

## REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

20th October 2010

### COUNCIL PLAN 2011-14 - Part 1

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Carole Gandy, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership & Partnership
Responsible Head of Service	Hugh Bennett, Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships
Key Decision	

#### 1. SUMMARY

To re-confirm the Council's Vision and priorities and strategic focus for the forthcoming budget round.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

**The Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that**

**the Vision and priorities, as set out in Appendix 1 (Paragraphs 6.1 – 6.6) of the report, be reconfirmed and the focus for the forthcoming budget round, in line with the analysis of the Council's national, regional and local context, be approved.**

#### 3. BACKGROUND

##### Council Plan 2011-2014

- 3.1 Executive and Full Council approved the Council Plan as part of the 2010/11 budget round. The Council Plan is effectively the business plan for the Council and a key document for Members. The 2011/2014 plan will be published in early 2011/12; however, the Council needs to agree its priorities and areas of focus now, so that officers can make detailed plans to deliver these as part of the service business planning cycle.

##### Process to Date

- 3.2 As part of the work on developing the Vision and priorities, the Council must take account of the strategic context within which it operates. The Council is in a good position to determine this. The Council has the following information to draw on:-
- The Redditch Profile e.g. deprivation indices, population growth predictions etc.
  - The current work on the Redditch Partnership Board, around its priorities: children and young people, health, economy and Winyates area of highest need.

# **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**20th October 2010**

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- The Worcestershire “Story of Place” and the resultant Local Area Agreement.
- Public consultation feedback, for example, road shows, Morton Stanley Festival etc.
- Performance data, based on the indicators in the Council Plan.
- Survey data, including Worcestershire Viewpoint.
- The forthcoming Budget jury.
- The Community Forum.
- Customer complaints data.
- A three year medium term financial plan.

3.3 Based on this information, the following priorities are recommended to Executive and Full Council:-

- An enterprising community.
- Safe.
- Clean and green.
- A well managed organisation

3.4 These are unchanged from last year and reflected in the Vision: “An enterprising community, which is safe, clean and green”.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Inevitably, the forthcoming budget round will be dominated by the Comprehensive Spending Review; however, it is critical that we continue to focus on our priorities and the areas of focus within these, as set out in Appendix 1.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications to this report.

## **6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES**

The report sets out the Council’s priorities and the evidence for them.

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

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**7. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY  
CONSIDERATIONS**

The Council Plan is supported by the corporate risk register.

**8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct recommendations on customer service; however, the report does indicate that an increased focus on customer service is required.

**9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct recommendations on equalities and diversity, however, the report identifies community cohesion as an area of focus.

**10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

The report supports value for money through ensuring that the Council aligns its spending and services to its priorities.

**11. CLIMATE CHANGE AND CARBON IMPLICATIONS**

The report identifies that more spend to save initiatives will need to be brought forward to meet the climate change targets and that these targets are set to increase.

**12. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Procurement Issues: None.
Personnel: HR modernisation and other HR practices e.g. workforce planning, competencies etc. are identified as an area of focus.
Governance/Performance Management: None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998: The report identifies community cohesion as an area of focus.
Policy: None.
Biodiversity: The report identifies the need for an increased focus on climate change.

## REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

20th October 2010

### **13. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Please include the following table and indicate 'Yes' or 'No' as appropriate. Delete the words in italics.

Portfolio Holder	At Portfolio Holder's
Chief Executive	At CMT
Executive Director and Deputy Chief Executive	At CMT
Executive Director – Finance and Resources	At CMT
Executive Director – Regeneration and Planning	At CMT
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	At CMT
Head of Service	At CMT
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	At CMT
Head of Finance and Resources	At CMT
Corporate Procurement Team	N/a

