and cannot be relied upon as a guaranteed funding source. The level of income will depend on the number and nature of enforcement cases, the outcome of appeals, and the Council's ability to successfully recover unpaid penalties.

5.8 There is a risk that civil penalties may not be recovered in full, particularly where individuals are unwilling or unable to pay. This may result in additional costs associated with debt recovery, including legal action.

5.9 The Council must also consider the financial implications of appeals to the First-tier Tribunal. While robust decision-making and evidentially sound enforcement practise minimises the number of appeals and improves outcomes, there remains a risk that some cases will be challenged. Where appeals arise, the Council may incur costs associated with officer time in preparing and presenting cases, and, where necessary, external legal advice. Any associated financial implications will be managed through existing service budgets and funding allocations, with ongoing monitoring through established budget and performance management arrangements.

5.10 Overall, the introduction of civil financial penalties supports a more sustainable enforcement model. However, the Council must continue to balance enforcement activity with available resources to ensure that the service remains financially viable and effective.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Amendments to the Scheme of Delegations are required to ensure officers are authorised to exercise enforcement powers and duties underthe Renters Rights Act 2025 and related housing legislation. Individual officer authorisations will also be updated accordingly.

6.2 The policy confirms that formal enforcement action will only be taken where evidential thresholds and public interest tests are satisfied, reflecting requirements under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and the Code for Crown Prosecutors. The policy also provides clear safeguards in relation to appeals, representations and tribunal proceedings.

7. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

7.1 The Policy has been aligned with ACEHO model enforcement policy and Civil Penalty policy. The new unitary authority will take over these duties as a local Housing Authority.

Relevant Council Priority

7.2 The implementation of the policy supports the Councils ability to meet one of the Council's priorities of 'Community & Housing'. The updated Policy directly impacts upon the residents throughout the community by ensuring that houses are safe and warm enabling the residents to be happy and Redditch a safe place to live.

Climate Change Implications

7.3 The implementation of this policy has a positive impact in relation to climate change. Through the enforcement of housing standards, including the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 (Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards), the Council will support improvements to the energy efficiency of residential properties within the private rented sector.

7.4 Improved energy efficiency contributes to reduced carbon emissions, lower energy consumption and enhanced thermal performance of housing stock. This supports wider national and local climate change objectives, while also delivering benefits in terms of reduced fuel poverty and improved health outcomes for residents

Equalities and Diversity Implications

7.5 The implementation of this policy has been considered in the context of the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the Public

Sector Equality Duty. The policy supports the Council's obligation to eliminate discrimination in the exercise of its enforcement functions.

7.6 Enforcement activity under this policy is expected to have a positive impact on vulnerable households, including those with protected characteristics, who are disproportionately affected by poor housing conditions and unlawful practices within the private rented sector.

7.7 The policy embeds a risk-based approach to enforcement, which includes consideration of vulnerability and individual circumstances when prioritising cases and determining appropriate action. This ensures that enforcement decisions are proportionate, fair and responsive to the needs of those at greatest risk of harm.

7.8 No adverse equality impacts have been identified. An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed prior to the implementation of this policy. While the policy primarily reflects statutory duties, the Council retains discretion in how enforcement powers are exercised. The assessment will ensure that due regard has been given to the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, including consideration of potential impacts on vulnerable groups and those with protected characteristics.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 The implementation of the Enforcement and Civil Penalty Notice Policy introduces a number of operational and strategic risks. These risks have been identified and mitigation measures are in place to ensure that enforcement activity is effective, proportionate and legally robust.

8.2 There is a risk that enforcement action, including the serving of civil financial penalties, may be subject to challenge or appeal where processes are not correctly followed or decisions are not sufficiently evidenced.

Mitigation: The policy establishes clear evidential thresholds, decision-making frameworks and procedural requirements aligned with statutory guidance. Officers will receive appropriate training and access to legal support to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and procedural standards.

8.3 There is an increased likelihood of appeals to the First-tier Tribunal, which may result in penalties being reduced, overturned, or subject to delay.

Mitigation: The policy embeds a structured and consistent approach to determining civil penalties, supported by clear reasoning, proportionality assessments and robust documentation to ensure decisions are defensible.

8.4 Income from civil financial penalties is not guaranteed and there is a risk that penalties may not be recovered in full, resulting in additional costs associated with debt recovery and legal proceedings.

Mitigation: The policy details appropriate debt recovery processes and penalty levels have been set in accordance with statutory guidance to maximise compliance and recovery where appropriate.

8.5 Increased enforcement activity may place pressure on staffing and resources, particularly where cases are complex and require significant officer time to investigate, prepare and defend enforcement action.

Mitigation: New Burdens Funding has been allocated to support implementation of the Renters Rights Act 2025 and associated enforcement activity. The Council will continue to monitor operational demand, staffing capacity, appeals activity and service pressures through normal management and budget monitoring arrangements. Officer training, procedural guidance and case management systems will support the efficient prioritisation and progression of enforcement cases.

8.6 There is a risk of inconsistent enforcement decisions across the service, which could undermine fairness and increase the likelihood of challenge.

Mitigation: The policy provides a clear and structured framework for enforcement decisions, including defined thresholds, proportionality assessments and case closure criteria (where compliance has been achieved, enforcement action has concluded or no further action is required) to ensure consistency across officers.

8.7 Enforcement action, particularly the use of civil financial penalties, may attract challenge or criticism from landlords or other stakeholders. Equally, failure to take appropriate action may undermine public confidence in the Council's regulatory role.

Mitigation: The policy promotes a balanced approach to enforcement, prioritising advice and engagement where appropriate, while ensuring that formal action is taken where statutory breaches are identified.

8.8 Effective enforcement relies on accurate record keeping and evidence management. There is a risk that inadequate systems or processes could weaken enforcement cases.

Mitigation: Investment in case management systems and clear procedural requirements will ensure that evidence is properly recorded, retained and accessible to support enforcement action and appeals.

8.9 There is a risk that future enforcement demand, appeal activity and staffing pressures may exceed available funding or create additional financial pressures for the Council.

Mitigation: The Council has received New Burdens Funding to support implementation of the new regulatory regime and will continue to monitor enforcement activity, appeal trends, staffing pressures and associated financial implications through existing financial governance and budget monitoring arrangements. Civil financial penalties may assist in offsetting a proportion of enforcement costs where recovery is successful; however, income from penalties will not be relied upon as a guaranteed funding source.

8.10 There is a risk that increased use of civil penalties may influence landlord behaviour, including market withdrawal or reduced supply in the private rented sector, which may indirectly impact housing availability

Mitigation: The Council will ensure that enforcement activity is proportionate, targeted and intelligence-led, focusing on serious or repeat non-compliance rather than minor breaches. The policy prioritises advice and engagement where appropriate, with formal enforcement action directed at those who fail to meet their legal obligations. All enforcement decisions will be underpinned by statutory guidance, the Regulators' Code and robust proportionality assessments to ensure fairness and consistency. The Council will monitor enforcement activity, appeal outcomes and local market conditions to identify any unintended impacts on the private rented sector and will keep its approach under regular review to maintain an appropriate balance between regulatory intervention and market stability.

8.11 These risks will be monitored as part of ongoing service management, financial monitoring and governance arrangements, and the policy will be kept under review to ensure that it remains effective, proportionate and aligned with legislative requirements.

9. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Private Sector Housing Enforcement & Civil Penalty Notice Policy 2026

Appendix 2 – New Delegations under the Renters Rights Act 2025

Appendix 3 – Note of existing delegations under the Electrical Safety Standards In the Private Sector (England) Regulations 2020 and Section

126 and Schedule 9 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to be formally included into the Scheme of Delegations.

Background papers

Following reports to Executive

- Renters Rights Act 2025 – 17th March 2026
- Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector - 7th September 2021
- Introduction of Civil Penalties for Failure to comply with standards in the private rented sector - 11th June 2019

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

9th June 2026

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Ashely Monk	02/06/2026
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Judith Willis Assistant Director Community and Housing Services	21/04/2026
Financial Services	Deb Goodall Assistant Director Financial Services	21/04/2026
Legal and Democratic Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor – Governance and Jess Bayley-Hill, Principal Democratic Services Officer	21/04/2026

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT & CIVIL PENALTY POLICY 2026

1. Background

Redditch Borough Council ("the Council") has statutory duties to keep housing conditions in its area under review and to take appropriate action where residential accommodation presents risks to health, safety or welfare, or where housing related legislation is not being complied with. This policy sets out the Council's principles for enforcing and exercising its duties as a Local Housing Authority under the relevant legislation. It has been developed having regard to government statutory guidance and recognised good practice frameworks including the Association of Chief Environmental Health Officers (ACEHO) model.

Local authorities exercising regulatory functions are required by section 5 of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 to publish an enforcement policy. Where regulatory functions fall within the scope of the Regulators Code, the Council is also required to have regard to that Code in the exercising of those functions. This policy provides transparency and consistency in the way the Council carries out its enforcement functions and ensures that regulatory activity is proportionate, targeted and accountable in regard to private sector housing enforcement.

This policy explains how the Council will approach housing enforcement across the private sector and how enforcement decisions will be made. It establishes the principles that guide enforcement activity and provides clarity to landlords, tenants, managing agents and other stakeholders about what can be expected from the Council when regulatory intervention is considered necessary. This policy does not apply to housing stock owned by Redditch Borough Council.

In developing this policy, the Council has had regard to relevant statutory guidance and good practise. The Council will support compliance through advice and engagement where this is appropriate and likely to be effective. However, the Council is not required to take informal action before exercising its statutory enforcement powers and may take formal action where this is necessary and proportionate to protect residents, address serious risks, and secure compliance with legal requirements.

The need for a clear and robust enforcement approach is informed by local housing conditions. Evidence indicates that a higher proportion of private rented properties contain serious hazards or fail to meet minimum standards compared with owner occupied housing throughout the Borough. The Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey 2024 indicates that approximately 9.9% of private rented sector dwellings contain a Category 1 hazard, compared with 5.9% of owner-occupied properties.

The same survey identified that approximately 11.3% of private rented homes and 9.7% of owner-occupied homes do not meet the Decent Homes Standard. By comparison, the English Housing Survey (2020) estimates that 17.5% of private rented homes and 15.1% of owner-occupied homes across the West Midlands do not meet the Decent Homes Standard. While overall housing conditions in the Borough compare favourably with regional averages, a significant number of properties still require intervention to address risks to occupants. This evidence supports the Councils use of a targeted and risk-based approach to enforcement activity. Detailed information on enforcement tools, procedures, penalties and officer decision making is set out in the sections that follow.

For the purposes of this policy, the term *"landlord"* includes letting agents, managing agents, licensors, property owners, directors of corporate landlords and any other person involved in the letting or management of privately rented accommodation. The terms *"House in Multiple Occupation"* (HMO) have the meaning set out in the Housing Act 2004. The term 'corporate landlord' should be read as referring to a corporate body that meets the definition of 'landlord' above.

For the avoidance of doubt, references in this policy to a "dwelling" have the meaning given by section 99 of the Housing Act 2004. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System applies only to premises that fall within that statutory definition. Caravans and mobile homes do not generally constitute dwellings for the purposes of Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 and are not assessed under the HHSRS. Such accommodation is instead subject to regulation and enforcement under other applicable legislation, including the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and the Mobile Homes Act 2013.

2. Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure housing enforcement action is taken lawfully, fairly and proportionately, in accordance with relevant legislation and statutory guidance, while supporting the Council's wider housing objectives. Through effective regulation and enforcement detailed within this policy provides a framework through which the Council seeks to: -

- Improve the quality of housing across the Borough
- Tackle fuel poverty and poor housing conditions
- Reduce the number of empty homes
- Support wider public health objectives and reducing health inequalities
- Support tenancy sustainment and reducing homelessness, particularly for vulnerable households
- Ensure landlords comply with their legal responsibilities
- Prevent the exploitation and poor treatment of tenants
- Contribute to safer, healthier local communities

The Council recognises that most landlords operate responsibly. The Council will therefore seek to support compliance through advice and engagement where this is appropriate and likely to be effective. However, where legal requirements are not met or risks to health or safety persist, the Council will take proportionate and effective enforcement action. Effective enforcement is essential to maintaining confidence in the private rented sector and ensuring that responsible landlords are not undercut by those who choose to operate unlawfully.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all private sector housing enforcement activity undertaken by the Council within its administrative area. It applies to all residential accommodation with the exception of Redditch Borough Council owned stock where statutory hazards or nuisances arise. The Councils private sector housing enforcement functions includes the following areas: -

- **Housing Standards and Property Conditions**
  - Privately rented properties and Housing Association properties
  - Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), including licensable and non-licensable HMOs for licensing and management standards
  - Owner occupied housing where hazards or statutory nuisances may arise
  - Empty properties
  - Buildings or structures used or intended to be used for human habitation, including outbuildings, sheds, garages or other non-traditional structures where occupation gives rise to risks to health, safety or welfare.

- **Tenancy Regulations and Landlord Conduct**
  - Enforcement of landlord obligations, tenancy requirements and tenant protections introduced by the Renters Rights Act 2025
  - Illegal eviction and harassment offences

- **Other Private Sector Housing Enforcement**
  - Residential mobile homes and caravan sites including licensing and site standards
  - Unauthorised encampments where the Council acts in its capacity as a land owner

All enforcement action will be carried out in accordance with relevant statutory Codes of Practice, Council procedures and protocols, and official guidance issued by central and local government bodies. In exercising its enforcement functions, the Council will act in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

The Council recognises that certain aspects of housing-related enforcement fall under the remit of other regulatory services. In particular, enforcement of tenancy fees and prohibited payments under the Tenant Fees Act 2019 is primarily undertaken by Trading Standards. However, Private Sector Housing may identify potential breaches during the course of their duties. Where such matters are identified, cases will be referred to Trading Standards for investigation where appropriate. The Council will work collaboratively with partner services to ensure a coordinated and proportionate enforcement response.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The effective regulation of private sector housing requires cooperation between the Council, landlords, agents, tenants and partner agencies. The following sets out the general expectations of each party.

Authorised Officers

Authorised officers will: -

- Act in accordance with this Policy, relevant legislation and statutory guidance
- Exercise professional judgement in determining appropriate enforcement action
- Act proportionately, consistently and transparently
- Ensure that decisions are properly evidenced, recorded and capable of withstanding legal scrutiny;
- Have regard to vulnerability, safeguarding considerations and equality duties when exercising enforcement functions

Landlords, Letting Agents and Managing Agents

Landlords and agents are expected to: -

- Maintain properties in compliance with all relevant legal requirements
- Respond promptly to tenant reports of disrepair or hazards
- Engage constructively with the Council and comply with statutory notices and requests for information
- Ensure that letting and management practices comply with all relevant tenancy and consumer protection legislation
- Take proactive steps to prevent risks to health and safety

Tenants and Occupiers

Tenants are expected to: -

- Report defects and hazards to their landlord or managing agent in the first instance, where it is safe and reasonable to do so
- Provide access for inspections and works where required
- Act in a tenant-like manner and not cause damage or contribute to unsafe conditions

Partner Agencies
The Council will work with partner agencies, including the Police, Fire Service, Trading Standards, Housing Options and safeguarding services, to ensure a coordinated and effective response to housing-related risks.

5. Legislative Framework

Redditch Borough Council acts as the Local Housing Authority responsible for regulating housing conditions and tenancy practices within the Borough. Under section 3 of the Housing Act 2004, the Council has a statutory duty to keep housing conditions in its district under review with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken. Where hazards are identified (as defined by the Housing Act), the Council has powers and duties to take appropriate enforcement action in accordance with Part 1 of the Act.

Section 5 Housing Act 2004 places a duty on Local Authorities to take appropriate enforcement action where a Category 1 hazard exists. Section 7 of the Housing Act 2004 gives the Council a discretionary power to take enforcement action where a Category 2 hazard exists. The Council will usually act where a Category 2 hazard presents a significant risk to health or safety.

Section 107 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 places a duty on the Council to enforce the landlord legislation including statutory duties and offences relating to tenancy standards, security of tenure, eviction practices, information requirements, rent practices and discrimination, as set out in the Act and associated legislation comprising of the following: -

- Chapters 3 and 6 of Part 1 of the Renters Rights Act 2025;
- Part 2 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025;
- Sections 1 and 1A of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977; and
- Chapter 1 of Part 1 of the Housing Act 1988.

Section 110, which places a duty on the Council to report to the Secretary of State on the exercise of its functions under the Landlord Legislation.

The Renters Rights Act 2025 and Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 fall outside the scope of the Regulators Code. Where the Code does not apply, the Council will nevertheless seek to act in accordance with the principles of good regulation unless statutory duties require otherwise.

