

Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy – Overview and Scrutiny Monitoring Report – January 2022

Redditch Community Sustainable Strategy (SCS)

The Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy is the strategy produced by Redditch Partnership which sets out the strategic direction for Redditch and how partners can contribute to achieving a shared vision for the Borough. The current Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) was pre-scrutinised in March 2011 with the final Strategy gaining approval by full Council on 28th March 2011. Originally the Strategy was in place for 3 years. A mini refresh of the SCS priorities was undertaken during 2015 with the outcome that a few minor changes were made to the priorities. Since then, there has been a short assessment of the priorities undertaken each year by the Partnership.

The current vision of the Strategy is:

‘Redditch will be successful and vibrant with communities that have access to good job opportunities, good education, good health and are communities that people will be proud to live and work in’.

The four current priorities of the SCS are:

Priority One	Health Inequalities	Focus is on following issues: smoking, alcohol, drugs; obesity / healthy lifestyles and mental health and wellbeing.
Priority Two	Education attainment, school readiness and raising aspirations of young people.	Focus is on three issues: improving literacy and numeracy; raising aspirations; and improve statistical levels of attainment particularly for Early Years and Key Stage 2.
Priority Three	The economy of Redditch with a focus on providing a larger and more diverse job offer.	Focus is on three broad issues: promotion of Redditch as a business location; jobs and worklessness; and fostering economic ambition in young people.
Priority Four	Lead on transformational change of services for citizens in Redditch	Focus is on carrying on some of the legacy work of the Connecting Families programme and identifying any further opportunities for transformational work across partners systems.

Redditch Partnership

The SCS is overseen by a group of strategic partners working in Redditch (see structure diagram appended to this report). This group used to be known as the Redditch Partnership Board but since April 2014, the group has been slightly reconfigured and is now known as Redditch Partnership Executive Group (RPEG).

Sitting underneath this group are other groups including the Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust (RCWT). This is a Thematic Group looking at issues regarding

children and young people and also health issues. This group oversees the Redditch Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Redditch Partnership Executive Group (RPEG)

The role of RPEG is to provide strategic direction in Redditch on the identified priorities and also provide guidance and influence on key commissioned services, projects and initiatives rolled out across Worcestershire which have an impact of the residents of Redditch.

During the past year, RPEG has continued to meet virtually (although one meeting did take place face to face in November). The group has given oversight and contributed direction to the development of the Redditch District Collaborative (RDC) and also the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) work which is being rolled out in Woodrow and across Redditch. It also hears regular updates from the two theme groups – the RCWT and the Redditch Business Leaders Group. The focus of discussions in 2022 will be on the RDC and the ABCD work.

Redditch Business Leaders

This group previously used to be the Economic Development Theme Group but has morphed into the Redditch Business Leaders Group. The group is chaired by a local businessman (the CEO of FaunZoeller) and has representatives from a number of local businesses including Heller, Mettis and MSP. The aim of the group is to focus on skills especially in young people and for the past couple of years has rolled out a project facilitating business mentors working with children in schools called the Power Up mentor scheme. The group is looking to become constituted and has been working on developing a website to help reach out to other businesses and promote the work of the group.

Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust (RCWT) and other Groups

The RCWT usually holds meetings every two months. Meetings consist of discussions predominantly around health inequalities, children and young people and older people. During the past year, there has been several virtual meetings of the group held on MS Teams. They have mostly been utilised to provide a forum for partner organisations to update each other about the work they have been undertaking during the pandemic. Some of the key issues highlighted by partners through the meetings include:

- Impact of Covid on vulnerable people and people already struggling financially;
- Training and skills activities / opportunities available to people especially young people in Redditch;
- Housing and homelessness issues in Redditch and how RBC are tackling these; and
- Concerns about fuel poverty and impacts on people's finances.

The Positive Activities Sub Group used to exist as a group as part of the Partnership but has been superseded by the Youth Forum. It is chaired by Pete Sugg who is the lead officer for Young Solutions (an umbrella group for VCS organisations whose focus is on children and young people). They are currently focusing on bidding for the next tranche of Positive Activities funding from Worcestershire County Council

and looking at opportunities for joint working on projects relating to children and young people.

Redditch District Collaborative (RDC)

The two Primary Care Networks for Redditch are leading on a partnership initiative which is driven by the national agenda of the development of the Integrated Care Systems (ICS) for each local area. The RDC has three priorities - mental health and wellbeing, frailty and obesity. Work has begun to engage with partner organisations whose work falls under one or more of these priorities. Asset mapping has taken place of services and initiatives and there has been discussion about roles within the different organisations that link communities with services under these priorities. The importance of having a clear directory of services has been highlighted by this work and the RDC is working closely with Worcestershire County Council to align with their Here2Help directory and also the Council's Knowledge Bank.

Further work of the RDC includes scoping out the possibility of developing an Integrated Wellbeing Network which will look at how we can build on the assets of communities and link them together with services to improve health outcomes for Redditch residents.

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) in Redditch

At the beginning of the year, a new ABCD team was established by Worcestershire County Council to roll out ABCD working across the County. Redditch was a focus for this work, with Woodrow chosen as the area to focus on initially. A Woodrow ABCD Steering Group was established including elected Members for the area, the Council and Voluntary and Community Sector representation on it. The Redditch Partnership Manager has chaired this group. The group has met numerous times over the year. Work to map services and community activities in the area has taken place along with some community engagement to see what local people would like to see in Woodrow.

Further funding has been awarded by WCC for this work. To take the work forward, roles called Community Builders are to be established. Community Builders work in the local areas to make connections between local people and services and activities and to initiate new activities if residents feel there is a need for them.

There is funding for one Community Builder in Woodrow and 2 other Community Builders to work in Redditch. It was decided that a further Community Builder would work in Abbeydale and another would work with Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities across the whole of Redditch. BARN in partnership with Sandycroft and Oasis Christian Centre have just been successful in bidding to host these three posts and oversee this work moving forward.

Wellbeing in Partnership Newsletter

The "Wellbeing in Partnership" Newsletter became a weekly, then fortnightly email bulletin in March 2020 once the pandemic began. The idea was to get messages out as quickly as possible to partner organisations about services which were running and those that had to pause owing to the pandemic. It still serves as a point of information about projects, programmes and services in Redditch and Bromsgrove. For the foreseeable future the newsletter will remain an e-news bulletin.

Redditch and Bromsgrove Directory of Services (Knowledge Bank)

A directory of services building on current directories produced by the Council's Customer Service Team and the Parenting and Family Support Service was created a number of years ago. The Council's IT development team assist on the technical side of this while officers including Customer Services, Parenting and Family Support, Redditch and Bromsgrove Partnership Managers are working to populate this with all services from the statutory, voluntary and community sector available in Redditch and Bromsgrove.

The fully searchable directory is available on the Council's webpages for the public and local partners to use. Local organisations can contact the administrating team and add their organisations details to the directory if not already on there. The administrating team will also work to keep the directory as up to date as possible. The link for the Knowledge Bank is <http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/knowledgebank>

There is also a directory of services now being produced by Worcestershire County Council called Here2Help. This is still developing but it might be that this directory supersedes the Knowledge Bank in time. Here2Help can be accessed [here](#).