### **14. WARDS AFFECTED**

All Wards

### **15. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Redditch Borough, Position Statement, September 2010.

### **16. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Draft Structural Reform Plan, DCGL, July 2010

Draft Structural Reform Plan, Cabinet Office, July 2010

Draft Structural Reform Plan, DECC, July 2010

Worcestershire Viewpoint Survey, WCC, March 2010

Redditch Profile, WCC, September 2009

Council Plan, RBC, 2010-13

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

**20th October 2010**

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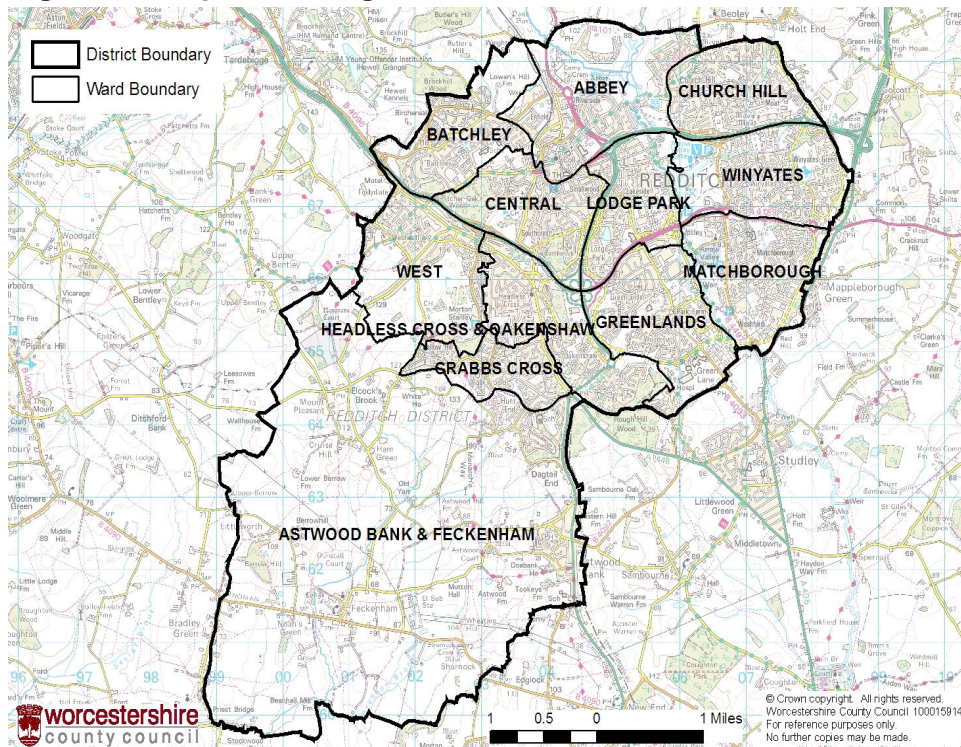
**Redditch BC**  
**Position Statement**  
**September 2010**

# 1. Redditch Borough

## Geography

- 1.1 The Borough of Redditch is situated in the West Midlands Region approximately 24 km (15 miles) south of Birmingham. Redditch has good transport links, being located near the M42 and a strong network of dual carriageways and A roads that connect Redditch to areas like Birmingham, Bromsgrove and Redditch. Redditch is also close to the M40 linking to London and close to Birmingham International. It lies within the administrative boundary of Worcestershire County Council and is adjacent to Bromsgrove District to its north and west, Stratford-upon-Avon District to the east and Wychavon District to the south.
- 1.2 Redditch, although a New Town, has retained many important ecological and landscape features, with the native flora retained and largely unaltered from that of an ecological survey in 1966. Ponds, hedges and green spaces all help to hold together the important ecological infrastructure. Redditch has 5.7 hectares of open space per 1,000 population.

**Figure 1 - Map of Borough**



## **Population**

- 1.3 The Borough has a population of 79,600. This represents an increase of 1% since 2001. Redditch has a comparatively young population, with the highest proportion of young people (0-19) in Worcestershire, 25.1% compared to 23.5%, and a smaller proportion of individuals over 60, 19.2% compared to 24.6%. Most of the population (93%) lives within the town of Redditch which accounts for approximately half the geographical area of the Borough. The now defunct Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) envisaged that an additional 6,600 dwellings which would have had a significant impact on the population of the Borough.
- 1.4 Although the biggest proportion, children and young people are the least satisfied, 47%, compared to 11% of the 65 plus age group. Generally, we might expect this group to be the least satisfied, but it is not necessarily the case in other Worcestershire districts. The main complaint is a lack of things to do.
- 1.5 Although a relatively smaller percentage of the population, an ageing population is still a key characteristic of the Borough, with the 80+ population expected to increase by 93% by 2026. This statistic may have a significant impact on policy and planning in the Borough. More concerning is the predicted drop in the working age population, with the highest expected reduction being the 9.9% anticipated reduction in the 20-29 year group. Similarly, Redditch is experiencing a negative net migration unlike Worcestershire as a whole. The numbers are relatively small, with a net migration of approximately 250 people a year; nevertheless it is concerning that people appear to be leaving the Borough. Further research is needed to understand why this is happening. The Core Strategy, or whatever replaces it, will be pivotal to responding to these predicted trends.
- 1.6 Redditch also has the largest proportion of ethnic minority groups in Worcestershire, with 8% of the population being black or minority ethnic (BME). Redditch also has the largest population of Asian or Asian British Pakistani residents in the County, with 2.5 times the County average proportion (0.9%). The Council has now set up a Community Forum, but it is recognised that further work is needed to really engage with this part of our population.