Other housing legislation enforced by the Council does however fall within the scope of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform (Regulatory Functions) Order 2007, and the

Council will act in accordance with the principles of good regulation where applicable. Legislation within the scope of the Regulators Code includes (but is not limited to): -

- Parts 8, 9 and 10 of the Housing Act 1985;
- Part 8 of the Housing Act 1996; and
- Parts 2 to 5 of the Housing Act 2004.

5.1 Primary Legislation

When exercising its housing enforcement functions, the Council may rely on the following primary legislation, where relevant (this list is not exhaustive): -

- Housing Act 2004
- Housing Act 1985
- Housing Act 1988
- Renters Rights Act 2025
- Housing and Planning Act 2016
- Protection from Eviction Act 1977
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Building Act 1984
- Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960
- Mobile Homes Act 2013
- Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
- Criminal Justice & Public Order Act 1994
- Public Health Act 1961
- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949
- Proceeds of Crime Act 2002
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982
- Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

5.2 Secondary Legislation

Relevant secondary legislation includes (but is not limited to): -

- Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 (as amended)
- Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 (as amended)
- Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006

- Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006
- Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Additional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2007
- Mandatory Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Order 2018
- Any regulations made under or associated with the Renters Rights Act 2025 relevant to the Council's enforcement functions

The Council's enforcement responsibilities include both housing condition and tenancy related regulatory functions. All enforcement action will be taken in accordance with relevant statutory Codes of Practice, Council procedures, and official guidance. In exercising its functions, the Council will act in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010. All enforcement powers under the legislation referred to in this policy are exercised by officers authorised by the Council in accordance with its Constitution, scheme of delegation, and officer authorisation procedures.

6. Regulatory Principles

The Council fulfils its regulatory role through a combination of proactive inspection, intelligence-led investigation, reactive complaint response and multi-agency working. The Council may investigate: -

- The physical condition of residential accommodation
- Management of the residential accommodation/mobile home site
- The conduct of landlords, agents and other relevant persons
- Compliance with relevant legislation.

In order to secure compliance, the Council may use the full range of statutory powers where available, necessary and proportionate to protect occupants and improve housing conditions. In carrying out its regulatory functions, the Council will act in accordance with the following principles of good regulation: -

- **Proportionate** – Enforcement action will reflect the seriousness of the breach and the risks posed to occupants.
- **Targeted** – Resources will be directed towards the most serious housing hazards, the highest risks to health and safety, and the most serious or repeated breaches of landlord obligations.
- **Consistent** – Similar cases will be treated in a consistent manner, while recognising the specific circumstances of each case.
- **Transparent** – Landlords, tenants and property owners will be provided with clear information about legal requirements and enforcement decisions.
- **Accountable** – Officers will explain enforcement decisions and provide information on rights of appeal and complaint procedures.

Advice, guidance and engagement may be used where appropriate and likely to be effective, but nothing in this policy requires the Council to take informal action before exercising formal enforcement powers.

7. Prioritisation and Use of Discretion

The Council has a duty to regulate housing conditions and tenancy practices across the Borough; however, it is not required to investigate every potential breach. Enforcement activity will be prioritised based on: -

- The level of risk to health or safety
- Evidence of non-compliance
- The potential harm to occupants or the wider community.

Nothing in this policy creates a duty on the Council to take enforcement action in any particular case, nor does it confer a right on any person to require the Council to investigate or act. The Council retains discretion to determine whether to investigate and whether to exercise any of its statutory powers, having regard to the available evidence, the relevant legal framework, and the professional judgement of authorised officers.

The Council may only exercise enforcement powers in respect of properties located within its district, unless another Local Housing Authority has formally delegated functions to Redditch Borough Council. Where a landlord or business is subject to a Primary Authority partnership, the Council will have regard to the applicable Primary Authority and its advice in accordance with statutory requirements. For the purposes of this policy, a *Primary Authority partnership* is an arrangement under Part 2 of the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 under which a business receives assured advice from a nominated enforcing authority.

The Council may have regard to patterns of conduct across a landlord's property portfolio, including evidence of repeated breaches, systemic non-compliance or failure to respond to previous enforcement action. This may include reviewing enforcement history, regulatory datasets, licensing records, housing benefit, council tax or information lawfully shared by partner agencies.

Where a complaint has been investigated and inspected and an authorised officer is satisfied, that no actionable hazard or breach of housing legislation exists, the case will be closed with no further action. The Council is not required to carry out repeated inspections where issues have already been assessed and no breach identified. The local authority will not normally undertake further investigation unless new evidence or materially changed circumstances are presented. The Council retains discretion to determine whether further investigation is appropriate in any individual case.

Where landlords or property owners fail to meet their legal responsibilities, or where housing conditions or tenancy practices present a risk to the health or safety of occupiers, the Council will take proportionate enforcement action. The Council recognises that poor housing conditions and unsafe tenancy practices can have a disproportionate impact on vulnerable residents and will prioritise enforcement action where serious hazards affect those at greatest risk. In deciding whether, when, and how to pursue enforcement and recovery action, the Council will have regard to any known vulnerability, health needs or welfare concerns, while ensuring that legal requirements are enforced and unlawful conduct is not left unaddressed.

In exercising its discretion, the Council may have regard not only to the underlying breach, but also to a person's conduct following enforcement action, including any failure to engage, delay, or comply with requirements such as the payment of civil financial penalties.

8. Initial Complaints and Informal Resolution

The Council will normally expect that, where appropriate and safe to do so, tenants will first raise concerns regarding housing conditions with their landlord or managing agent. Landlords are expected to take reasonable steps to investigate and address reported issues within a reasonable timeframe. The Council may take this into account when determining whether to intervene; however, this will not prevent the Council from taking immediate action where: -

- there is a serious risk to health or safety;
- there is evidence of harassment, illegal eviction or retaliatory action;
- the occupier is vulnerable; or
- there is clear evidence of non-compliance.

Nothing in this section limits the Council's discretion to take formal enforcement action at any stage where it considers it necessary and proportionate.

9. Investigatory powers and powers of entry

In addition to the Council's informal and formal powers of enforcement, there are investigatory powers relating to the collection of information and relating to the entry of premises. Investigatory powers will only be exercised where it is necessary and proportionate to do so for the purposes of enforcing housing legislation and in accordance with statutory safeguards. For the purposes of this section, *rented accommodation legislation* means: -

- Sections 1 and 1A of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977;
- Chapter 1 of Part 1 of the Housing Act 1988;
- Parts 1 to 4 and 7 of the Housing Act 2004 ;
- Section 83(1) or 84(1) of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013;
- Sections 21 to 23 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016;

- Chapter 3 of Part 1 and Part 2 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.

9.1 Power to Investigate

Section 114 Renters Rights Act 2025 gives the Council power to issue a notice to a relevant person to require that person to provide specified information to the Council. This notice may be given to any person with an estate or interest in the land, the licensor, their agents, or a marketer of a property. It may be served for the investigation relating to the rented accommodation legislation.

Failure to comply with section 114 notice is an offence under section 131 Renters Rights Act 2025, as is being obstructive and intentionally or recklessly making false or misleading statements in response to a section 113 notice. Section 115 Renters Rights Act 2025 permits the Council when it reasonably suspects a breach of the rented accommodation legislation to issue a notice to any person requiring them to provide the information specified. This may only be done to investigate whether a breach has occurred under rented accommodation legislation, or to determine the amount of a penalty.

Where an individual has not complied with a section 115 notice, section 116 Renters Rights Act 2025 enables the Council to make an application to the Court to enforce the provisions of the notice and seek reimbursement for the costs of the application. Section 131 Renters Rights Act provides that, in addition to the offence of non-compliance with a Section 114 notice, it is an offence for an individual to obstruct a Council officer seeking to exercise their powers without reasonable excuse. It is also an offence to fail to give an officer any additional assistance or information which they reasonably require without reasonable excuse.

Section 235 Housing Act 2004 allows the Council to issue a notice to relevant individuals, including occupiers, directing them to provide specified documents under their control for the purpose of investigating whether an offence has been committed under Parts 1 to 4 of the Housing Act 2004 or exercising the Council's functions under Parts 1 to 4 of the Housing Act 2004.

Section 16 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 also permits the Council to issue a notice to an occupier, manager, or individual with an interest in the land to compel them to provide the Council with information on the nature of their interest and the names and addresses of current occupiers and of any others with an interest in the land.

Where relevant to the Council's housing enforcement functions, investigatory powers may also be exercised under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 for the purposes of investigating statutory nuisances or pest-related conditions affecting residential premises.

10. Decision Making Framework

The Council adopts a structured and proportionate approach to decision-making in all enforcement cases. The purpose of this framework is to ensure that enforcement action is consistent, transparent, evidence-based and proportionate to the risk posed. Enforcement decisions will be informed by a range of factors including: -

- The seriousness of the breach
- The level of risk or harm to occupants or the wider community
- The vulnerability of those affected
- The conduct, culpability and compliance history of the landlord or responsible person
- The likelihood of achieving compliance through different forms of intervention.

To support consistency in decision-making, the Council applies a structured escalation approach which reflects the severity of the case.

Band 1 – Informal Resolution

Cases involving minor deficiencies or low risk where there is no immediate threat to health or safety. Action is likely to include advice, guidance, or informal engagement.

Band 2 – Non-Punitive Formal Action

Cases where there is evidence of non-compliance but the risk remains moderate and can be addressed without punitive action. Action may include formal notices, licence conditions, or other regulatory interventions designed to secure compliance.

Band 3 – Formal Enforcement

More serious cases involving significant non-compliance, elevated risk, or failure to respond to previous interventions. Action may include civil financial penalties, formal investigations, or other enforcement measures.

Band 4 – Serious / High Harm Cases

The most serious cases involving significant harm, deliberate or reckless conduct, or repeated non-compliance. Action is likely to include prosecution, banning order applications, or the imposition of substantial financial penalties.

The bands are intended to guide and support officer decision-making. Each case will be considered on its individual merits, and authorised officers retain discretion to depart from this framework where justified, provided that the reasons for doing so are properly recorded.

Recording of Decisions

All enforcement decisions will be documented in accordance with the Council's procedures and governance arrangements. Records will include the evidence relied upon, the options considered, and the reasons for the decision taken. Where prosecution or other formal legal action is proposed, cases will be reviewed in accordance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors and, where required, in consultation with Legal Services.

Records will, where appropriate, include: -

- the nature of the breach or hazard identified
- the evidence relied upon
- the relevant legislative provisions
- the enforcement options considered
- the reasons for selecting the chosen course of action
- consideration of proportionality, vulnerability and public interest
- details of officer authorisation and, where required, legal advice

This ensures transparency, consistency and that decisions are capable of withstanding challenge through appeal, complaint or legal proceedings.

11. Entry to Premises

Section 118 Renters Rights Act 2025 permits Council officers to enter business premises of relevant people (including landlords, letting agents, and marketers) if it is necessary for the production or seizure of documents under section 122-123 Renters Rights Act 2025. This power will be exercised without a warrant.

Section 121 Renters Rights Act 2025 allows an authorised Council officer named in a warrant to enter premises used for a rental sector business which is not mainly accommodation if there are documents on the premises which the officer could require under section 122 or seize under section 123. In addition, for this power to be exercised, one of the following conditions must be met: -

- That access to the premises has been or is likely to be refused, and the Council has provided notice of their intention to apply for a warrant to the occupier
- Those documents on the premises would likely be concealed or interfered with if notice of entry were to be given
- That no occupier is present, and waiting for their return might defeat the purpose of the entry

Following a section 118 or section 121 Renters Rights Act 2025 entry, section 122 allows an officer at any reasonable time to require a relevant person on the premises to produce any documents relating to the business and to take copies of them. This

may only be exercised to ascertain whether there has been a breach of the rented accommodation legislation where an officer reasonably suspects there has been a breach or an offence; or to ascertain whether the documents may be required in evidence for proceedings regarding a breach or offence.

Following a section 118 or section 121 Renters Rights Act 2025 entry, section 123 authorises Council officers to seize and detain documents that the officer reasonably suspects may be required as evidence in proceedings relating to a breach of, or an offence under, the rented accommodation legislation. When doing so, the officer will provide evidence of the officer's identity and authority if reasonably practicable. The officer will take reasonable steps to inform the person from whom documents have been seized that they have been seized and will provide that person with a written record of what has been taken. Documents seized will be retained only for as long as reasonably necessary for the purposes of the investigation or any related proceedings and will be returned as soon as practicable thereafter, unless lawfully retained.

Section 126 Renters Rights Act 2025 permits the Council to enter residential premises used for a tenancy at a reasonable time if the officer considers it necessary as part of an investigation into potential offences specified in subsection 1(b). Where required, the Council will give at least 24 hours' notice of this to the occupier and individuals with an interest in the property as per subsection 1(c), detailing in writing why the entry is necessary and the suspected offences. Where there are occupiers found on the premises, the officer will provide evidence of the officer's identity and authority to at least one of the occupiers if reasonably practicable.

In addition, section 239 Housing Act 2004 permits Council officers to enter, if necessary and at a reasonable time, a property to carry out a survey or examination. This may be done if any one of the following is met: -

- to determine if any Part 1-4 enforcement functions should be exercised
- the premises are part of an Improvement Notice or Prohibition Order
- a management order is in force under Chapter 1 or 2 of Part 4 on the premises

In certain circumstances the Council may obtain a warrant to enter by force, if necessary, under section 240 Housing Act 2004.

11.2 Other Statutory Powers of Entry

In addition to the investigatory powers contained within the Renters Rights Act 2025 and the Housing Act 2004, the Council has powers under a range of other primary legislation to enter premises, obtain information and carry out inspections for the purposes of enforcing housing, public health and related regulatory requirements.

Under section 81 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and associated provisions of that Act, the Council has powers of entry for the purposes of investigating and dealing with statutory nuisances, including conditions that may be prejudicial to health or constitute a nuisance. Council officers may enter premises at reasonable times to investigate complaints, carry out inspections, assess conditions, take measurements or gather evidence for the purposes of determining whether a statutory nuisance exists or for taking enforcement action under the Act. Where required by the legislation, advance notice will be given. Where entry is refused or otherwise obstructed, the Council may apply to the court for a warrant authorising entry.

Under the section 4 of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 and associated provisions of that Act, the Council has powers to enter land or premises for the purpose of inspecting for, preventing or dealing with infestations of rats or mice. These powers may be exercised to establish whether treatment or works are required, to monitor compliance with statutory notices, or to carry out works in default where appropriate. Entry will normally be at reasonable times and in accordance with the procedural requirements of the Act.

Under section 95 of the Building Act 1984, the Council may exercise powers of entry for the purpose of carrying out functions under the Act, subject to the statutory requirements relating to notice and warrants. These powers may be used in connection with those building-related functions and delegations exercised by the Council, such as inspections relating to drainage, defective buildings or dangerous land. Where necessary and permitted by law, the Council may apply to the court for a warrant authorising entry, including entry by force.

The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and the Mobile Homes Act 2013 operate together to regulate residential caravan and mobile home sites. The Mobile Homes Act 2013 strengthens the site licensing and enforcement regime under the 1960 Act, including compliance notices, emergency action and works in default.

Under section 26 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960, authorised Council officers have powers to enter land used as a caravan site, including licensed residential caravan sites, at reasonable times and on production of authority if required. Entry may be exercised for the purposes of inspecting sites, assessing compliance with site licence conditions, investigating potential contraventions and taking enforcement action where permitted. Where required by law, at least 24 hours' notice of entry will be given to the occupier. Where entry is refused, anticipated to be refused, or where giving notice would defeat the purpose of entry, the Council may apply to the court for a warrant authorising entry, including entry by force where permitted by statute.

In relation to empty or unoccupied residential premises, the Council may exercise powers of entry where authorised by relevant legislation and where inspections are necessary to assess risks to neighbouring properties or the wider community. Such entry may be undertaken, where statutory requirements are met, under provisions including the Housing Act 2004, the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Building Act 1984, or the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982. These powers may be used, for example, to investigate potential housing hazards, statutory nuisances, dangerous conditions, or to secure unoccupied buildings where this is necessary in the interests of public safety.

Any powers of entry in relation to empty or unoccupied premises will be exercised in accordance with the specific procedural requirements of the relevant legislation, including notice and warrant provisions where applicable.

11.3 General Provisions

Where legislation requires notice to be given prior to entry, the Council will comply with those requirements. Where consent to enter is refused, or where entry is otherwise impracticable, the Council may apply to the court for a warrant authorising entry, including entry by force where permitted by law. All powers of entry will be exercised reasonably and proportionately, and in accordance with: -

- Relevant statutory provisions and safeguards
- Applicable Codes of Practice
- Council procedures and governance arrangements
- The Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.

