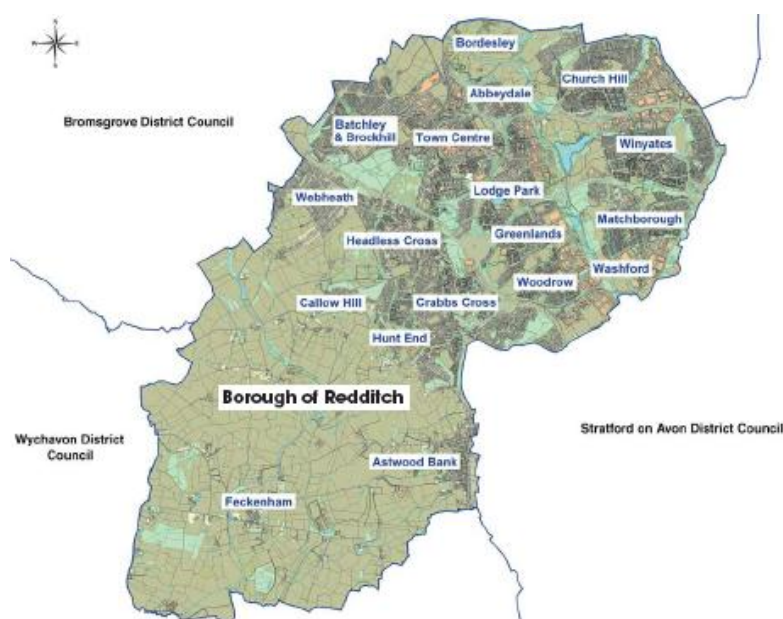


Redditch Borough Council Plan- *DRAFT* July 2013

The Council Plan

Foreword – Cllr Hartnett, Leader RBC

Redditch Borough



The Borough of Redditch is situated in the West Midlands region approximately 15 miles south of Birmingham, within the administrative boundary of Worcestershire County Council. The Borough has a population of 84,300 with a higher percentage of young people (age 0-15 years) compared with the rest of the County. There are four areas in the Borough that are within the top 10% most deprived in England; Winyates housing estate, St. Thomas More First School Area, Church Hill (YMCA surrounding area) and Batchley. Issues including health inequalities, education and employment all impact on the Borough.

What matters?

Redditch Borough Council is committed to providing residents with effective and efficient services that not only meet their needs but understand them too. We have listened to demand from our customers in order to understand what goes on in our communities and considered how we work with partners to support the issues within those communities. Through considering what really matters to our residents we have produced a set of six strategic purposes to guide us; they are based on customer demands and data and evidence about the needs of and issues affecting the people of Redditch Borough. Working to these purposes will help us to understand the needs of the Borough and how, together with our partners, we can improve the lives of our residents and the prospects for Redditch Borough as a whole.

Strategic Purposes



Keep my place safe & looking good

We know how important the place people live is to their happiness and wellbeing. It also has an impact on how people live their lives; the places they visit, when they go out and how they get there.

We want to make sure that these concerns are at the heart of our work in Redditch Borough and that we understand where the issues are and how we can work with our partners address them. We will also work to combat illegal activity such as fly tipping which can blight the environment.

Data is key to our understanding of the issues; from trees that needs cutting to levels of anti-social behaviour. This information will help the Council, from Members to frontline officers, to make the right decisions about where to prioritise resources so that we can make Redditch Borough a great place to live, work and visit.

Help me run a successful business

We want Redditch Borough to be a place where businesses thrive. The Borough has excellent links to Birmingham and the motorway network which makes it a perfect place to start or develop a business. Supporting businesses to flourish will help the local economy and bring more employment possibilities to our residents; more income will be brought into the Borough and standard of living and quality of life will improve.

We will make sure that we understand the numbers of businesses starting and ceasing so that we can, where appropriate, target support or work with partners in the region to give businesses the best start or guidance. We also need to consider the land and sites we have available for businesses and to balance their needs with those of local residents and the environment.

Help me to be financially independent

The financial crisis of the last few years has taken a toll on national and global economies. The effects are being felt by people all over the Country, including Redditch Borough residents. Having enough money to pay your bills or buy enough food are essential to all people, which is why financial independence is such an important issue. As a community leader, Redditch Borough Council is committed to supporting our residents to manage their finances wherever possible. However, as a responsible public authority we will not tolerate people abusing the system through fraud and will work with residents to recover arrears.

To get a full picture, we will work with partners to understand unemployment levels, benefit take-up and if people are struggling with their rent, mortgage or Council Tax. By understanding the issues facing Redditch Borough residents and how those issues may differ around the Borough we can alter how we deliver our services to maximise their impact. We can also work with partners in the public and voluntary sectors to ensure that the right support is available to our residents when they need it. Another key part of this issue is education and skills; we will work with partners to understand the barriers to education and the different routes people could take to get the skills they and local employers need.

Help me to live my life independently

Being independent is essential to quality of life and we recognise that some people struggle to access services due to their health, disability or isolation. We want to understand the issues that prevent people from living independently or result in people going into residential care. This is an area where we will work closely with partners such as Worcestershire County Council and the NHS to ensure that services are targeted at the people who need it most. We will also work with voluntary sector partners to provide the most appropriate support to our communities.

By capturing information on the health issues affecting the Borough or how many people are caring for a relative or loved one we will start to develop a picture not only of the support residents may need now but what support they may need in the future. This will help the Council and its partners to plan effectively for the future needs of our residents, whether in terms of home adaptations or numbers of suitable and accessible properties.