## **Economy**

- 1.7 We have already noted that Redditch enjoys excellent transport links (if you have a car) locally with very little congestion, including a strong network of dual carriageways and A-roads. The nearby M42 and M5 motorways provide access further afield and to Birmingham International. Public transport is provided via a train and bus network. The train station is in need of regeneration.



- 1.8 The economy in Redditch is an area of concern. The Redditch Profile notes:-

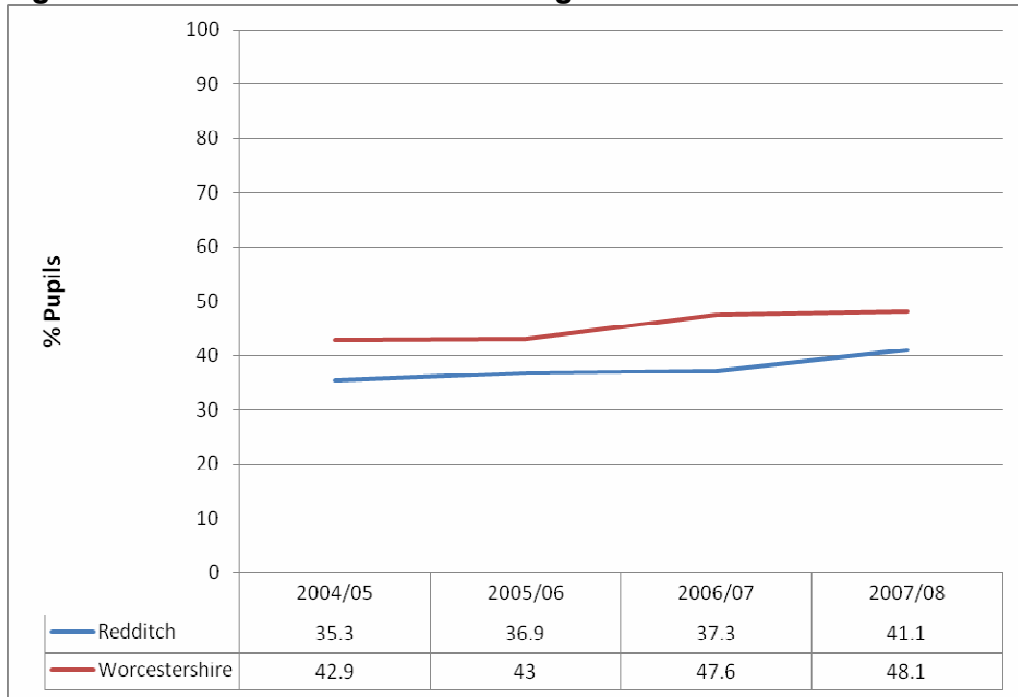
“while many new towns have been economically successful, most are now experiencing major problems. Their design is inappropriate to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Their infrastructure is ageing at the same rate and many have social and economic problems”.

The proportion of individuals employed in manufacturing industry (25%) is considerably higher than both the County and West Midlands region average. Redditch has fewer individuals employed in distribution, hotels and restaurants compared to other areas of Worcestershire. The economic downturn over the last year is affecting everyone; however, Redditch has been hit hardest when compared to Worcestershire as a whole. VAT registrations are “consistently lower” than the County and national average (34.4, compared to 41.7) and Redditch has one of the lowest proportions of “wealthy achievers” (31% compared to Wyre Forest’s 42%). There needs to be a greater strategic focus on economic development for Redditch (and all of North Worcestershire), whose three main towns orbit around Birmingham and not Worcester City. As part of the Shared Services programme, a draft North Worcestershire Economic Development Strategy has been developed and a North Worcestershire Economic Development team is being created. Reversing these trends will require new sites for economic development, more business start up units, housing that encourages more “wealthy achievers”, a better public transport infrastructure and continued improvements to the town centre. The compact nature of the Borough restricts the development of new economic sites to the north of the town, close the motorway network, something Solihull Borough and Warwick District have been able to do.