Entry powers will be exercised only where necessary and proportionate for the purposes of enforcing relevant legislation and securing compliance.

12. Enforcement Action

The Council aims to support responsible landlords and property owners to raise and maintain housing standards. Landlords are expected to have an appropriate understanding of the legal requirements relating to the condition and management of privately rented accommodation and to take proactive steps to ensure compliance.

The Council will seek to secure compliance through advice, guidance and engagement wherever this is appropriate and likely to be effective. However, the Council is not required to take informal action before taking formal enforcement action and may proceed directly to formal measures where it considers this necessary and proportionate, having regard to the seriousness of the breach and the risk of harm.

In deciding the most appropriate course of action, officers will have regard to the circumstances of the case, the nature and extent of any breach, the degree of risk posed to occupiers or others, and the likelihood of achieving compliance within a reasonable timeframe.

12.1 Informal action

Informal enforcement action may include the provision of written or verbal advice, guidance, warnings, or requests for voluntary compliance. In some cases, a visit by authorised officers may be undertaken at the outset where an initial complaint, referral or other information indicates that an inspection or investigation is warranted.

Where officers visit a property, whether following a complaint, as part of a planned audit, or because of a landlord's failure to adequately resolve a reported issue informal action may be considered sufficient where only very minor deficiencies are identified and there is no immediate risk to health or safety. Where written advice is provided, this will normally specify the action required and include reasonable timescales for compliance.

While the Council will use its discretion on whether to take informal action in cases involving Category 2 hazards, it is not required to provide written or verbal advice before commencing formal enforcement action and may proceed directly to statutory measures where this is considered appropriate.

In relation to matters regulated under legislation other than the Housing Act 2004 and the Renters Rights Act 2025, the Council may also seek to secure compliance through informal enforcement action where it considers this appropriate. Informal engagement may be used where inspections or investigations identify minor deficiencies, low level breaches, or matters that do not present an immediate risk to health or safety.

12.2 Formal action

Formal enforcement action may be taken where informal action is ineffective, inappropriate, or insufficient to address risks to health, safety or the environment, or where the Council considers that informal engagement is unlikely to secure compliance. Formal enforcement action may be taken without prior informal action where, for example: -

- there are serious risks to health or safety
- there is deliberate, reckless or blatant non-compliance
- there is a history of previous breaches or failures to comply, or
- informal engagement is unlikely to achieve timely or effective compliance

The Council will therefore select the most appropriate enforcement tool having regard to the relevant legislation, the circumstances of the case, and the principle of proportionality.

The following sections describe the principal statutory enforcement powers available to the Council under specific legislative regimes. The choice of enforcement tool in any case will depend on the nature of the breach, the level of risk, the evidence available, and what is necessary and proportionate to secure compliance and protect occupants.

12.3 Enforcement

12.3.1 Housing Act 2004 Part 1

Where hazards are identified in a dwelling, the Council may exercise its powers under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004. These powers include the service of the following notices and orders: -

- **Improvement Notice** – In respect of any Category 1 hazards and any Category 2 hazards. This requires the person to whom it is served to undertake the specified remedial action within a stated period. The mandated work and the timeframe will be determined by the Council depending on the nature and scale of the work.
- **Prohibition Order** - In respect of any Category 1 hazards and any Category 2 hazards on the property. This prevents occupation of whole or part of the property, or can be used to limit occupant numbers, within a specified time frame.
- **Hazard Awareness Notice** - In respect of any Category 1 hazards and any Category 2 hazards on the property. This makes the owner and occupiers aware of the hazards identified however, it does not require remedial action. As a result, and because it does not secure risk reducing works within a specified timeframe, a Hazard Awareness Notice will not usually be the most appropriate course of action where remedial works are necessary to reduce the risk of harm to occupiers or potential occupiers.
- **Emergency Prohibition Order** – To immediately prohibit the use of all or part of a dwelling where there is an imminent risk of serious harm to the health or safety of the occupants or others.
- **Emergency Remedial Action** - Where there is a Category 1 hazard present, section 40 of the Housing Act 2004 allows the Council to undertake Emergency Remedial Action on the Category 1 hazard without prior notice.
- **Suspended Improvement/Prohibition Order** - The Council also has the power to suspend action taken under Part 1 Housing Act 2004 in situations where it has the power or duty to take enforcement action. This will be at the

Council's discretion and will normally be considered for the purpose of minimising inconvenience to the current occupiers.

- **Demolition and Clearance** - Where the statutory criteria are met, the Council may consider action under Parts 9 and 10 of the Housing Act 2004 in respect of dwellings that are unfit for human habitation or areas containing multiple such dwellings.

Non Compliance with Housing Act 2004

- Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice under section 30, or a Prohibition Order under section 32, of the Housing Act 2004 is a criminal offence. The Council may consider prosecution or the imposition of a civil financial penalty, having regard to the circumstances of the case and statutory guidance.

Other formal notices served by the Council may not relate to the landlord undertaking remedial works but may cover a range of other matters including, but not limited to, exercising a right of entry under section 239 of the Housing Act 2004 and a request to provide information or the need to abate or avoid overcrowding.

12.3.2 Renters Rights Act 2025

The Council has specific statutory duties to enforce landlord obligations and tenant protection provisions introduced by the Renters Rights Act 2025. In exercising its functions under the Renters Rights Act 2025, the Council may investigate and take enforcement action in relation to breaches of the landlord legislation, including (but not limited to): -

- Failures to comply with prescribed tenancy requirements
- Unlawful eviction and harassment offences
- Attempts to end tenancies otherwise than in accordance with the prescribed statutory process
- Misuse or abuse of possession grounds
- Failures to provide required information to tenants
- Breaches of restrictions on reletting, remarketing or rent practices
- Unlawful discrimination against prospective tenants in breach of the Renters Rights Act 2025. The Council recognises that other forms of discrimination in the letting process may arise under separate legislative frameworks. These are addressed elsewhere in this policy.

Enforcement action under the Renters Rights Act 2025 may include the service of statutory Notices, the requirement to provide information, the imposition of civil financial penalties, prosecution, applications for rent repayment orders, or other regulatory action permitted by law. Enforcement under the Renters' Rights Act 2025

is primarily offence-based and may be addressed through civil penalties, prosecution and other statutory remedies rather than through prescriptive notice regimes.

In determining the most appropriate enforcement response, the Council will have regard to the circumstances of the case, including the seriousness of the breach, the impact on the tenant, any evidence of deliberate, reckless or repeated non-compliance, and the need to protect tenants from unfair or unlawful practices.

12.3.3 Right to Rent Avoidance of Discrimination

The Council recognises the requirements placed on landlords under the Immigration Act 2014 and associated secondary legislation in relation to Right to Rent checks. Section 23 of the Act provides for a Code of Practice issued by the Home Office to ensure that such checks are carried out without unlawful discrimination.

Enforcement of immigration legislation does not fall within the remit of the Council's Private Sector Housing functions. However, the Council recognises that discriminatory letting practices may impact access to accommodation and contribute to housing need. Where such practices are identified, the Council may: -

- provide advice and guidance to landlords on lawful letting practices
- signpost to relevant statutory codes of practice
- consider whether wider housing enforcement powers are engaged
- work with partner agencies where appropriate.

12.4 Other Housing and Public Health and Environmental Legislation

12.4.1 Environmental Protection Act 1990

Under the Section 79 to 80 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Council has powers to take enforcement action in relation to statutory nuisances, including conditions that are prejudicial to health or constitute a nuisance.

Where a statutory nuisance is identified, or is likely to occur, the Council may serve an Abatement Notice requiring the nuisance to be discontinued, restricted or prevented, or requiring works to be carried out. Failure to comply with an Abatement Notice is a criminal offence and may result in prosecution or further enforcement action, including works in default where appropriate.

12.4.2 Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949

Under section 4 of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, the Council has powers to require owners or occupiers of land or premises to take steps to prevent or eradicate infestations of rats or mice.

Enforcement action may include the service of statutory notices requiring treatment or works to be carried out, monitoring compliance, and the carrying out of works in default where necessary. Failure to comply with a notice may lead to prosecution and/or the recovery of costs incurred by the Council.

12.4.3 Building Act 1984

Under the Building Act 1984, the Council may take enforcement action in connection with those building-related functions delegated to it under the Act, where statutory conditions are met. This may include action in respect of buildings or land presenting risks to persons or property, or where works are required to address defective conditions within the Council's remit.

Formal enforcement action may include the service of statutory notices requiring remedial works to be carried out, the taking of emergency action where there is an imminent risk of serious harm, or the carrying out of works in default, in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Any enforcement action will be taken only where authorised by law and where other regulatory powers are not more appropriate.

12.4.4 Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 & Mobile Homes Act 2013

In relation to licensed residential caravan sites and protected mobile home sites, the Council has enforcement powers under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and the Mobile Homes Act 2013.

Formal enforcement action may be taken where a site is operating without a licence, site licence conditions are not complied with, where site management standards are deficient, or where offences are identified. Enforcement action may include the service of statutory or compliance notices, emergency action where permitted, the carrying out of works in default, and the prosecution of offences in accordance with the relevant legislation.

12.4.5 Empty Properties

The Council will take a proactive and risk-based approach to the identification and management of empty private residential properties, recognising the impact that long-term vacant dwellings can have on housing supply, neighbourhood amenity and community wellbeing.

Where empty or unoccupied properties give rise to housing hazards, statutory nuisances, anti-social behaviour or other breaches of housing-related legislation, the

Council may take proportionate enforcement action using the relevant statutory powers available to it.

The Council's approach to empty properties is supported by its adopted Empty Homes Strategy 2026, which sets out the Council's wider objectives, priorities and non-statutory interventions for bringing empty homes back into use. This Enforcement Policy provides the framework through which statutory enforcement and regulatory powers may be exercised, where appropriate, to support the delivery of those objectives.

The Council will seek, in the first instance, to work with owners to bring empty properties back into use through advice, engagement and voluntary measures. However, where voluntary action is not achieved, the Council may consider proportionate enforcement action in accordance with this policy and the relevant statutory framework.

Enforcement options may include: -

- service of statutory notices to address housing hazards, statutory nuisances, waste accumulation or defective conditions;
- action to secure properties where they present a risk to public safety;
- carrying out works in default where required works are not undertaken;
- recovery of costs incurred by the Council, including through local land charges; and
- consideration of enforced sale procedures where debts are secured against a property.
- Consideration of compulsory purchase orders

Where statutory criteria are met, the Council may also consider the use of Interim or Final Empty Dwelling Management Orders under Part 4 of the Housing Act 2004, or compulsory purchase powers, in accordance with adopted policies, corporate governance arrangements and decision-making procedures. The Council will prioritise long-term empty properties that have a significant adverse effect on the local community and may adopt a coordinated approach involving internal services and external partners to support their return to occupation.

12.4.6 Electrical safety / smoke and carbon monoxide / energy efficiency

The Council may take enforcement action to secure compliance with statutory private rented sector safety and energy efficiency requirements. This includes duties relating to electrical safety standards, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, and minimum energy efficiency standards.

In relation to energy efficiency, the Council enforces the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards under the *Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 (as amended)*. Where landlords fail to comply with the prescribed minimum energy efficiency standard or other regulatory requirements, the Council may take enforcement action, which may include the service of compliance notices, the requirement to provide information, and the imposition of civil financial penalties.

Enforcement of electrical safety requirements and smoke and carbon monoxide alarm standards may also include the service of statutory notices and the imposition of civil financial penalties in accordance with the relevant regulations. Further detail on the Council's approach, including statutory statements of principles for determining penalties, is set out in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

12.4.7 HMO licensing and management

The Council may take enforcement action to secure compliance with Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing requirements, licence conditions and management standards, including the imposition of civil financial penalties or prosecution where appropriate. Enforcement action may include the service and enforcement of licence conditions and requirements imposed under the Housing Act 2004 and associated Management Regulations.

HMO licences may include conditions requiring works to be carried out or measures to be taken to meet prescribed standards, including compliance with the Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations. In general, the Council will seek to address Category 1 and Category 2 hazards through the exercise of its powers under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004. This does not prevent the Council from imposing licence conditions relating to the provision, installation or maintenance of facilities or equipment, even where similar outcomes could be achieved through Part 1 enforcement.

Failure to comply with HMO licence conditions or management requirements is a criminal offence and may result in prosecution or the imposition of a civil financial penalty, having regard to the circumstances of the case and relevant statutory guidance.

The Council has adopted local amenity standards for HMOs, published as "Amenity Standards", which set out minimum requirements for facilities and space. Compliance with these standards forms a condition of all HMO licences issued within the Borough.

12.4.8 Illegal eviction and harassment

The Council will investigate and take enforcement action in relation to illegal eviction and harassment offences, including offences under the Protection from Eviction Act 1977 and related tenant-protection provisions. Such action will be taken in accordance with the applicable evidential tests and public interest considerations.

Enforcement action may include the imposition of civil financial penalties, prosecution, or other regulatory action permitted by law, including enforcement of relevant duties and offences introduced by the Renters' Rights Act 2025. In determining the appropriate response, the Council will have regard to the seriousness of the conduct, the impact on the occupier, and the need to protect tenants from unlawful interference with their occupation of residential premises.

12.4.9 Traveller Incursions on Local Authority Land

This section sets out the Council's approach to unauthorised encampments on land it owns or manages. In dealing with unauthorised encampments, the Council is acting primarily in its capacity as a landowner rather than as a housing regulator.

Where an unauthorised encampment occurs on Redditch Borough Council land, the Council will adopt a lawful, proportionate and case-specific approach. In determining the appropriate response, the Council will have regard to all relevant circumstances, including:

- the location, use and characteristics of the land occupied;
- any risks to health, safety or public amenity;
- the presence of children, elderly persons or individuals with health, welfare or support needs;
- any evidence of criminal activity, significant disruption or environmental harm; and
- the availability of alternative authorised sites or appropriate support.

The Council recognises the need to balance the rights and welfare of individuals occupying land without authorisation with the rights of the wider community and its responsibilities to protect public land, public safety and amenity. When considering any action in relation to unauthorised encampments, the Council will have due regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Where appropriate, and having considered all relevant circumstances, the Council may take enforcement action as a landowner. This may include, but is not limited to:

- seeking possession of land through civil proceedings;

- the service of notices or the taking of action under relevant housing, public health or environmental legislation where statutory criteria are met;
- the recovery of costs associated with enforcement or remediation, where lawful to do so; and
- working with the Police or other agencies where statutory thresholds for involvement are met.

Matters relating to unauthorised encampments will normally involve joint working with partner agencies, which may include the Police, Legal Services, Housing, Environmental Health, Public Health and safeguarding services. Where welfare needs or safeguarding concerns are identified, the Council will ensure that appropriate enquiries are made and that relevant support services are engaged before, or alongside, any enforcement action.

The Council retains discretion as to whether, and how, enforcement action is taken in relation to unauthorised encampments. Nothing in this policy creates a duty on the Council to take enforcement action in any particular case, nor does it confer any right on any person to require the Council to act. Any action taken will be proportionate, justified and recorded, with decisions made by authorised officers in accordance with the Council's governance arrangements.

13. Work in default

Where legislation permits, the Council may carry out works in default where a person has failed to comply with the requirements of a statutory notice or with licence conditions, or where urgent action is required and the relevant statutory criteria are met. Works in default may be undertaken under a range of legislative regimes, including housing, public health, environmental and site licensing legislation.

The carrying out of works in default is an enforcement option available to the Council in addition to other action for non-compliance, such as prosecution or the imposition of civil financial penalties. The Council is under no duty to undertake works in default and will do so only where it considers this necessary, appropriate and proportionate to secure compliance or to remove or reduce risks to health, safety or amenity.

Where works in default are undertaken, the Council will seek to recover its reasonable costs in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions. This may include the application of local land charges or other lawful cost-recovery mechanisms.

Decisions to carry out works in default will be taken by authorised officers having regard to the circumstances of the case, the seriousness of the breach, the risk posed, the availability of alternative enforcement options, and the Council's governance and financial procedures.

14. Enforcement Outcomes for Non-Compliance

14.1 Prosecution

Prosecution is a formal enforcement option available to the Council in respect of criminal offences under housing and related legislation. Where legislation provides an alternative of a civil financial penalty, the Council will normally consider prosecution only in more serious cases.

Prosecution will normally be considered where one or more of the following circumstances apply: -

- A breach has resulted in serious harm or risk of serious harm to occupants or others
- There is evidence of deliberate, reckless or persistent non-compliance
- There have been repeated breaches or a history of non-compliance
- There has been a failure to comply with a statutory notice
- False or misleading information has been provided to the Council
- An individual has obstructed officers in the course of their duties
- The offence is of such seriousness that a financial penalty would not be an appropriate response
- It is necessary to act as a deterrent and protect the wider community

The decision to prosecute will be made having regard to the evidential sufficiency of the case and the public interest factors set out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors, issued by the Director of Public Prosecutions. In determining whether prosecution is appropriate, the Council will consider the seriousness of the offence, any evidence of deliberate or reckless conduct, the harm caused, and the deterrent effect of formal legal proceedings.