Help me find somewhere to live in my locality

Having somewhere to live is fundamentally important; finding appropriate accommodation can sometimes be challenging and renting or buying a home can be very expensive. We need to understand not only the demand on the housing market, be that emergency housing or finding a home that is suitable for a growing family, but whether enough new homes are being built to meet future need.

By looking at what housing is needed in conjunction with financial measures such as rent or mortgage arrears we can start to understand the pressures people face in not only getting but staying in a home. Based on data and consultation we will plan for the future to ensure that we have enough of the right housing for the people of Redditch Borough.

Provide good things for me to see do & visit

It is important to remember that having something good to do in your area is also central to meeting the needs of our residents. It also brings visitors to the Borough which is positive for the local economy. Having something to do can also be essential in health and wellbeing; whether that is through joining a local accredited sports group or attending a guided walk through one of our open spaces.

To understand if there are good things to see, do and visit in the Borough we will look at who is, and who is not, attending the services we provide and whether there are any gaps in our provision. This will mean we will need to work with partners and private providers to gain a full picture of what is on offer in Redditch Borough, from events to footfall in the town centre.

How the Council will support the plan

In order to meet our Strategic Purposes, we will need to change how the whole Council works. Every area of the Council will look at how it works and what demands are being placed on them, redesigning their services and procedures to meet the demand.

We will ensure that we:

- Provide excellent customer care at all times
- Listen to our residents and try to understand their needs
- Deliver our core services efficiently and effectively
- Make the best use of our resources, with residents at the heart of all we do
- Work with partners in the public, voluntary and private sectors to ensure residents of Redditch Borough get the services and support they need

Redditch Borough Council is committed to ensuring an excellent customer experience for all our customers and aims to have people, systems and processes in place which make it easy for customers to access our services. We believe that every customer should receive the same high level of customer care and our customer experience strategy Every Customer, Every Time set out our vision for the delivery of this

As issues within the area can change we are committed to understanding whether we are delivering the purposes we have set for the Borough; we will do this by using measures to capture data which Officers, Managers and Members will use to understand the services we provide. These will change as situations change and will be used to allocate resources and to help us gain a true picture of the Borough. We also need to recognise the changing national agendas and the impact they could have on our outcomes.

As we progress, the budget will be aligned with the strategic purposes; moving away from money being allocated to specific service areas but instead allowing flexibility to tackle issues as they arise making our services more responsive and effective. Our internal support services will also be aligned to enable the organisation to deliver the strategic purposes.

As the strategic purposes cover issues fundamental to our customers' lives, we will need to work differently with our partners. Redditch Partnership, the local strategic partnership for Redditch Borough, will be a key stakeholder in developing and supporting these new ways of working. We are also starting to explore working in a more locality driven way, which aims to understand the differing needs of communities within our Borough and how public services can support them.

Where are we now?

Redditch Borough Council is looking at how services work across the whole organisation, with teams considering the demand that they get and how they could make the services more focused around customers' real needs. These projects are on-going and will help us to deliver what matters to customers.

Case Studies

Locality Trial- Winyates

The trial is seeking to find a way to deliver a service that is designed to identify the underlying issues affecting the citizen- the real problems- not just the presenting issue, in this case rent arrears. It is looking to provide the right support when it is needed, prevent needs from escalating and as a result reduce the number of people in need of significant professional support. This should also have an impact on the number of unresolved or repeat demands.

Revenues & Benefits

Over the last few years we have started to change the way that our revenues and benefits services are designed. A big change has seen the experts dealing with demand up front, resolving as many issues as possible during the first contact. Not only will this benefit the customer as they are helped quickly but will also save the organisation money.

Trees

The trees team have undergone a trial to understand how they could work better, removing activities that add no value to the customer. By focusing on what the customer needs, it will enable the team to increase proactive work which will help to reduce the amount of reactive work. The trial has seen the time it takes for trees to be dealt with move from weeks to a mean average of 11 days.

Bin Collection

The refuse team have looked at how they could improve the routes that the refuse wagons take around the Borough, reducing mileage, carbon emissions and providing greater support in the case of breakdown. Focusing on one type of collection at a time is improving efficiency and further projects are planned to help with missed bins.

Corporate Principles

We need the organisation to be flexible enough to meet the changing demands of our residents. To ensure that we are working in a way that supports this flexibility and keeps the customer at the centre of all we do, we have developed a set of corporate principles. These principles will guide how we change the business, how decisions are made and how we work going forward.

- We will meet individual needs where possible and provide excellent customer care
- Policy and decision making are informed by our customers and their needs
- Partnership working is central to how we do business and how we understand the real needs of our customers
- Senior management and Members will develop a view of the organisation as a whole and use this understanding to ensure we do what matters to the customer
- Performance management should be based on using real data to learn and improve
- Managers focus on using this data on a day to day basis within their service to make changes and to try to fix the underlying causes of problems
- Efficiencies will come from making the service focused on the customers true needs
- Good performance comes from services working better as a whole not from individuals
- Costs should be looked at across the whole organisation
- Expertise should be placed at the frontline as appropriate and staff empowered to make decisions based on their skills and knowledge not set procedures
- We will learn what matters to our customers by spending time listening to their real enquiries and issues
- All major redesign will look at localities not service areas
- We will only do value things that help us deliver our strategic purposes
- We will align our resources to ensure we are delivering against our strategic purposes