### **Education, Deprivation and Health**

- 1.9 Educational attainment was identified as being lower than in other parts of Worcestershire and was part of the reason for the Audit Commission’s red flag for Redditch. It is interesting to note that the Redditch Profile, assembled by the Worcestershire Research and Intelligence Unit, identified that educational attainment has been “recognised as an issue over many years”, which begs the question why it has only recently been flagged, Audit Commission or no Audit Commission.

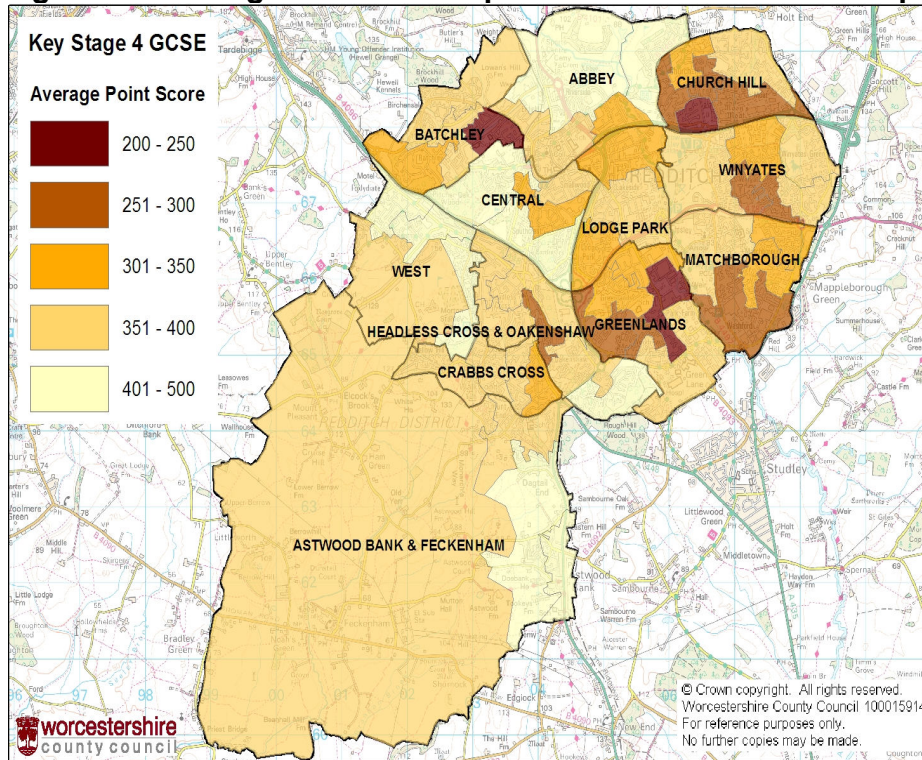
**Figure 2 - % of 16 Year Olds Achieving 5 or More GCSEs at Grade A\* to C**



**Source: FTI Area Profiles**

- 1.10 The best performing school in the Borough at GCSE in 2008 was St Augustine's Catholic High School, with 58% of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C. The poorest was Arrow Vale Community High School, with just 29% of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C.
- 1.11 Not surprisingly the spatial distribution between poor exam results is linked to deprivation.

**Figure 3 – Average GCSE and Equivalent Point Score Per Pupil, by SOA**



**Source: Department for Children, Schools, and Families. Average GCSE and equivalent point score per pupil at the end of Key Stage 4, September 2006 to August 2007.**

1.12 Absence levels are also higher than the Worcestershire average (4.8%) in all, but one of Redditch’s schools.

**Figure 4 – School Absence Data, Primary Schools 2008**

Primary Schools	% of half days missed due to:	
	Overall Absence	Persistent Absence
Ipsley CofE Middle School	6.7%	3.1%
Birchensale Middle School	5.6%	2.8%
Church Hill Middle School	6.4%	3.5%
Ridgeway Middle School	4.8%	1.9%
St. Bede’s Catholic Middle School	5.1%	2.3%
Walkwood CofE Middle School	5.1%	1.8%
Woodfield Middle School	7.3%	5.8%
The Kingfisher School	N/a	N/a
Pitcheroak School	N/a	N/a