In circumstances where an offence has been committed by a corporate body, relevant legislation may permit enforcement action to be taken against company officers or, where applicable, company members, in addition to or instead of the corporate body itself. The Council will determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether enforcement action against individuals is appropriate, having regard to their level of responsibility and involvement in the offence. The Council may, where appropriate following conviction, consider the use of confiscation proceedings under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 to recover financial benefit obtained as a result of criminal conduct.

14.2 Civil Financial Penalties for specified offences

The Council may impose civil financial penalties where legislation provides an alternative to prosecution. Civil penalties will be imposed in accordance with statutory guidance and this policy.

If a landlord has committed multiple breaches or offences, a separate civil penalty can, and usually will, be imposed for each breach and offence. In each case, the level of any civil penalty imposed will be determined in accordance with this policy. If multiple landlords have committed the same breach or offence at the same property, a separate civil penalty can, and usually will, be imposed on each offender. In each case, the level of civil penalty imposed on each offender will be in accordance with this policy.

This section of the policy outlines the Council's methodology and mechanism for assessing and setting the level of a civil penalty at all stages where a civil penalty is under consideration, including the preparation of a notice of intent, and where a final decision has been made to impose a civil penalty.

When applying the civil penalties matrix, interim calculations at individual stages may result in figures that exceed the statutory maximum. Where the final amount reached following application of all relevant steps exceeds the statutory maximum, the civil penalty will be reduced to the applicable statutory maximum.

The Council considers the need for transparency and consistency to be of primary importance to ensure fairness in the discharge of its functions. The general objective of this policy is, therefore, to promote both transparency and consistency in the imposition of financial penalties so that those involved in the letting or management of accommodation

(a) know how the Council will generally penalise relevant breaches and offences and;
(b) are assured that, generally, like cases will be penalised similarly, and different cases penalised differently.

The Council recognises that, despite its best efforts, landlords may operate unlawfully for a significant period without detection, and that only a proportion of those committing relevant breaches and offences will be identified. Accordingly, the Council seeks to ensure that civil penalties are set at a level that makes it clear to the landlord concerned and to others that operating unlawfully as a landlord is financially disadvantageous when compared to operating lawfully.

The Council has a duty to act fairly, transparently and consistently when assessing civil penalties. To maintain fairness between all landlords, the Council will not give weight to claims advanced as factors that might reduce the amount of a civil penalty unless those claims are supported by evidence that the Council reasonably considers to be relevant, reliable, credible, and sufficient in scope and detail to enable proper assessment of the claim, having regard to the nature of the claim, the information ordinarily available to the landlord, and the need for consistent and fair decision-making. Allowing inadequately evidenced assertions to influence outcomes would risk

rewarding those who provide incomplete or misleading information and would create an unfair advantage over landlords who provide a full and properly evidenced account.

Accordingly, the Council expects landlords against whom a civil penalty is being considered to provide all documents and records that would ordinarily exist if their account were accurate. Where such evidence is not provided, and no explanation that the Council considers adequate is given, the Council may draw an adverse inference.

Where claims are advanced without sufficient supporting evidence, the Council may request specified supporting material before determining whether to issue a final notice or whether any mitigation has been sufficiently evidenced so as to justify a lower civil penalty. The Council has the power to impose a Civil Financial Penalty for the following: -

- Unlawful eviction and harassment of occupier as defined under the Protection from Eviction Act 1977
- Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice [s30 Housing Act 2004]
- Offences in relation to licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) [s72 Housing Act 2004]
- Offences in relation to the Selective Licensing of ‘houses’ [s95 Housing Act 2004]
- Failure to comply with an Overcrowding Notice [s139 Housing Act 2004]
- Failure to comply with a management regulation in respect of an HMO [s234 Housing Act 2004]
- Offences in relation to Regulation 3 of the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020
- Failure to comply with a banning order [s21 Housing and Planning Act 2016]
- Failure to give a written statement of terms under section 16D of the Housing Act 1988
- Failure to give an existing tenant information about changes made by the Renters’ Rights Act under paragraph 7(2) of schedule 6 to the Renters’ Rights Act 2025
- Attempting to let a property for a fixed term under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988
- Attempting to end a tenancy orally or by service of a notice to quit under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988
- Serving an eviction notice that attempts to end a tenancy outside the prescribed section 8 process under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988
- Relying on a ground where the person does not reasonably believe that the landlord is/will be able to obtain possession under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988

- Relying on a ground knowing the landlord would not be able to obtain possession or being reckless as to whether they would under section 16J of the Housing Act 1988
- Failing to provide a tenant with prior notice that a ground which requires it may be used under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988
- Reletting or remarketing a property before expiry of the 12 month no-let period after using the moving and selling grounds under sections 16E and 16J of the Housing Act 1988
- Discriminating against prospective tenants during the letting process on the grounds that those tenants are in receipt of benefits or have children under sections 33 and 34 of the Renters Rights Act 2025
- Marketing a letting without stating the proposed rent under section 56 of the Renters Rights Act 2025
- Inviting or encouraging any person to offer to pay an amount of rent under the proposed letting that exceeds the stated rent under section 56 of the Renters Rights Act 2025
- Accepting an offer from any person to pay an amount of rent under the proposed letting that exceeds the stated rent under section 56 of the Renters Rights Act 2025

The Government has issued statutory guidance entitled “Civil penalties under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation”. The Council has regard to this guidance in the exercise of their functions in respect of civil penalties. The Council has considered the following factors in developing this civil penalty policy to help ensure that the civil penalty is set at an appropriate level.

14.1 Persons Liable for Civil Penalties

Civil financial penalties may be imposed on any person who has committed a relevant breach or offence under the legislation outlined in this policy. In determining who is liable, the Council will consider the available evidence and identify the person or persons responsible for the breach or offence. Liability will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may include landlords, agents, licence holders, or other persons involved in the letting or management of residential accommodation. The following table provides a general guide to responsibility for common breaches and offences: -

Summary of Offence Responsibilities

Breach or Offence	**Person(s) Liable**
Rent to Rent arrangements	Landlord and/or superior landlord
Illegal eviction and harassment	Any person who has committed the offence
Assured tenancy duties (Renters Rights Act 2025)	Landlord or person acting on their behalf

Discrimination in breach of the Renters Rights Act 2025	Landlord or person acting on their behalf
Unlicensed HMOs	Person having control and/or person managing (section 263 Housing Act 2004)
Overcrowded HMOs	Person having control and/or person managing
Breach of HMO licence conditions	Licence holder
Breach of HMO Management Regulations	Person having control and/or person managing
Failure to comply with a statutory notice	Person on whom the notice was served
Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Regulations	Relevant landlord
Electrical Safety Regulations	Private landlord or registered provider

The table above is intended as a general guide only. The Council will determine liability based on the specific facts of each case. Where a breach or offence is committed by a body corporate, and it is shown to have been committed with the consent, participation or neglect of an officer of that body, the Council may impose a civil penalty on that individual as well as, or instead of, the corporate body.

Where more than one person is liable for the same breach or offence, the Council may impose a civil penalty on more than one person. The amount imposed on each person may differ depending on the circumstances of the case.

Once the Council has identified the appropriate person or persons against whom enforcement action should be taken, it will determine the level of any civil financial penalty in accordance with statutory guidance and this Policy. In doing so, the Council will have regard to a range of factors such as: -

- **Severity of the breach or offence.** The more serious the breach or offence, the higher the penalty should be.
- **Culpability and track record of the offender.** A higher penalty will be appropriate where the offender has a history of failing to comply with their obligations and/or their actions were deliberate and/or they knew, or ought to have known, that they were in breach of their legal responsibilities.
- **The harm caused to the tenant.** This is a very important factor when determining the level of penalty. The greater the actual harm or the potential for harm, principally to the tenant but also potentially the local community, the higher the penalty should be.
- **Punishment of the offender.** The penalty should, in a way that is fair, both punish the offender and demonstrate the consequences of not complying with their responsibilities.

- **Deter the offender from repeating breaches or offences.** The ultimate goal is to prevent any further offending and help ensure that the offender fully complies with all of their legal responsibilities in future. The level of the penalty should therefore be set at a level that it is likely to have a very significant deterrent effect.
- **Deter others from committing similar breaches or offences.** While the fact that someone has received a civil penalty may not be in the public domain, the civil penalty policy itself will be and local authorities should consider how their formal enforcement activity can be effectively publicised. An important part of deterrence is the realisation on the part of landlords that the local housing authority is proactive in levying civil penalties where the need to do so exists and the civil penalty will be set at a high enough level such that operating lawfully will be the sensible financial choice.
- **Remove any financial benefit the offender may have obtained as a result of committing the breach or offence.** The principle here is that it should not be in the offender's financial interest to commit a breach or offence rather than comply, for example that the penalty for breaching licensing conditions in respect of occupancy of a property is less than the additional rent received as a result of the over-crowding. The absence of any financial benefit to the landlord does not mean though that the penalty should be reduced.

The factors set out above will be applied through the Council's civil penalties matrix to determine an appropriate starting point and any subsequent adjustments to the level of the penalty. The matrix provide a structured framework to promote consistency, but does not remove the Council's discretion to depart from starting points where justified by the particular circumstances of a case, subject to statutory limits and guidance. Once the level of the civil financial penalty has been determined, the Council will apply the relevant statutory process for imposing the penalty.

14.2.1 Statutory requirements for Imposing Civil Penalties

The table below sets out the statutory requirements applicable to different civil penalty regimes. It is intended as a general guide only. The Council will ensure that all enforcement action is taken in accordance with the specific statutory provisions applicable to each case, including any requirements relating to notices, representations, appeals and publication.

Legislation	Relevant Provision	Notice of Intent Required?	Publication / Transparency
Housing and Planning Act 2016	Civil penalties (including banning order breaches)	Yes – Notice of Intent must be served before imposing a civil penalty	Details may be recorded on the Rogue Landlord Database (where applicable)

Housing Act 2004	Civil penalties under s.249A	Yes – Notice of Intent required before imposing a civil penalty	Publication at the Council's discretion and/or on relevant databases
Protection from Eviction Act 1977	Illegal eviction and harassment (civil penalty alternative)	Yes – where a civil penalty is imposed instead of prosecution	Publication discretionary via Council reporting or enforcement transparency
Renters' Rights Act 2025	Civil penalty provisions	Yes – Notice of Intent required	Publication may include national PRS database and Council transparency reporting
Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015	Regulations 33–42	No – Compliance Notice issued first	Publication on PRS Exemptions Register
Electrical Safety Standards Regulations 2020	Regulations 3–11	Yes – following Remedial Notice	Publication discretionary
Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Regulations 2015	Regulations 5–8	No – Remedial Notice precedes penalty	Statement of Principles must be published
Consumer Rights Act 2015	Letting agent transparency	Yes	No statutory publication requirement

14.2.2 Civil Penalties Matrix

In determining the level of a civil penalty, officers will have regard to the matrix set out in Appendix 1 and the following sequential steps: -

1. Determining the starting point based on the seriousness of the breach or offence.
2. Adjustment for factors relating to the type of landlord; size and type of portfolio controlled, owned or managed; experience of the landlord ("Landlord Type")
3. Mitigating and aggravating factors the Council deems significant including, but not limited to, factors relating to the track record and culpability of the landlord and the actual or potential harm to the occupants.
4. Financial considerations.
5. Applying the totality principle.

Where legislation requires the Council to publish a separate statement of principles for determining penalty charges, including the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015, the offence-specific factors and starting points set out in the relevant appendix will apply in place of those in Appendix 1. In all other respects, the methodology set out in this policy, including landlord-type adjustments, financial consideration and the totality principle, will continue to apply.

Where a civil financial penalty is imposed in respect of an offence under section 234(3) of the Housing Act 2004 (failure to comply with HMO Management Regulations), or section 72(3) of the Housing Act 2004 (breach of licence conditions), the offence-specific duties, factors and starting points set out in Appendix 1 will apply. The Council will determine whether a separate civil penalty is appropriate for each breached regulation or licence condition having regard to the facts of the case, statutory guidance, and the totality principle.

Starting point based of seriousness of the breach or offence

The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government has provided statutory guidance that prescribes starting points for all breaches and offences based on the seriousness of the breach or offence. Where the Council has determined its own starting points for specific offences, including breaches of licence conditions under sections 72(3) and 95(2) of the Housing Act 2004, these are set out in the relevant matrices appended to this policy.

Adjustment for factors relating to the type of landlord; size and type of portfolio controlled, owned or managed; experience of the landlord ("Landlord Type")

While all landlords are expected to comply fully with their legal obligations, the Council considers that a higher standard of professionalism and regulatory awareness is reasonably expected of landlords who operate at greater scale, who have greater experience, or who are involved in more complex forms of letting. Where such landlords fail to comply with their obligations, this will ordinarily justify a higher civil penalty. In particular, a higher degree of professionalism is expected of landlords who:

- Control, own, or manage a significant portfolio of properties
- Have significant experience in the letting or management of property
- Are or have been involved in the letting or management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)
- Are corporate landlords, or
- Are or have been directors of corporate landlords

An upward adjustment of 20% of the applicable starting point will be applied where the landlord meets any one or more of the following criteria: -

- The landlord has, at any point in time, controlled, owned, or managed six or more properties. These properties need not have been held concurrently or at the time civil penalty proceedings are brought
- The landlord has, at any point in time, controlled, owned, or managed three or more properties that operated as HMOs, whether or not concurrently
- The landlord is, or has previously been, a director of a corporate landlord
- The landlord is a corporate landlord
- The landlord has, in the Council's assessment and by reference to the available evidence, significant experience in the letting or management of property.

A downward adjustment of 20% of the applicable starting point will be applied only where all of the following criteria are met: -

- The landlord has, at any point in time, controlled, owned, or managed no more than two properties
- The landlord has controlled, owned, or managed no more than one property that has operated as an HMO, at any point in time
- The landlord has, in the Council's assessment and by reference to the available evidence, very limited experience in the letting or management of property

Mitigating and aggravating factors the Council deems significant including, but not limited to, factors relating to the track record and culpability of the landlord and the actual or potential harm to the occupants

To promote fairness and consistency in the administration of civil penalties, the Council will apply a structured and consistent framework when determining the extent to which mitigating and aggravating factors affect the quantum of any civil penalty.

14.2.2 General approach

Each breach or offence may have offence-specific mitigating and/or aggravating factors, which will be considered alongside the generic factors set out below. Where multiple civil penalties are issued under this policy against the same landlord at the same time, and except where expressly stated otherwise, mitigating and aggravating factors will be considered and applied separately to each civil penalty when determining the quantum of each penalty.

Mitigating factors

The Council may reduce the level of a civil penalty by up to 20% of the applicable starting point to reflect the presence of mitigating factors. Only in exceptional circumstances may the Council depart from the application of this policy in respect of mitigating factors and apply a reduction in excess of 20%. Exceptional circumstances

are rare and unusual and are not established merely by the presence of multiple mitigating factors.

Within the framework of this policy, the Council has not sought to provide an exhaustive list of mitigating factors, recognising that a wide range of circumstances may potentially give rise to mitigation. However, the following generic mitigating factors will be considered in respect of each breach or offence: -

Steps taken to remedy the basis of the breach or offence

Non-exhaustive examples include: -

- Promptly remedying all elements of the breach or offence after receiving communication from the Council.
- Promptly remedying all the significant elements of the breach or offence leaving only less significant elements of the breach or offence.

A high level of cooperation

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Proactive provision of significant information the Council reasonably considers relevant beyond that required by statutory notice.

Acceptance of liability

Non-exhaustive examples include: -

- Accepting liability before or within the period for representations.

Where a landlord relies on a reasonable excuse defence or otherwise contests liability, this mitigating factor will not usually apply.

Health circumstances

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- A serious health condition or medical incident experienced by the landlord during, or in the period immediately preceding, the breach or offence, where there is clear and reliable evidence that the condition had a direct and material impact on the landlord’s ability to comply with the relevant legal obligation. Examples may include, but are not limited to, a heart attack, stroke, cancer diagnosis, or other acute or serious medical event causing significant incapacity or impairment.

Diminished culpability (limited responsibility)

Non-exhaustive examples include: -

- A joint landlord who has evidenced that compliance arrangements for the subject property were directed and controlled by another joint landlord, and not by them.
- A landlord who became involved only after an unforeseen change in circumstances (such as the death of the previous landlord) and who committed the breach or offence only for a limited period while putting their affairs in order.