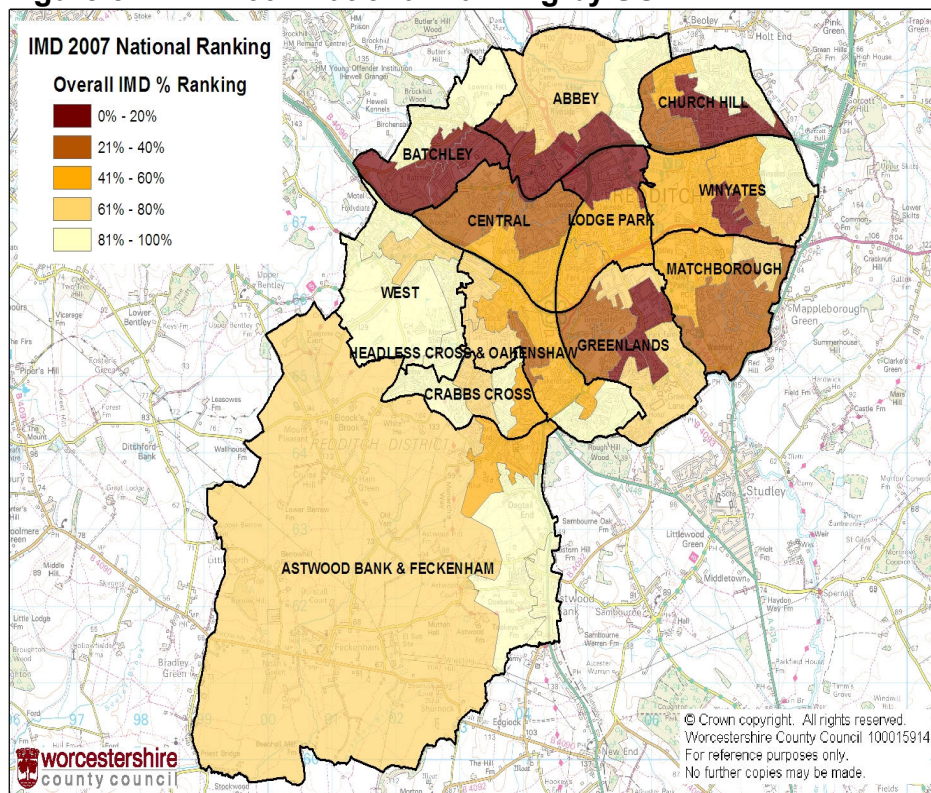
**Source: DCFS**

1.13 Based on data from May 2008, 3.8% of Redditch’s 16-18 year old population are in education, employment or training (NEET). This is better than the County average of 4.7%; however, almost a quarter (23.5%) of 16-18 year olds around

the Winyates housing estate are NEETs. Winyates is also statistically significantly different from the rest of the Borough, with the next highest NEET area, Smallwood, having 15% NEETs. Similarly, 31% of this population is claiming out of work benefits. A geographic focus on Winyates should concentrate on these two issues.

- 1.14 Redditch is the most deprived district in Worcestershire, something that has not really featured at a County level, where the focus appears to have been on parts of Worcester City and Kidderminster (Kidderminster is actually ranked 154<sup>th</sup> out of 354 nationally, compared to Redditch's 131<sup>st</sup>). Deprivation is all relative and it should be remembered that Redditch Borough is in the top 40% nationally, not the top 10%; however, there are wards where the deprivation is more serious:-

**Figure 5 – IMD 2007 National Ranking by SOA**



Source: IMD 2007

- 1.15 Within these wards, there are two areas that are within the top 10% most deprived in England:-