The instruction of a managing or letting agent, or reliance on an agent's actions or omissions, will not of itself constitute diminished culpability.

Aggravating factors

The Council may increase the level of a civil penalty by up to 20% of the applicable starting point to reflect the presence of aggravating factors. Only in exceptional circumstances may the Council depart from the application of this policy in respect of aggravating factors and apply an increase in excess of 20%. Exceptional circumstances are rare and unusual and are not established merely by the presence of multiple aggravating factors. The following generic aggravating factors will be considered in respect of each breach or offence: -

Previous history of non-compliance.

Non-exhaustive examples include: -

- Previous successful prosecutions (including relevant spent convictions), previous civil penalties, previous rent repayment orders, previous works in default, previous simple cautions.

Concurrent investigations or proceedings relating to other civil penalties, prosecutions, or rent repayment orders will not be treated as previous non-compliance.

Non-cooperation with the Council.

Non-exhaustive examples include: -

- Failure to comply with notices issued under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, section 235 of the Housing Act 2004, or section 114 of the Renters Rights Act 2025.
- Failing to provide a substantive response to a letter of alleged offence.
- Failing to attend previously agreed meetings.

Where the Council considers that steps have been taken to avoid payment or enforcement (including asset transfer, company dissolution, or re-structuring), this

may be treated as an aggravating factor and pursued through appropriate legal routes. Where the Council has prosecuted, or is pursuing a prosecution, in respect of the same act or omission involving failure to provide legally required information (including failure to comply with a statutory notice), that conduct will not also be treated as an aggravating factor for the purposes of setting the civil penalty, in order to avoid double counting. Where multiple civil penalties are imposed against the same landlord at the same time, this aggravating factor will be applied only to the civil penalty with the highest starting point, unless there is a clear and reasoned basis for applying it differently.

Deliberate intent or negligence when committing the offence.

Non-exhaustive examples include: -

- Knowledge that the breach or offence was occurring.
- Continuation of offending after communication from the Council.
- Premeditation or planning, including steps taken to prevent detection or effective investigation.
- Providing false or misleading information to the Council.
- Applying pressure to occupants to deter cooperation with the Council.

The number of occupants affected.

Non-exhaustive examples include: -

- 3-5 occupants affected.

Duration of non-compliance.

Non-exhaustive examples include: -

- The offence or breach occurred over a 3–6 month period.

Vulnerability of occupants

Non-exhaustive examples include children and young adults, persons vulnerable by reason of age, disability or sensory impairment, persons with drug or alcohol dependency, victims of domestic abuse, children in care, persons with complex health needs, persons who do not speak English as a first language, victims of trafficking or sexual exploitation, refugees, asylum seekers, and pregnant women.

14.2.3 Financial considerations

The Council will review the quantum of the civil penalty and consider whether it is sufficient to act as an effective deterrent to future non-compliance. Where the Council has evidence that it considers to be sufficiently reliable regarding rental income and/or

asset value from the landlord's, it may determine that an increase in the level of the penalty is appropriate in order to achieve effective deterrence. It is essential that, as an absolute minimum, landlords do not financially benefit from their offending behaviour.

Financial circumstances will ordinarily be considered after any written representations have been received and as part of the determination of any final notice. Where a landlord seeks to rely on a strained or limited financial position as a basis for reducing the level of a civil penalty, that position must be supported by appropriate and verifiable evidence sufficient to enable the Council to assess the landlord's financial position consistently, objectively, and transparently. A distinction will be drawn between evidenced financial hardship and deliberate or strategic non-payment. A claimed inability to pay will not prevent enforcement or recovery action where the Council is satisfied that non-payment is avoidable or part of a pattern of non-compliance.

Unsupported assertions, partial disclosure, or selective provision of information will not be given weight. At a minimum, and where such information exists, the following should be provided as part of any written representations: -

- The last three full tax years full self-assessment tax returns filed with HMRC, including all additional and supplemental pages
- The last three full tax years SA302 documents & tax year overviews
- The last three months payslips
- The last three years P60 certificates
- The last twelve months Universal Credit payment statements
- A list of all property assets owned or jointly owned (not limited to rental properties), together with corresponding Land Registry title documents
- A list of all property assets owned, or held on a long lease, by any corporate entity in which the landlord has a beneficial interest, together with corresponding Land Registry documentation
- The most recent annual mortgage statement for each property, or the last twelve months mortgage statements where the mortgage has been in place for less than twelve months
- Valuation statements for all ISAs held
- Statements from any cryptoasset exchange accounts showing balances and valuations
- A list of all shareholdings
- Recent bank statements for any account holding a balance in excess of £5,000
- Recent statements for all secured and unsecured loans
- Bankruptcy orders and official notifications of bankruptcy

Where the Council is not satisfied that it has been provided with sufficiently reliable, complete, and accurate information to assess the landlord's financial position, the

Council may draw the inference that the landlord is able to pay the civil penalty as imposed.

A claimed inability to pay will not, of itself, outweigh the need to ensure effective deterrence or to remove any financial benefit obtained as a result of the breach or offence.

14.2.4 The Totality Principle

The Council will have regard to the totality principle to ensure that the overall outcome of its enforcement action is just and proportionate. In exceptional cases and having regard to the particular circumstances of the case, the Council may take account of totality at an earlier stage by deciding not to pursue a civil penalty in respect of a specific breach or offence where doing so would render the overall outcome disproportionate.

In general, however, the application of the totality principle will form the final step in the Council's decision-making process, undertaken after any written representations have been considered and before final notices are issued, once the level of each individual civil penalty has been assessed in accordance with this policy.

As a final step before issuing final notices, the Council will consider whether multiple civil penalties being imposed under this policy against the same landlord at the same time result in an aggregate amount that is just and proportionate. Where the Council concludes that the aggregate amount would not be just and proportionate, it will consider whether a proportionate reduction of the penalties is appropriate.

The totality principle does not operate across different legal persons who are separately liable in law, nor does it operate across civil penalties imposed at different times. In general, it applies only to multiple civil penalties imposed under this policy on the same person at the same time. Where, however, legislation provides that an officer of a body corporate, or a person concerned in its management, may be separately liable in relation to the same conduct as the body corporate, and that officer also holds a shareholding interest in the body corporate, the Council will, where civil penalties are imposed at the same time on both the body corporate and the officer arising from that same conduct, consider whether the combined outcome results in punitive duplication and is therefore not just and proportionate.

Where a reduction is applied under the totality principle, the Council will ordinarily do so by applying a uniform percentage reduction across all relevant civil penalties being issued at the same time, being those civil penalties that form part of the same totality assessment. Where, however, the application of the totality principle is required to address punitive duplication arising from a shared economic interest between a body

corporate and an officer, the Council may apply a differential adjustment to ensure that the overall outcome is just and proportionate.

This approach reflects the statutory guidance on the application of the totality principle and is intended to promote consistency, transparency, and proportionality, while avoiding arbitrary or selective adjustment of individual penalties.

In accordance with the statutory guidance, any rent repayment orders made in respect of the same breach or offence will be disregarded for the purposes of assessing the totality of civil penalties under this policy.

14.2.5 Process for imposing a civil penalty and the right to make written representations

Notice of intent

Before imposing a civil penalty on a landlord, the Council will give the landlord a notice of intent. The notice of intent will set out: -

- The amount of the proposed civil penalty
- The reasons for proposing to impose the civil penalty
- Information about their right to make written representations

Right to make written representations

A landlord who is given a notice of intent may make written representations to the Council about the proposal to impose a civil penalty. Any representations must be made within a period of 28 days beginning with the day after the date on which the notice of intent was given.

Decision after the representations period

After the end of the period for representations the Council will: -

- Decide whether to impose a civil penalty on the landlord, and
- If it decides to impose a civil penalty, decide the amount of the penalty. This amount can be higher or lower than the amount stated in the notice of intent.

A landlord's rectification of the identified breach or offence during the representations period will rarely, of itself, lead the Council to conclude that the imposition of a civil penalty is inappropriate. However, compliance at that stage will usually be relevant to the assessment of mitigating factors that may reduce the level of any civil penalty imposed.

Similarly, an admission of liability will rarely, of itself, lead the Council to conclude that the imposition of a civil penalty is inappropriate. An admission of liability will, however, usually be relevant to the assessment of mitigating factors that may reduce the level of any civil penalty imposed.

Final notice

If, following the receipt of written representations and/or the expiry of the time period to make written representations, the Council decides to impose a civil penalty on the landlord, it will give the landlord a final notice imposing that penalty. The final notice will set out: -

- The amount of the civil penalty
- The reasons for imposing the penalty
- Information about how to pay the penalty
- Explain the consequences of non-payment and the Council's powers to recover unpaid civil financial penalties.
- The period for payment of the penalty
- Information about rights of appeal
- The consequences of failure to comply with the notice

Discount for prompt payment

Where a civil penalty imposed by a final notice is paid in full within the period specified in that notice (normally 28 days beginning with the day after the final notice is given), the Council will apply a discount of 15% to the amount of the civil penalty.

The availability of the discount is conditional upon full payment being received within the specified period. The discount period will not be extended or suspended by the bringing of an appeal. A landlord who chooses to appeal may still benefit from the discount by paying the civil penalty in full within the specified period; however, where payment is not made within that period, the discount will not apply. The application of any prompt payment discount will be subject to internal approval and financial governance procedures.

Illustrative example of the application of the discount

The landlord of an HMO property fails to obtain a licence. They only operate two HMO properties and there are no other relevant factors or aggravating features. The starting point for the offence under the Council's civil penalties matrix is £17,000.

Following the issue of a notice of intent proposing a civil penalty of £17,000, the landlord makes written representations. Having considered those representations, the Council determines to impose a civil penalty of £16,000, as set out in the final notice. If the landlord pays the civil penalty in full within the payment period specified in the final notice, a 15% prompt payment discount is applied, resulting in a discounted payment of £13,600.

Appeals

Where an appeal is brought, the final notice is suspended in accordance with legislation. Where no appeal is brought, payment remains due in accordance with the final notice and recovery action may commence after the payment period expires.

A landlord who is given a final notice may appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) against the decision to impose a civil penalty and/or the amount of the civil penalty. Any appeal must be made within 28 days beginning with the day after the date on which the final notice was given. Where an appeal is brought, the final notice is suspended until the appeal is finally determined or withdrawn.

An appeal to the First-tier Tribunal is by way of a re-hearing of the Council's decision. In determining an appeal, the Tribunal may have regard to matters of which the Council was unaware at the time the decision to impose the civil penalty was made. The Tribunal may dismiss an appeal if it is satisfied that the appeal is frivolous, vexatious, an abuse of process, or has no reasonable prospect of success.

The First-tier Tribunal may invite the parties to consider mediation or another form of alternative dispute resolution. The Council will not generally agree to mediation in relation to the level of a civil penalty, as civil penalties are determined by reference to this Policy to promote fair, consistent, and proportionate outcomes. Agreeing reductions outside the Policy framework would risk undermining consistency and the Council's enforcement objectives.

On determination of an appeal, the Tribunal may: -

- Confirm the civil penalty
- Vary the amount of the civil penalty (whether by increase or reduction)
- Cancel the civil penalty

Where the Tribunal varies a civil penalty by increasing its amount, it may do so only up to the applicable statutory maximum for the relevant breach or offence (£7,000 or £40,000, as applicable). A party to the appeal may apply for permission to appeal the decision of the First-tier Tribunal to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber).

14.3 Rent Repayment Orders

Part 2 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 permits the Council to seek a Rent Repayment Order at the First Tier Tribunal Property Chamber to require the landlord of the property where the offence(s) has been committed to refund rent to the tenants or the Council. S48 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 places a duty on the Council to consider applying for Rent Repayment Orders.

Where a landlord has been convicted or received a Civil Financial Penalty in respect of the offence, the Tribunal must award the maximum applicable amount, except in exceptional circumstances.

This power will be considered in response to all qualifying offences and where there is sufficient evidence for a successful application to the First Tier Tribunal. The qualifying offences are: -

- Unlawful eviction and harassment of occupier as defined under the Protection from Eviction Act 1997
- Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice [s30 Housing Act 2004]
- Offences in relation to unlicensed HMOs [s72(1) Housing Act 2004]
- Offences in relation to unlicensed houses [s95(1) Housing Act 2004]
- Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice [s30(1) Housing Act 2004]
- Failure to comply with a Prohibition Order [s32(1) Housing Act 2004]
- Breach of a Banning Order [s21 Housing and Planning Act 2016]
- Using Violence to secure entry [s6(1) Criminal Law Act 1977]
- Knowingly or recklessly misusing a possession ground [s16J(1) Housing Act 1988]
- Letting or marketing of a property within twelve months of using the 'moving in' or 'selling' ground of eviction [s16J(2) Housing Act 1988]
- Continuous breach of certain tenancy reform requirements [s16J(3) Housing Act 1988]

An application for an RRO may be in addition to other formal action, such as prosecution proceedings or the imposition of a Civil Penalty. Where the Council has issued a Civil Financial Penalty or pursued prosecution, it will usually apply for a Rent Repayment Order where public funds have been paid to a landlord who has committed a qualifying offence.

S49 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 enables the Council to assist tenants in applying for Rent Repayment Orders. The Council will usually assist tenants by referring or signposting them to a relevant organisation. An application for a Rent Repayment Order may be made in addition to, or alongside, other enforcement action where legislation permits.

14.4 Simple Cautions

A simple caution may be used as an alternative to prosecution in appropriate cases where: -

- there is sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction;
- the offender admits the offence; and
- the offender agrees to accept a caution.

Simple cautions will generally be considered where offences are less serious and where it is proportionate to do so, having regard to the circumstances of the case. A record of a simple caution may be taken into account in any future enforcement action. Where an offender declines to accept a simple caution, the Council will normally consider prosecution.

14.5 Banning Orders

Part 2, Chapter 2 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 permits a Council to apply for a Banning Order against a person who has been convicted of one or more of the relevant offences. This would prevent the landlord from:

- Letting housing in England
- Engaging in English letting agency work
- Engaging in English property management work
- Doing two or more of those things

The Council may consider a Banning Order for the more serious offenders. It will take into account the seriousness of the offence(s), whether the landlord has committed other offences (or received any Civil Penalty in relation to a Banning Order offence) and any history of failing to comply with their obligations or legal responsibilities. It will also take into account other relevant factors, including but not limited to: -

- The harm, or potential harm, caused to the tenant
- The need to punish the offender
- The need to deter the offender from repeating the offence
- The need to deter others from committing similar offences

Persistent non-compliance, including failure to pay civil financial penalties or comply with enforcement outcomes, may form part of the evidence considered when determining whether an application for a banning order is appropriate.

15. Costs and Charges

The Council incurs costs in carrying out its functions. Where legislation allows, the Council will seek to recover reasonable costs and expenses associated with its enforcement, licensing and wider regulatory activity. This may include (non-exhaustively) costs arising from inspections, investigation, evidence gathering, notices and other statutory documentation, follow-up action, compliance monitoring, and works or other interventions. Further detail on the recovery of unpaid civil financial penalties is set out at section 16 of this policy.

Recovery may be pursued using all available lawful routes, which may include civil action, local land charges, and enforcement against the property. Where permitted by legislation, interest may be applied to outstanding sums until paid.

16. Recovery of Unpaid Civil Financial Penalties

Where a civil financial penalty remains unpaid following the expiry of the period for payment specified in the final notice, and where no appeal is outstanding, the penalty may be recovered by the Council as a civil debt. The Council will actively pursue the recovery of unpaid civil financial penalties where it is lawful, proportionate and appropriate to do so. Recovery action is an important element of ensuring effective enforcement and maintaining public confidence in the Council's regulatory role.

The method of recovery pursued in any individual case will be determined having regard to the value of the debt, the conduct of the debtor, any history of non-payment or non-compliance, vulnerability considerations, and what is reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances.

16.1 Ways to Enforce the Debt

Potential routes to recover an unpaid civil financial penalty include (but are not limited to): -

- **Warrant or writ of control**
  This authorises court enforcement agents to take control of goods from the debtor's home or business to satisfy the judgment debt.
- **Attachment of earnings order**
  This allows deductions to be made directly from the debtor's earnings by their employer and paid to the Council.
- **Third party debt order**
  This enables money held in a debtor's bank or building society account to be frozen and paid to the Council to satisfy the debt.
- **Charging order**
  This secures the debt against an asset (usually a property), preventing its sale without payment of the outstanding amount and potentially enabling the Council to seek an order for sale.
- **Bankruptcy proceedings**
  This may be pursued where the statutory threshold is met (currently £5,000), enabling a trustee-in-bankruptcy to realise assets and distribute funds to creditors in accordance with insolvency law.