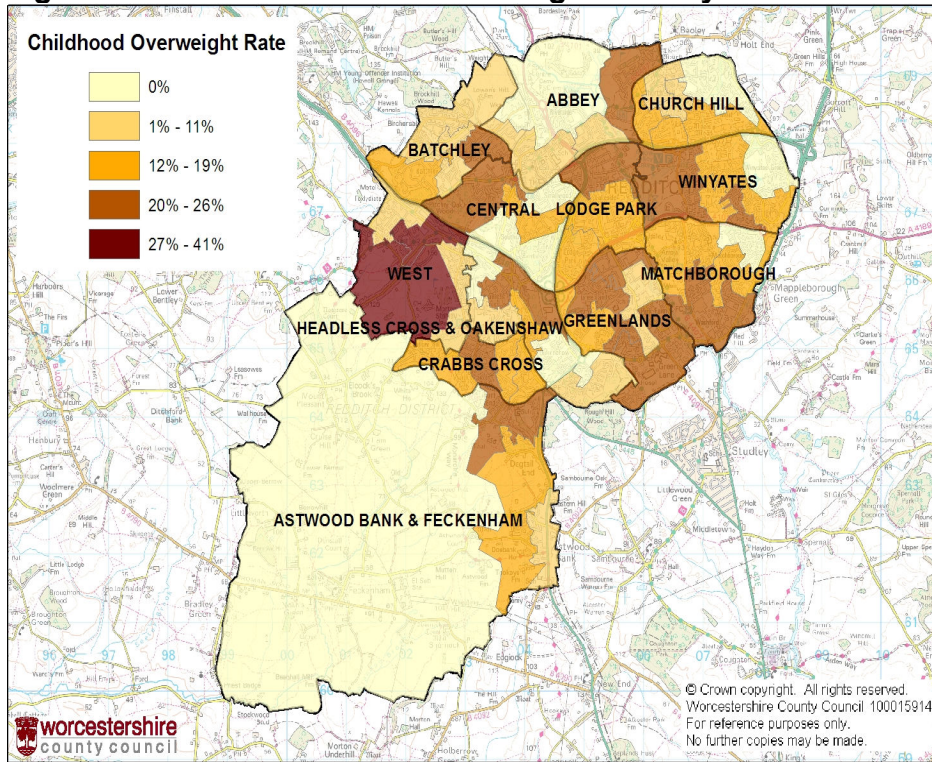
**Figure 6 – Top Five Deprived Super Output Areas in Redditch**

Area Description	Deprivation	Ward
Winyates Housing Estate (Ipsley C.E. Middle School)	Top 10%	Winyates
Church Hill YMCA Area	Top 10%	Church Hill
St Thomas More First School	Top 20%	Greenlands
Batchley	Top 20%	Batchley
Between Woodrow North and Woodrow South Roads	Top 20%	Greenlands