16.2 Costs and Interest

Where permitted by law, the Council may seek to recover reasonable court fees, enforcement costs, and associated expenses incurred in the recovery of unpaid civil financial penalties. Interest may also be applied to outstanding sums until paid.

16.3 Relationship to Wider Enforcement Action

Failure to pay a civil financial penalty may be regarded as evidence of ongoing non-compliance and may be taken into account in future enforcement decisions, including but not limited to decisions to prosecute, to impose further civil penalties, to refuse or revoke licences, or to consider banning order proceedings where the statutory criteria are met.

16.4 Governance and Write-Off

Any decision not to pursue, or to discontinue, recovery action will be taken in accordance with the Council's financial regulations and governance arrangements and will be properly recorded with reasons. Decisions to pursue enforcement beyond initial recovery action, or to commence insolvency proceedings, will be taken or endorsed by a senior officer in accordance with the Council's scheme of delegation.

17. Joint Working and Information Sharing

The Council recognises that effective regulation of the private rented sector requires a coordinated and multi-agency approach. Many cases involve overlapping issues, including housing conditions, tenancy rights, safeguarding, financial exploitation, and criminal behaviour. The Private Sector Housing Team will work in partnership with a range of internal and external agencies to ensure that risks to tenants are identified at the earliest opportunity and addressed through appropriate and proportionate intervention. The Council may work jointly with other agencies including (this list is not exhaustive): -

- Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service
- Police
- Planning and Building Control
- Worcestershire Regulatory Services
- Trading Standards
- Home Office
- Worcestershire County Council

17.1 Internal Collaboration

The Council will work closely across internal services to ensure a joined-up approach to prevention and enforcement, including: -

- Housing Options and Homelessness Services - To support early intervention, prevent homelessness, and ensure effective case handover where enforcement action may be required.

- Legal Services - To support the use of formal enforcement powers, including civil penalties, prosecutions, and injunctions.
- Customer Services and Revenues and Benefits - To support intelligence gathering, identify vulnerable households, and ensure coordinated responses to tenant concerns.

17.2 External Partnership Working

The Council will work collaboratively with external partners to address risks within the private rented sector, including:

- Police - In relation to criminal matters such as unlawful eviction, harassment, violence, or organised criminal activity.
- Fire and Rescue Authority -To address fire safety risks, including Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), means of escape, and fire protection measures.
- Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) - In relation to environmental protection, statutory nuisance, public health, and wider regulatory functions.
- Trading Standards -In relation to unfair trading practices, letting agent regulation, and financial or consumer protection issues affecting tenants.

17.3 Letting Agents and Property Agent Regulation

The Council recognises that the regulation of letting agents and property managers forms an important part of protecting tenants within the private rented sector. The legislative framework includes the Consumer Rights Act 2015, the Tenant Fees Act 2019, and associated requirements relating to client money protection and redress schemes. Enforcement responsibilities in this area are shared across regulatory services. The Private Sector Housing Team will identify potential breaches through inspections, complaints, and casework, and will work collaboratively with Trading Standards and other partners to ensure appropriate enforcement action is taken.

17.4 Coordinated Enforcement Approach

The Council will adopt a coordinated and intelligence-led approach to enforcement, including:

- sharing information lawfully between partners
- undertaking joint inspections where appropriate
- coordinating enforcement action across agencies
- ensuring clear referral pathways between services
- prioritising cases involving vulnerable households or serious risk.

This approach ensures that enforcement action is effective, proportionate, and targeted at the most serious and high-risk cases.

17.5 Safeguarding and Vulnerability

The Council recognises that many cases involve vulnerable individuals or households at risk of harm. Officers will work with safeguarding partners and relevant agencies to ensure that appropriate support is provided alongside any enforcement action. Joint

working arrangements applied in relation to unauthorised encampments are addressed in Section 9.4.9 of this policy.

18. Monitoring of Enforcement Activity

The Council will monitor the use of its housing enforcement powers to ensure enforcement activity is lawful, proportionate, consistent and effective. Information may be recorded and reviewed relating to:

- Inspections and investigations undertaken
- Statutory notices served
- Civil financial penalties issued
- Prosecutions and legal proceedings
- Works in default undertaken
- Rent repayment orders and banning orders pursued
- Enforcement activity undertaken under the Renters Rights Act 2025, including any statutory reporting requirements or Government data returns.
- Recovery action taken in respect of unpaid civil financial penalties, including outcomes and sums recovered.

This information will be used to: -

- Review enforcement practices
- Identify emerging risks within the private rented sector
- Inform future housing policy and regulatory activity
- Ensure consistency and fairness in enforcement decisions.

Summary information may be reported through internal governance processes or published, where appropriate and in accordance with transparency requirements. The Council may publish anonymised or summary information relating to enforcement activity, including civil penalties imposed and recovery outcomes, where lawful and appropriate.

19. Communication and Training

This Policy will be made publicly available and will be communicated to relevant stakeholders. The Council will: -

- ensure that authorised officers receive appropriate training in housing enforcement and relevant legislation;
- provide internal guidance, procedures and templates to support consistent application of this Policy; and
- engage with landlords, agents and partner organisations where appropriate to promote compliance and awareness of legal requirements.

20. Complaints

Contact may be made with the Council about any matters listed here by email at pshteam@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk or by post at: -Redditch Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 8AH

A service user can still make a complaint in cases where the Council has instigated legal proceedings. However, making a complaint will not stop any impending legal action. Where statutory notices have been served, making a complaint does not replace the statutory rights of appeal or the right to make representations. It also does not allow extra time to comply with any notice or order. If a service user disagrees with a statutory notice, they should take action as specified in the notice or order to make an appeal, if any exists. Reference should be made to any notes that may accompany the notice or order for more detail.

21. Policy Review

This policy will normally be reviewed every five years, or sooner where there are significant legislative, regulatory or operational changes.

Version Control

Title		**Enforcement and Civil Penalties Policy**		
Description		**Private Sector Housing Policy**		
Created by		**Miss Katie Sharp-Fisher** **Private Sector Housing Manager**		
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Maintained by		**Private Sector Housing**		
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Version number	**Modified by**	**Modifications made**	**Date modified**	**Status**

Appendix 1 – Civil Penalties Tables

1. Purpose of this Appendix

This appendix provides an indicative framework to support the Council in determining the level of civil penalty for relevant housing offences under:

- Housing Act 2004
- Housing Act 1988
- Protection from Eviction Act 1977
- Housing and Planning Act 2016
- Renters' Rights Act 2025
- Electrical Safety Regulations

This matrix must be applied alongside the main Enforcement Policy, including the Council's approach to:

- culpability
- harm
- proportionality
- deterrence

2. Landlord Adjustment (Applied Across All Offences)

The ranges within this table reflect indicative adjustments: -

- **Downward adjustment (up to –20%)** may apply where:
  - First offence
  - Small-scale landlord
  - Evidence of cooperation or engagement

- **Upward adjustment (up to +20%)** may apply where:
  - Portfolio or professional landlord
  - Previous enforcement history
  - Deliberate or reckless conduct

Officers must exercise discretion. The figures shown are indicative and must not be applied mechanistically.

3. General Principles

- "No specific factors identified" means no additional factors beyond the Council's standard policy framework apply
- Where multiple offences arise, penalties may be considered individually or in combination
- Where offences are particularly serious, the Council may consider prosecution as an alternative to a civil penalty

Appendix 1

Matrix Tables

1. Protection from Eviction Act 1977

Offence	1st Offence/ starting point	2nd Offence (Statutory Maximum)	Landlord Type downward adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment	Offence-specific mitigating factors	Offence-specific aggravating factors:
Unlawful eviction and harassment of occupier - section 1 of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977	£35,000	£40,000	£28,000	£42,000	No specific factors identified.	• Violence or threats of violence. • Disposal of possessions or threats to dispose of possessions. • Breach or evasion of an injunction or undertaking. • Loss of home.

2. Housing Act 1988 breaches and offences

Offence	1st Offence/ starting point	2nd Offence (Statutory Maximum)	Landlord Type downward adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment	Offence-specific mitigating factors	Offence-specific aggravating factors:
Failure to give a written statement of terms and any other prescribed information - section 16D of the Housing Act 1988	£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,800	Provision of some of the required terms and prescribed information within the required period.	No specific factors identified
Attempting to let a property for a fixed term - section 16E(1)(a) of the Housing Act 1988	£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,800	No specific factors identified.	No specific factors identified beyond the standard policy framework.
Attempting to end a tenancy by service of a notice to quit - section 16E(1)(b) of the Housing Act 1988	£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£7,200	No specific factors identified.	Tenant vacates property within four months of the date of vacation or equivalent specified in the notice to quit.
Attempting to end a tenancy orally or requiring that it is ended orally - section 16E(1)(c) of the Housing Act 1988	£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£7,200	No specific factors identified.	Tenant vacates property within four months of the date of vacation or equivalent specified in the notice to quit.
Serving a possession notice that attempts to end a tenancy outside the prescribed section	£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£7,200	No specific factors identified	Tenant vacates property within four months of the date of

8 process - section 16E(1)(d) of the Housing Act 1988						vacation or equivalent specified in the notice to quit.
Relying on a ground where the person does not reasonably believe that the landlord is, will, or may be able to obtain possession on that ground and the tenant(s) surrendered the tenancy within the period of four months beginning with the date of the contravention, without an order for possession of the dwelling-house being made - section 16E(1)(e) of the Housing Act 1988	£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£7,200	No specific factors identified	No specific factors identified
Failing to provide a tenant with prior notice that a ground which requires it may be used - section 16E(1)(f) of the Housing Act 1988	£3,000	£7,000	£2,400	£3,600	No specific factors identified.	No specific factors identified
Failure to give an existing tenant prescribed information about changes made by the Renters' Rights Act 2025 in the prescribed form and timeframe - paragraph 7(2) of schedule 6 to the Renters' Rights Act 2025	£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,800	Provision of some of the required prescribed information within the required period. Provision of prescribed information but not in the prescribed form.	No specific factors identified
Continuation of conduct subject to a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) after the 28-day period (or, if appealed, after conclusion of the appeal) where the final notice has not been withdrawn — section 16J(3) of the Housing Act 1988	Double the starting level for the two constituent breaches added together	£40,000	Dependent on the constituent breaches	Dependent on the constituent breaches	No specific factors identified.	No specific factors identified
Conduct giving rise to liability under s.16I, where within the preceding five years the person has either (i) had a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) imposed for different conduct and the final notice has not been withdrawn, or (ii) been convicted under s.16J for different conduct – section 16(J)(4) of the Housing Act 1988	Double the starting level for the two constituent breaches added together	£40,000	Dependent on the constituent breaches	Dependent on the constituent breaches	Dependent on the most recent conduct giving rise to liability to a civil penalty under section 16I of the Housing Act 1988.	Dependent on the most recent conduct giving rise to liability to a civil penalty under section 16I of the Housing Act 1988.
Relying on a ground where the person knows that the landlord would not be able to obtain an order for possession on that ground, or being reckless as to whether the landlord would be able to do so and the	£30,000	£40,000	£24,000	£36,000	No specific factors identified	No specific factors identified

tenant(s) surrendered the tenancy within the period of four months beginning with the date the ground was relied on, without an order for possession of the dwelling-house being made – section 16J(1) of the Housing Act 1988						
Breach of restrictions relating to reletting (s16(E)(2) Housing Act 1988) or remarketing (s16(E)(3) Housing Act 1988) a property within restricted period after using Grounds 1 or 1A of Schedule 2 Housing Act 1988 - section 16J(2) of the Housing Act 1988	£25,000	£40,000	£20,000	£30,000	No specific factors identified.	No specific factors identified.

3. Renters Rights Act 2025

Offence	1st Offence/ starting point	2nd Offence (Statutory Maximum)	Landlord Type downward adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment	Offence-specific mitigating factors	Offence-specific aggravating factors:
Discrimination relating to children in the lettings process – section 33(1) of the Renters' Rights Act 2025	£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£7,200	No specific factors identified	No specific factors identified
Discrimination relating to benefits in the lettings process – section 34(1) of the Renters' Rights Act 2025	£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£7,200	No specific factors identified	No specific factors identified
Failure to specify proposed rent within a written advertisement or offer – section 56(2) of the Renters' Rights Act 2025	£3,000	£7,000	£2,400	£3,600	No specific factors identified	No specific factors identified
Inviting, encouraging or accepting any offer of rent greater than the stated rate – section 56(3) of the Renters' Rights Act 2025	£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,800	No specific factors identified	No specific factors identified

4. Housing and Planning Act 2016

Offence	1st Offence/ starting point	2nd Offence (Statutory Maximum)	Landlord Type downward adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment	Offence-specific mitigating factors	Offence-specific aggravating factors:
Breach of a banning order - section 21(1) of the Housing and Planning Act 2016	£35,000	£40,000	£28,000	£42,000	A single, isolated incident	Concealment or evasion

5. The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 breach of duties

Offence	1st Offence/ starting point	2nd Offence (Statutory Maximum)	Landlord Type downward adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment	Offence-specific mitigating factors	Offence-specific aggravating factors:
Failure to comply with The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 Regulation 3: (3)(b), (3)(d), (3)(e). Regulation 3D: (a), (b), (c), (f)	£5,000	£40,000	£4,000	£6,000	The report or record evidences that the electrical installations were compliant at all points.	The number or nature or severity of the issues observed on the report or record.
Failure to comply with The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 Regulation 3: (1)(a), (1)(b), (1)(c), (3)(a), (3)(c), (3)(ca), (5)(b), (5)(c). Regulation 3B: (1)(a), (1)(b), (1)(c). Regulation 3C: (1), (2)(a). Regulation 3D: (d), (e)	£12,500	£40,000	£10,000	£15,000	The report or record evidences that the electrical installations were compliant at all points.	The number or nature or severity of the issues observed on the report or record.
Failure to comply with The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 Regulation 3: (4), (5a), (6). Regulation 3C: (2)(b), (4)	£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£24,000	No specific factors identified.	The number or nature or severity of the issues observed on the report or record.

6. Housing Act 2004 offences

	1st Offence/ starting point	2nd Offence (Statutory Maximum)	Landlord Type downward adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment	Offence-specific mitigating factors	Offence-specific aggravating factors:
Failure to comply with an improvement notice - section 30(1) of the Housing Act 2004	£25,000	£40,000	£25,000	£30,000	The nature and extent of hazard(s) that are present once the deadline for compliance has passed. Whether the property is unoccupied once the deadline for compliance has passed.	The nature and extent of hazard(s) that are present once the deadline for compliance has passed.

					Access to the property was prevented by the actions or refusal of the occupant(s) and a landlord can evidence that they took steps to obtain access to the property for the purpose of carrying out the required works, but those steps fell short of establishing a reasonable excuse for non-compliance.	
Failure to comply with an overcrowding notice - section 139(7) of the Housing Act 2004	£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£24,000	No specific factors identified.	The level of overcrowding present.
Failure to obtain an HMO licence - section 72(1) of the Housing Act 2004	£17,000	£40,000	£13,600	£20,400	No specific factors identified	The landlord has knowledge or experience of licensing requirements. The condition of the unlicensed property.
Knowingly permitting over-occupation of an HMO - section 72(2) of the Housing Act 2004	£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£24,000	There are suitable amenity and space provisions in the HMO.	The level of over-occupation present.