**Source: IMD 2007**

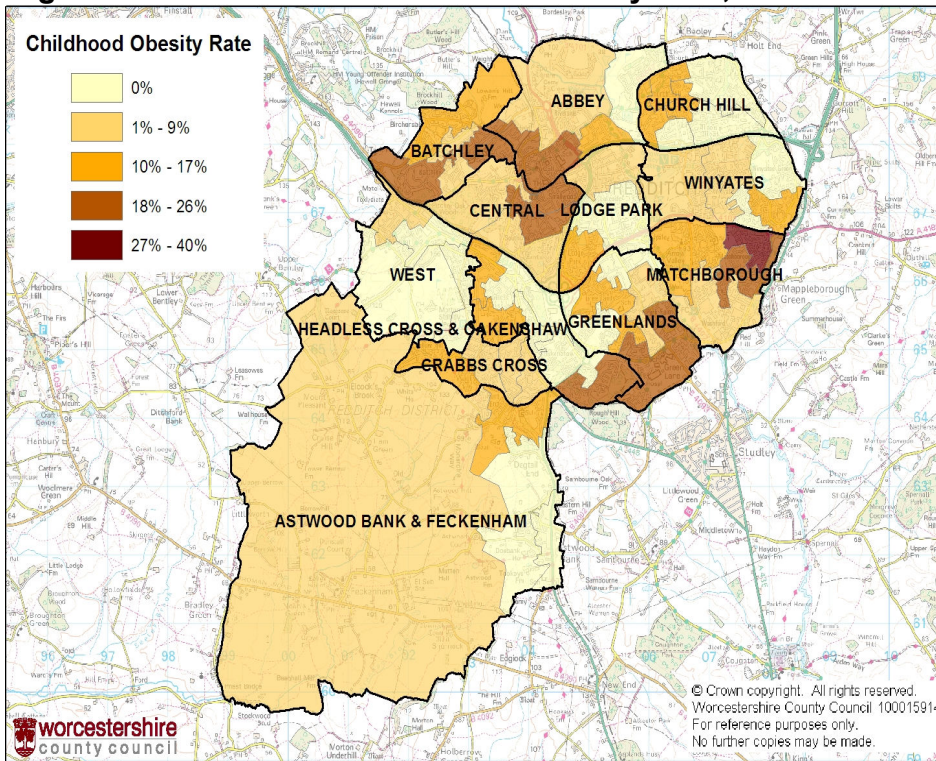
- 1.16 An analysis of the Index of Multiple Deprivation for these areas identifies barriers to housing, education and health as the three main concerns.
- 1.17 Tackling deprivation requires a multi-agency response. The Borough Council cannot be expected to deal with complex deprivation issues on its own, particularly, when it is not the lead for two of the three concerns identified. Engaging with our partners, in particular, the County Council and the Primary Care Trust are critical and for this reason we need a functioning Borough Local Strategic Partnership. Lessons from other regeneration projects suggest that progress may be slow at first, as it takes time to build a plan, engage partners (who may have different agendas) and assemble funding, but a sustained long term focus, usually provided through political leadership will bear fruit. The regeneration in Chelmsley Wood, north Solihull, provides a good example of what can be done. This large scale regeneration scheme was predicated on rising house prices over the last decade, using development and sector 106 monies to lever in improved schools, health facilities, housing and retail. Clearly, the recent economic downturn, depressed housing market and national budget deficit are all factors which are going to make regenerating parts of Redditch quickly more difficult, as the recent experience of the Church Hill regeneration scheme shows. The fact that conditions are difficult should not deter us and the example of Solihull points to the need for a sustained long term focus – they started in 1995. Given the red flag was only “awarded” in 2009, it is very early days.
- 1.18 Health inequalities was the other part of the “red flag” given to Redditch. The mortality rate from all circulatory diseases for under 75s is “much higher” than the County average (79.60 per 100,000, compared to 69.21), which suggests lifestyles is the issue. Smoking, drinking and obesity (diet and exercise) appear to be the causes, but the spatial distribution of these varies and in some cases is outside the five super output areas identified as the most deprived in Redditch.
- 1.19 Over a third of children in year 6 are overweight in the areas around Webheath, including Crumpfields Lane; conversely, obesity at year 6 is most prevalent in areas of Matchborough.

**Figure 7 – Year 6 Childhood Overweight Rate by SOA 2005/06**



Source: Data provided by PCT

**Figure 8 – Year 6 Childhood Obese Rate by SOA, 2005/06**



Source: Data provided by PCT

- 1.20 Redditch's levels of exercise are the lowest in Worcestershire, with only 19% of the population taking 30 minutes of exercise 3 times a week. The areas of lowest exercise do not cross reference to the areas with overweight or obese children (although there is some synergy around south Abbey and the neighbouring wards); however, the main point is that exercise levels are generally low across the urban part of the Borough.
- 1.21 Based on a lifestyle survey of secondary schools in 2007, year 8 and year 10 pupils in Worcestershire were much more likely to have drunk alcohol in the past week than the corresponding group in the rest of England. Binge drinking rates are the joint highest in Worcestershire, but we do not have data that drills down to ward or sub-ward level. Sub-ward data is available for levels of smoking and it would not be unreasonable to assume that there is a correlation between smoking rates and drinking rates. Redditch has the highest rate of adult smoking in the Worcestershire, with 26.5% of adults smoking. Five of the 17 smoking hotspots in Worcestershire are in Redditch.

### **Smoking Hotspots in Redditch**

- 1.22 Redditch has the highest rate of adult smokers in the County, with 26.5% of adults smoking. Smoking prevalence has been estimated for each of the Middle Super Output Area (MSOAs) in the County. There are 85 MSOAs in Worcestershire, of which seventeen fall within the top 20% areas with the highest rates. These MSOAs have been identified as County hotspots by the Worcestershire Primary Care Trust and Worcestershire County Council.
- 1.23 Five of the seventeen hotspot MSOAs are in Redditch:
- MSOA E02006730 covering Greenlands – 37% adult smokers. Ranked as 4<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all MSOAs in the County.
  - MSOA E02006722 covering Church Hill – 35% adult smokers. Ranked as 6<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all MSOAs in the County.
  - MSOA E02006725 covering Winyates – 32.8% adult smokers. Ranked as 8<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all MSOAs in the County.
  - MSOA E02006723 covering Batchley – 30.9% adult smokers. Ranked as 10<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all MSOAs in the County.
  - MSOA E02006724 covering North Redditch area including Trinity High School, Abbeydale, Smallwood and St. Georges – 30.3% adult smokers. Ranked as 12<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all MSOAs in the County.
- 1.24 These hotspots almost exactly cross match the five areas with deprivation in the top 20% nationally.
- 1.25 Teenage pregnancy and adolescent sexual health is the number one priority for residents when surveyed in November 2008. Teenage pregnancies, whilst life changing for the teenager involved, are small in number and the location difficult to identify as the data counts where young people live after the birth of their child.