7. Failure to Comply with The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation [England] Regulations 2006 and The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Additional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2007 – section 234(3) of the Housing Act 2004

	1st Offence/ starting point	2nd Offence (Statutory Maximum)	Landlord Type downward adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment	Offence-specific mitigating factors	Offence-specific aggravating factors:
Duty of Manager to provide information to occupier	£3,000	£40,000	£2,400	£3,600	The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation	The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation The landlord has refused to provide any outstanding contact information more than 48 hours

						after it has been requested by an occupant or on behalf of an occupant.
Duty of manager to take safety measures	£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£24,000	The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation	The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
Duty of manager to maintain water supply and drainage	£10,000	£40,000	£8,000	£12,000	The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation	The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
Duty of manager to supply and maintain gas and electricity	£12,000	£40,000	£9,600	£14,400	The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation	The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
Duty of manager to maintain common parts, fixtures, fittings and appliances	£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£8,400	The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation	The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
Duty of manager to maintain living accommodation	£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£8,400	The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation	The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
Duty to provide waste disposal facilities	£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£8,400	The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation	The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation The lack of sufficient refuse and/or litter containers either inside and/or outside the property has been previously reported The refuse and/or litter that requires disposal includes hazardous materials

8. Housing Act 2004 - Section 72(3) - Breach of licence conditions

	1st Offence/ starting point	2nd Offence (Statutory Maximum)	Landlord Type downward adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment	Offence-specific mitigating factors	Offence-specific aggravating factors:
Failure to comply with licence conditions related to: - • Signage or the provision of information for tenants • Provision of written terms of occupancy for tenants • 21 • Procedures regarding complaints • Procedures regarding vetting of incoming tenants • Compliance with deposit protection legislation • The recording and provision of information regarding rent payments • Procedures relating to rent collection • The provision of information regarding occupancy of the property • The provision of information regarding change of managers or licence holder details • The provision of information related to changes in the property • Requirements relating to the sale of the property • Attending training courses • Requirements to hold insurance • The provision of insurance documentation • The provision of or obtaining of suitable references • The provision of keys and alarm codes • Security provisions for access to the property • The provision of suitable means for occupiers to regulate temperature	£4,000	£40,000	£3,200	£4,800	The nature and extent of the licence condition breach	The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

• Carrying out items on a schedule of works not otherwise mentioned in the HMO licence conditions section of this policy, relating to non-compliance with items on a schedule of works						
• Failure to comply with licence conditions related to: • Procedures and actions regarding Inspections • Procedures regarding Repair issues • Maintenance and use of common parts (including gardens, outbuildings and property exterior) and living areas • Safeguarding occupiers and minimising disruption during works • The provision of information regarding alterations and construction works • Procedures regarding emergency issues • Waste and waste receptacles, pests, minor repairs, alterations or decoration. • Giving written notice prior to entry • Allowing access for inspections • Minimising risk of water contamination • The compliance of furnishings or furniture with fire safety regulations • Carrying out items on a schedule of works in relation to provision of mechanical extraction or electrical sockets	£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£8,400	The nature and extent of the licence condition breach	The nature and extent of the licence condition breach
• Failure to comply with licence conditions related to: • The provision of documentation regarding energy performance certificates, fire detection and prevention, emergency lighting, carbon monoxide detection, fire risk assessments, gas installations, electric installations and appliances • Notification of legal proceedings, contraventions and other relevant information that may affect a fit and proper person status • Procedures and actions regarding ASB	£12,500	£40,000	£10,000	£15,000	The nature and extent of the licence condition breach	The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

• Carrying out items on a schedule of works in relation to the provision of personal hygiene facilities, kitchen facilities or heating						
• Failure to comply with licence conditions related to: • Minimum floor areas • Occupancy rates • Occupancy of rooms or areas that are not to be used as sleeping accommodation • Limits on number of households allowed to occupy the property or part of the property	£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£24,000	The nature and extent of the licence condition breach	The nature and extent of the licence condition breach
• Failure to comply with licence conditions related to: • The condition or existence of smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, emergency lighting, gas installations, electric installations and appliances, fire detection or other fire safety features or requirements • The provision and maintenance of safe means of escape, including requirements to keep escape routes and exits free from obstruction • Carrying out items on a schedule of works in relation to fire safety or the provision of a Carbon Monoxide detector	£25,000	£40,000	£20,000	£30,000	The nature and extent of the licence condition breach	The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Appendix 2

Statement of principles to determine the amount of a penalty charge under Part 4 of The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 as amended by The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022 ("the Regulations")

Section 13 of the Regulations requires local housing authorities to prepare and publish a statement of principles which they propose to follow in determining the amount of a penalty charge.

The Regulations introduced legal requirements on relevant landlords to:

1. Equip a smoke alarm on each storey of the premises on which there is a room used wholly or partly as living accommodation.

2. During any period when the premises were occupied under the tenancy, to ensure that a carbon monoxide alarm is equipped in any room of the premises which is used wholly or partly as living accommodation and which contains fixed combustion appliance other than a gas cooker.

3. Carry out checks by or on behalf of the landlord to ensure that each prescribed alarm is in proper working order on the day the tenancy begins if it is a new tenancy.

4. Where, following a report made on or after 1st October 2022 by a tenant or by their nominated representative to the landlord, a prescribed alarm is found not to be in proper working order, the alarm is repaired or replaced.

For the purposes of the legislation, living accommodation includes a bathroom or lavatory.

Where the Council believe that a landlord is in breach of one or more of the above duties, the Council must serve a remedial notice on the landlord. The remedial notice is a notice served under Regulation 5 of the Regulations.

If the landlord then fails to take the remedial action specified in the notice within the specified timescale, the Council can require a landlord to pay a penalty charge and can arrange for remedial action to be taken under certain circumstances. The power to charge a penalty arises from Regulation 8 of the Regulations. Failure to comply with each remedial notice can lead to a fine of up to £5,000. Fines will be applied per breach, rather than per landlord or property.

The Council will impose a penalty charge where it is satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that the landlord has not complied with the action specified in the remedial notice within the required timescale.

A landlord will not be considered to be in breach of their duty to comply with the remedial notice if they can demonstrate they have taken all reasonable steps to comply. Where there is evidence, including written correspondence, of repeated and consistent efforts to obtain access to the property, with access repeatedly being prevented by the occupant(s) of the property, a landlord will

not be considered to be in breach of their duty to comply with the remedial notice. A landlord will be expected to have:

- Communicated the risk of harm that the lack of functioning alarms posed to all occupants in writing on multiple occasions
- Requested access to comply with the remedial notice on a regular basis of no longer than every seven days in writing

In considering the imposition of a penalty, the Council may look at the evidence concerning the breach of the requirement of the notice. A non-exhaustive list of methods that may be used to obtain relevant evidence includes, but is not limited to:

- Evidence obtained from a property inspection
- Evidence provided by the tenant or agent
- Evidence provided by the landlord demonstrating compliance with the Regulations by supplying dated photographs of alarms, together with installation records
- That all detector heads have not passed their expiration or replacement date

Landlords need to take steps to demonstrate that they have met the testing requirements at the start of the tenancy requirements. A non-exhaustive list of methods that may be used to evidence compliance with these testing requirements includes, but is not limited to:

- Tenants signing an inventory form which states that they observed the alarms being tested and confirming that the alarms were in working order at the start of the tenancy

Where a landlord is in breach, the local housing authority may serve a remedial notice. Failure to comply with each remedial notice can lead to a fine of up to £5,000. Fines will be applied per breach, rather than per landlord or property

When determining the amount of the penalty charge, regard will be had to whether this is a first breach under the Regulations.

Determining the amount of the penalty charge for a first breach

The minimum amount of a penalty charge for a first breach of the Regulations will be £2500. Only in exceptional circumstances may the Council depart from the application of this statement of principles and issue a penalty charge for less than £2500. Exceptional circumstances are rare and unusual and are not established merely by the presence of multiple mitigating factors

The starting level of a penalty charge for a first breach of the Regulations will be £3000. The penalty charge amount will then be varied depending on aggravating and mitigating factors.

Aggravating factor include, but are not limited to:

- The number of alarms not working or missing (the Regulations state there should be one per storey)
- Other fire safety concerns/defects in the property which increase the risk posed to the occupants
- The length of time the offence is believed to have been on-going

- The frequency of complaints by the occupiers to the landlord about the non-working or missing alarms
- The costs of any remedial work the Council have carried out in response to the breach
- Whether the property is let as a HMO (which increases the overall risk)
- The number of occupants living in the property
- Presence of vulnerable occupiers such as elderly, children or disabled people
- Any history of previous enforcement or non-compliance of the landlord
- Attempts to obstruct the investigation

Mitigating factors include, but are not limited to:

- The property being small and low-risk (for example a one-bedroom ground floor flat with a large number of fire escapes including large windows)
- A single occupant living in the property
- Evidence that all required alarms were checked and in working order at the start of the tenancy
- Written evidence that some efforts to gain access and comply with the remedial notice were made and access was prevented by the occupant

Determining the amount of the penalty charge for a subsequent breach

The penalty for subsequent breaches by the same landlord will be £5000. Only in exceptional circumstances may the Council depart from the application of this statement of principles and issue a penalty charge for less than £5000. Exceptional circumstances are rare and unusual and are not established merely by the presence of multiple mitigating factors.

Appendix 3

Statement of principles to determine the amount of a penalty charge for a breach of minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES) with respect to domestic privately rented property

The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations") make it unlawful to rent out a domestic property if it has an EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) rating of F or G (unless a valid exemption has been registered on the PRS Exemptions register).

The Regulations make it unlawful to fail to comply with a compliance notice served by the Council.

The Regulations cover all relevant properties, even where there has been no change of tenancy.

The Regulations were introduced to improve the energy efficiency of housing in the private rented sector and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and tackle climate change. They should help make tenants' homes more thermally efficient.

An energy performance certificate (EPC) gives the property an energy efficiency rating – A rated properties are the most energy efficient and G rated are the least efficient. It's valid for 10 years and must be provided by the owner of a property, when it is rented or sold.

If you are a landlord and you fail, when requested, to provide an EPC for the start of a tenancy, you will be in breach of the Regulations.

An EPC contains information about the type of heating system and typical energy costs. It also gives recommendations about how the energy use could be reduced, lowering running costs. You can find the recommended energy efficiency improvements on the current EPC.

If you're a private landlord, you must either:

- ensure your rented properties have an EPC with a minimum 'E' rating
- register a valid PRS exemption on the PRS exemptions register

Failure to do either of these is a breach of the Regulations.

The Council investigates any potential breaches of the regulations. If the Council is satisfied that you are, or have at any time in the 18 months preceding the date of service of the penalty notice, breached the Regulations, you may be subject to a penalty notice imposing a financial penalty. The Council may also impose a publication penalty.

The "publication penalty" means publication, for a minimum period of 12 months, or such longer period as the Council may decide, on the PRS Exemptions Register of such of the following information in relation to a penalty notice as the Council decides:

- Where the landlord is not an individual, the landlord's name
- Details of the breach of these Regulations in respect of which the penalty notice has been issued
- The address of the property in relation to which the breach has occurred, and
- The amount of any financial penalty imposed.

The Council will impose the following financial penalties:

(a) letting a property with an F or G rating for less than 3 months: £2,000
(b) letting a property with an F or G rating for more than 3 months: £4,000
(c) registering false or misleading information on the PRS exemptions register: £1,000
(d) failing to provide information to the Council demanded by a compliance notice: £2,000

The Council may not impose a financial penalty under both subsections (a) and (b) above in relation to the same breach of the Regulations. But they may impose a financial penalty under either paragraph (a) or paragraph (b), together with financial penalties under paragraphs (c) and (d), in relation to the same breach. Where penalties are imposed under more than one of these paragraphs, the total amount of the financial penalty may not be more than £5,000.

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APPENDIX 2

Constitution – Part 4 – Table 4.04 – Community Services

2. Private Sector Housing			
Subject	**Detail**	**Delegated by:**	**Delegated to:**
Power of entry	To exercise the powers of Authorised Officers in respect of entry, inspection and investigation in relation to housing conditions as specified in any legislation the enforcement of which is delegated to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services.	Executive Committee	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Strategic Housing Services Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Manager] / [Housing Development & Strategy Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Officer]
General regulatory and enforcement activity for private sector housing (including Houses of Multiple Occupation)	1, To exercise all local authority regulatory and enforcement functions under the legislation listed below:- Housing Act 1985 Housing Act 1988 Housing Act 2004 Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations 2006 Licensing & Management of HMO & other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 Environmental Protection Act 1990 section 79(1)(a) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Acts 1976, 1982 Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 Public Health Act 1961 Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (additional provisions) (England) Regulations 2007 Mobile Homes Act 2013 Caravan Sites & Control of Development Act 1960 Housing and Planning Act 2016 Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England)		[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Strategic Housing Services Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Manager] / [Housing Development & Strategy Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Officer]

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APPENDIX 2

Constitution – Part 4 – Table 4.04 – Community Services

2. Private Sector Housing			
Subject	**Detail**	**Delegated by:**	**Delegated to:**
	Regulations 2020 2. To institute legal proceedings for offences under the legislation listed above. 3, To impose a civil penalty for an offence as an alternative to bringing a prosecution.		2 and 3 Strategic Housing Manager in consultation with Principal Solicitor
Caravan Site Licences	To approve a transfer or renewal of a Caravan Site Licence	Executive	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Strategic Housing Services Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Manager] / [Housing Development & Strategy Manager]
Caravan Site Licences	To approve licence for new site	Council	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Strategic Housing Services Manager]
Property Tribunal	To make application to a Residential Property Tribunal in relation to enforcement or other provisions under the Housing Act 2004	Executive Committee	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Strategic Housing Services Manager]
Illegal evictions and harassment	1. To institute legal proceedings in respect of illegal evictions and harassment under provisions of the Protection From Eviction Act 1977 and Housing Act 1988 (as	Executive Committee	1 and 2 [Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Strategic Housing Services

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APPENDIX 2

Constitution – Part 4 – Table 4.04 – Community Services

2. Private Sector Housing			
Subject	**Detail**	**Delegated by:**	**Delegated to:**
	amended by the Renters Right Act 2025). 2. To impose a financial penalty for an offence under section 1 of the Protection from Eviction Act (as amended) as an alternative to bringing a prosecution.		Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Manager] / [Housing Development & Strategy Manager] in consultation with the Principal Solicitor
Renters Rights Act 2025 – investigatory powers (Added following report on Renters Right Act in March 2026)	To exercise all powers in respect of entry, inspection, investigation, service of notices and other functions for the purposes of the following legislation: - Renters Rights Act 2025 sections 114 to 132 (investigatory powers) and section 110 (reporting to government)	Executive Committee	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Housing Strategy Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Team Leader] / [Housing Strategy & Enabling Team Leader] / [Private Sector Housing Officer]
Renters Rights Act 2025 Investigations (Added following report on Renters Right Act in March 2026)	To undertake investigations into potential offences under sections 33, 34, 39 and 56 of the Renters Rights Act 2025	Executive Committee	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Housing Strategy Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Team Leader] / [Housing Strategy & Enabling Team Leader] / [Private Sector Housing Officer]
Discrimination in the rental market	To take enforcement action under Chapter 3 of the Renters Rights Act 2025, including the imposition of financial penalties in accordance with the Councils Enforcement and Civil Penalties Notice Policy	Executive Committee	Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services
Stating the proposed rent and rental bidding	To take enforcement action under Chapter 6 of the Renters Rights Act 2025, including the imposition of financial penalties in	Executive Committee	Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services

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APPENDIX 2

Constitution – Part 4 – Table 4.04 – Community Services

2. Private Sector Housing			
Subject	**Detail**	**Delegated by:**	**Delegated to:**
	accordance with the Councils Enforcement and Civil Penalties Notice Policy		
Private Sector Housing Enforcement and Civil Penalty Policy	To update the Policy in line with any legislative or government guidance updates	Executive Committee	Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing
Building Act notices	To serve notices under the Building Act 1984, Sections 59, 63, 64, 70, 72(1)(a) 76 & 79 in relation to housing conditions, to undertake work in default and recover expenses.	Executive Committee	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Strategic Housing Services Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Manager] / [Housing Development & Strategy Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Officer]
Lifetime Grants - approval	To approve applications for Lifetime Grants under the Housing Assistance Scheme and any subsequent schemes for works of repair, improvement, adaptation or thermal efficiency and applications for Landlord (HMO) Lifetime Grant	Executive Committee	[Deputy Chief Executive] / [Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Strategic Housing Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Manager] / [Housing Development & Strategy Manager]
Disabled Facilities Grants	To approve applications for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant	Executive Committee	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Strategic Housing Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Manager] / [Housing Development & Strategy Manager]
Disabled Facilities Grant - Repayment	To waive the condition requiring repayment of a Disabled Facilities Grant in accordance with the Government's Criteria set out in Section 5.19(b) of the report to	Executive Committee	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] following consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.

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APPENDIX 2

Constitution – Part 4 – Table 4.04 – Community Services

2. Private Sector Housing			
Subject	**Detail**	**Delegated by:**	**Delegated to:**
	the Executive Committee on 7th January 1999		
Lifetime Grants - cancellation	To cancel Lifetime Grant and recover interim payments for failure to complete eligible work within 12 months of approval date or to grant extensions of time for completion	Executive Committee	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Strategic Housing Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Manager] / [Housing Development & Strategy Manager]
Council land and premises - dealing with Trespassers	To authorise the exercise of Local Authority powers under the Criminal Justice & Public Order Act 1994 relating to occupation of council land and premises by trespassers.	Executive Committee	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Strategic Housing Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Manager] / [Housing Strategy and Enabling Team Leader].
Proceedings for possession	To authorise the instigation of civil legal proceedings for possession of council land and premises occupied by trespassers without permission and further legal proceedings for their eviction from such land and premises.	Executive Committee	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Strategic Housing Manager] / [Private Sector Housing Manager] / [Housing Development & Strategy Manager].
Council land - bunding	In connection with the construction of bunding to prevent trespass on council land or removal of bunding provided for such purpose the Executive Director of Leisure, Environmental & Community Services shall, before taking action, consult with relevant Ward Members and residents in the vicinity likely to be affected. The decision to construct or remove bunding shall be delegated to the Director of Leisure, Environment & Community Services following	Executive Committee	[Deputy Chief Executive] / [Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Strategic Housing Manager] following consultation with Ward Members

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APPENDIX 2

Constitution – Part 4 – Table 4.04 – Community Services

	consultation with the relevant Ward Members		
Home Improvement Agency	To deal with day to day management of the Home Improvement Agency Service	Executive Committee	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Strategic Housing Manager] / [Private Sector Team Leader]
Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015	To implement enforcement powers under the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England & Wales) Regulations 2015	Executive	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services]

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APPENDIX 2

Constitution – Part 4 – Table 4.04 – Community Services

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APPENDIX 3

4. Enforcement Powers – Private Sector Housing			
Subject	**Detail**	**Delegated by:**	**Delegated to:**
Electrical Safety Standards Enforcement Action	To take enforcement action under the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Sector (England) Regulations 2020	Executive	Assistant Director of Community and Housing Service
Housing Act 2004 – imposition of a financial penalty as an alternative to prosecution	To impose a financial penalty for breach of duties under the Housing Act 2004 (in accordance with Section126 and Schedule 9 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016) such penalty set at £1000 for a first offence and £3000 for subsequent offence(s)	Executive	Assistant Director of Community and Housing Service

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive

Tuesday, 9 June 2026

Housing Tenant Engagement Policy

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Cllr Ashley Monk
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Assistant Director Community and Housing Services
Report Author: Jonathan Elger	Job Title: Neighbourhood & Tenancy Manager Contact email: jon.elger@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3272	
Wards Affected		All Wards
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		Community & Housing;
Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee IS ASKED TO RECOMMEND that: -

1) **The Tenant Engagement Policy is approved and delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director Community & Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to update the Policy in line with any recommendations arising from consultation with tenants and legislative or government guidance updates.**

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 During 2025–2026, we began the development of a dedicated Tenant Experience Team as part of our wider commitment to placing tenants at the heart of service improvement. This new approach recognises the importance of listening to customers, understanding lived experience, and involving tenants more meaningfully in shaping housing services.

The Tenant Experience Team will provide a clear and consistent framework for how tenants can influence decisions, share feedback, and participate in service reviews. This includes opportunities to be involved in shaping policies, reviewing performance such as complaints and tenant satisfaction measures, and contributing to service improvement initiatives.

By strengthening tenant engagement we aim to ensure that feedback is gathered proactively rather than only through complaints, helping us to identify issues earlier and design services that better reflect tenant priorities. The team will also support clearer communication and help close the feedback loop, so tenants can see how their views have informed change.

Residents are encouraged to get involved in the Tenant Experience Team in a way that suits them, whether through forums, surveys, task-and-finish groups or other engagement activities. Participation will not require previous experience – only a willingness to share views and help improve services for the wider community.

As the Tenant Experience Team becomes established, it will play a key role in supporting transparency, accountability and continuous improvement. We believe that working in partnership with tenants will strengthen trust, improve outcomes, and contribute to better housing services for all residents.

This Policy is the start point for this new era of engagement and is a pre-runner of a broader Tenant Engagement Strategy that will be designed, built and delivered in partnership between the Housing Service and our tenants.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 The review of the Housing Service that took place in 2025 has put in place all the resources we currently require to deliver the intentions of this Policy.

3.2 There are no additional system updates or IT software requirements needed to deliver this Policy

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 All of the roles to undertake Tenant Engagement have been costed, agreed and considered as part of the Housing Service review.

4.2 There will be additional costs with regards to paying for tenants to attend meetings and boards and other minor sundry expenses. At its meeting on 2 September 2025, Executive Committee approved an annual budget of £35,000 in the first year, and £25,000 per annum

ongoing for this purpose. It will be accounted for quarterly to ensure we control costs. This funding is available and will be paid directly from the Housing Revenue Account.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council is responsible for providing a cost effective, efficient housing service whilst meeting its obligation to deliver value for money for its tenants. This Policy will ensure this responsibility is achieved in a transparent and consistent way with full tenant engagement and consultation.

5.2 RBC are governed by The Regulator of Social Housing and under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 the Regulators consumer standards are mandatory. We are committed to adhere to their Consumer Standard Code of Practice (April 2024). Specifically, regarding this Tenant Engagement Policy, we commit to adhere to The Transparency, Influence and Accountability (TIA) Standards in the Code of Practice.

5.3 Tenants have the right to be consulted by their Landlord on matters of housing management as set out in Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

6.1 If decisions are to be made regarding the future of social housing provision in RBC pre or post reorganisation then a robust Tenant Engagement Policy is essential, as Secure Tenants have specific legal rights to be consulted about changes to their tenancy and or landlord, as set out in Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985.

Relevant Council Priority

6.2 This supports the Council's Priority of Community and Housing

One of the key findings in our C3 rating by the Social Housing Regulator was that they*'… found serious failings in Redditch BC's provision of meaningful opportunities for tenants to effectively scrutinise its performance, with it acknowledging that this provision had not been in place for several years. Redditch BC was unable to demonstrate how tenants' views have been considered, and we saw limited evidence of tenant engagement and consultation shaping policies. Redditch BC is committed to improving engagement and scrutiny opportunities with tenants, acknowledged that the effectiveness of its current tenant engagement arrangements is inadequate and has commenced a review of its approach to deliver improvements…'*

This Policy, coupled with prompt recruitment to the Tenancy Experience Team, are key building blocks to provide robust and meaningful engagement going forward.

Climate Change Implications

6.3 While this Policy is not directly related to physical climate mitigation measures, it plays an important enabling role in supporting the Council's climate change objectives. Effective tenant engagement is essential to the successful delivery of low-carbon housing initiatives, energy efficiency programmes, and climate resilience measures across the Council's housing stock.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.4 The Policy will be implemented for all our tenants equitably. The Housing Service are familiar with the importance of eliminating discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, as it is central to delivering services consistently and effectively to our customers with full consideration to individually tailoring our services to include those with Protected Characteristics.

By delivering a Tenant Engagement Policy, we are ensuring decisions and processes undertaken in the team will be done so consistently and fairly and with due regard for Protected Characteristics.

This Policy will be implemented equitably for all tenants, so there will be no differences in rights and responsibilities for any specific group.

A robust Engagement Policy will ensure all who live in the Councils social housing stock are aware of their, and our, responsibilities

regarding the formal relationship we have. This in turn will foster clear and effective relations with the communities we serve.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of the Policy,

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 The key risk is to not progress on the C3 Judgement and fall into 'special measures' under the Social Housing Regulator.

7.2 Reputational risk of being seen as a social Landlord that has no regard for its tenants and their opinions.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 The Tenant Engagement Policy

8.2 Appendix One- Options for Engagement Opportunities

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive

Tuesday, 9 June 2026

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Ashley Monk Portfolio Holder for Housing	09 June 2026
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Assistant Director of Community & Housing	17 April 2026.
Financial Services	Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services	13 May 2026
Legal Services	Assistant Director Legal and Procurement Services	24 April 2026
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)		30 April 2026
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matthew Eccles – Climate Change Manager	29 April 2026

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Full Council

29th June 2026

Construction of Redditch Innovation Centre

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Cllr Matt Dormer
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Rachel Egan, Assistant Director Regeneration & Property
Report Author: Neil Batt	Job Title: Regeneration Project Manager Email: neil.batt@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 07484 546690	
Wards Affected		Central Ward
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		Cllr Sharon Harvey
Relevant Council Priority		Economy and Regeneration
Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		
This report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee RECOMMEND that:-

1. **The Council utilise all available underspend from within the Town Deal programme (as set out in section 2.5) for construction of the Innovation Centre.**

2. **The Council accept the £2,425,000 Enterprise Zone funding from Birmingham City Council for the construction of the Innovation Centre and incorporate it into the Council's Capital Programme.**

3. **Subject to the agreement of recommendations 1 and 2, authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Regeneration & Property Services, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and relevant portfolio holder to enter into the necessary contracts and legal agreements required to implement the recommendations within this report.**

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In June 2021, Redditch secured an historic investment of £15.6 million Town Deal funding. Town Deal is a national economic regeneration programme designed to reshape towns and secure long-term economic sustainability and growth**.** The Redditch submission was based on a vision for the transformation of the town summarised in

the Town Investment Plan. This investment plan was successful in securing funding for the following projects:

- Redditch Innovation Centre (£8,000,000)
- Redevelopment of Redditch Library Site (£4,200,000)
- Redditch Public Realm (£3,000,000)
- Programme Management Costs (£400,000)

TOTAL: £15,600,000

2.2 Redditch Innovation Centre will be a brand new 2600m2 development in Redditch Town Centre. This will provide the platform for innovation and business growth, specifically (but not exclusively) targeting the digital manufacturing sector to create new and improved opportunities for businesses and local residents.

2.3 The accommodation will provide a flexible mix of office, lab and workshop space, combined with meeting rooms, networking areas and a café. The centre will also offer additional business support services and specialist shared digital manufacturing equipment, whilst acting as a hub for new and existing businesses to benefit from shared knowledge and experience.

2.4 The decision to cancel the redevelopment of Redditch Library site was taken at the Redditch Borough Council Executive Committee meeting on 29th July 2024, leaving a £4,200,000 underspend.

2.5 The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) agreed that this underspend could be used to further develop the Innovation Centre with a smaller amount also going towards Redditch Public Realm. This report now seeks agreement on behalf of the Council as lead accountable body to allocate the full £4,200,000 underspend to the Innovation Centre, along with £897,501 underspend from the Public Realm project, and £400,000 programme management costs. MHCLG funding rules allow easy virement of funding between projects within the Town Deal programme. This means the Innovation Centre can utilise funding from elsewhere within the programme, subject to S151 Officer approval alongside internal governance processes.

2.6 Members are asked to note that public realm works to Church Green West and Unicorn Hill have been completed within budget.

2.7 The Committee is asked to note that MHCLG have extended the deadline to spend Town Deal funding until the end of March 2028.

2.8 In consideration of the above, the Innovation Centre has been redesigned to increase the building in size resulting in additional economic benefits and overall sustainability.

2.9 Speller-Metcalfe were appointed to work alongside the design team to complete the Stage 4 designs (via Procure Partnerships Framework), in line with the decision taken by Executive Committee on 8th July 2025. Stage 4 designs are now in place and we are currently in the process of agreeing final costs for construction.

2.11 This report seeks delegated authority to proceed to the construction phase, subject to agreement of final costs, within the budget framework set out in the exempt appendix. Construction is profiled to commence Summer 2026 with an anticipated 70-week programme, completing Autumn 2027. This work will be contracted via a JCT (Joint Contracts Tribunal) Design and Build 2024 Contract.

2.12 The project includes £2,425,000 from the Enterprise Zone Regional Investment Funding (EZRIF), now being managed by Birmingham City Council (BCC). This amount was approved by the Enterprise Zone Partnership Board in December 2025 and ratified by Birmingham City Council's (BCC) Cabinet on 20th January 2026. This report requests agreement to accept and spend all grant funding received from BCC on the construction of the Innovation Centre in line with the agreed business case. This funding forms part of the overall project budget, with detailed financial information set out in the exempt appendix

2.13 The Committee is also asked to note the project secured an additional £30,435 UKSPF (United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Funding), which was utilised as a contribution towards site enabling works which have already been carried out.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Construction costs are to be funded by a combination of Town Deal, Enterprise Zone Regional Investment Fund (EZRIF) now managed by Birmingham City Council and Regeneration Reserves.

3.2 Construction costs are being developed in line with pre-agreed benchmarked rates which will be reviewed and validated by the Procure Partnerships framework. Additional checks and balances are also taking place including transparent pricing and specialist monitoring, to ensure continued value for money. The Council is also utilising specialist cost consultancy input from Gleeds to represent the Council in negotiating and agreeing final costs with Speller Metcalfe in line with the Stage 3 cost plan and pre-agreed rates. The Council

reserves the right to source further quotes or tender the works in the event of not reaching an agreement with Speller Metcalfe on final costs.

3.3 MHCLG funding needs to be spent by the end of March 2028. EZRIF funding (now managed by BCC) is profiled to be spent in the 2027/28 financial year.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Council's procurement and legal team will remain involved with this process to ensure that best value is demonstrated in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

4.2 Work will be contracted via a JCT Design and Build 2024 Contract. Officers will work closely with legal services in determining the most appropriate contractual arrangements and protections.

5. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

5.1 Assets and ongoing management responsibility for the new Innovation Centre will transfer to the new authority.

Relevant Council Priority

5.2 The proposals detailed in this report align with the Council's Corporate Priority "Economy and Regeneration". It is a key project for the Council and will support delivery of objectives to support and encourage new start-up businesses, attract businesses to locate in Redditch and increase footfall in the town centre.

Climate Change Implications

5.4 The Innovation Centre remains on track to achieve a Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessments Method (BREEAM) Excellent rating. This reflects the project's commitment to climate-responsive design, as the standard integrates rigorous requirements on energy efficiency, carbon emissions, climate resilience, and sustainable resource use.

5.5 AHR Architects are the lead designers of the building and have ensured that designs are environmentally friendly and in line with local and national climate change policies. The design has been through a whole life carbon assessment to minimise the embodied carbon within the building. The super structure has been designed to bring maximum efficiency and reduce material weight. This is achieved by reducing spans where possible to reduce the size of beams and columns. High carbon materials like aluminium have been avoided in favour of long-life and recyclable products like brick.

5.4 The building follows a fabric first approach to maximise the sustainability credentials through: a regular, efficient form factor; highly insulated walls (0.15 W/m²K), floor (0.15 W/m²K), and roof (0.15 W/m²K); high-performing windows (1.3 W/m²K) and doors (1.6 W/m²K); and passive solar measures to reduce overheating. It will be fully electric and follow its ventilation, heating, cooling and water systems, which will be low-energy, efficient systems that follow sustainable principles. It will be a sealed (air tightness target 3.5m³/hm² @50Pa), mechanically ventilated building that has a high degree of control to individual spaces that seeks to maintain a consistent and comfortable internal temperature. Heat recovery, whilst ventilating the building, is done through individual Mechanical Ventilation and Heat Recovery (MVHR) units within tenant spaces and central air handling for landlord spaces. Air source heat pumps provide low-temperature heating to spaces via fan-coil units or wet radiators depending on the space.

5.5 Note that the designs include a photovoltaic (PV) array on the roof of the building.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

5.6 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and has not identified any adverse equality or diversity impacts arising from this project. The Innovation Centre will be open to all businesses and individuals, and it is intended to support inclusive economic growth across Redditch. Although the Centre is not aimed at specific groups, it offers the opportunity to widen access to skills, employment and innovation-led opportunities for a broad range of residents. Equality considerations will continue to be kept under review as the Centre becomes operational, to ensure it remains accessible, fair and inclusive in practice.

4. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

5. There is an up-to-date costed risk register which is held by the project team and reviewed at regular intervals.

6. **APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Exempt Information

Background Papers:

"Redditch Town Investment Plan Business Cases" report to the Executive Committee on 28th June 2022
Issue - items at meetings - Redditch Town Investment Plan Business Cases

"Use of £300k of the Economic Development Reserve for feasibility studies at Matchborough, Winyates and Woodrow" report to Executive Committee 26th November 2024
Medium Term Financial Plan 25-6 to 27-8 Tranche 1 - Final - covering report only.pdf

"Digital Manufacturing Innovation Centre – Appointment of Design and Build Contractors for Stage 4 Designs" report to the Executive Committee on 8th July 2025:
Issue details - Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre (DMIC) – Appointment of Contractor for Stage 4 Designs

"Digital Manufacturing Innovation Centre – Proposed Project Changes" report to the Executive Committee considered on 13th May 2025:
Link to covering report - Executive Committee 13th May 2026

"Appointment of Design Team and Project Managers – Towns Fund Schemes", report to the Executive Committee considered on 9th January 2024: Link to the covering report to the Executive Committee - 9th January 2024

Town Investment Plan: Town Investment Plan submission | Redditch Town Deal

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Full Council

29th June 2026

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Matt Dormer	13/05/26
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Rachel Egan (Assistant Director Regeneration and Property Services)	30/04/26
Financial Services	Debra Goodall (Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services)	30/04/26
Legal and Democratic Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor – Governance Claire Green, Principal Solicitor – Contracts, Commercial and Procurement Jess Bayley-Hill – Principal Democratic Services Officer	01/05/26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green	29/04/26
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matthew Eccles	30/04/26

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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