1.26 In conclusion, for the LSP all this data suggests:-

- Winyates really stands out for the proportion of 16-18 year olds who are NEETs - 23.5% (the next highest area in the Borough is 15%).
- Winyates also have a very high worklessness level of 31%.
- Smoking rates cross reference to the 5 Super Output Areas (including Winyates) identified as being in the top 20% most deprived.
- It would be reasonable to assume that drinking levels also cross reference (we do not have this data).
- Overweight and obesity levels do not cross reference, instead being focused on around Webheath and Matchborough.
- Participation in sport across Redditch is generally low (19%), Winyates is not the worst offender, with Feckenham being the exception.
- A focus should be on Winyates for NEETs and worklessness;
- A focus on the 5 areas of deprivation (including Winyates) for smoking and drinking;
- A focus on increasing participation in sport across the urban parts of the Borough;
- A focus on overweight year 6 children in the West and Matchborough.

### **Crime and Fear of Crime**

1.27 There has been a small drop in the overall crime rate for the Borough (3,469 offences compared to 3,690), a 15 percentage point reduction in residents who view teenagers hanging around as a very/fairly big problem and a 15 percentage point reduction in residents who view people with or dealing drugs as a problem. The Redditch Profile notes: "Redditch appears to have made significant progress in tackling anti-social behaviour since 2006/07". Alcohol fuelled violence in the town centre remains a concern, as does community cohesion.

### **Housing**

1.28 The Council's Housing Department currently owns 6,083 properties, is exceeding its affordable housing target (but see also paragraph below) and is performing well on the number of households living in temporary



accommodation. The major challenge facing the Council is the planned changes to the Housing Revenue Account.

### **Core Strategy and Housing**

- 1.29 The preparation of the Core Strategy will address the issue of setting a level of new housing provision up to 2026 and identifying the new strategic sites for housing development. Housing is a key determinant of health and well being and through s.106 monies provides an opportunity to lever in infrastructure investment into the Borough and, in particular, some of our deprived areas. The North Solihull regeneration project was a planning led response to deprivation, working with the private sector to build a mix of private tenure and social housing and levering in new investment in medical centres, community centres etc. It was predicated on rising house prices, but given the core strategy looks forward to 2026, we should look to use techniques like local master planning and Planning4Real to support the focus on regenerating some of our more deprived areas.
- 1.30 What can we conclude from this analysis? Where the Council has direct responsibility e.g. leisure, parks or has an established partnership e.g. community safety, we can make a significant difference to our communities. The attainment, health inequalities and economic development we now face are complex and made more difficult by us not being the lead organisation; however, Redditch Borough Council is, due to its democratic mandate, the community leader. It is important that the Council invests in areas like strategic planning, the LSP and economic development to ensure the Council has sufficient strategic capacity to drive this agenda and lever in focus and investment from our partners over a sustained long term period and that we ensure that our direct service provision, like leisure, sports development, housing are more aligned to supporting the delivery of an enterprising community. It normally takes several years to fully align a budget. The forthcoming budget round will inevitably focus on efficiencies as we respond to the Comprehensive Spending Review.

## 2. National Policy

2.1 A change of national Government has led to a significant change in national policy towards local government. It is early days and we are not at a legislative stage yet, however, the Draft Structural Reform Plan (July 2010), gives the best indication yet of the Coalition Government's direction. Before looking at the specifics, two key phrases have emerged: "Big Society" and "New Localism".

### **Big Society**

2.2 Big Society includes the decentralisation of power, changes to the planning regime, increased accountability and increased transparency. Much of this will be legislative, so the Council will need to comply with it; however, there is more scope for local policy makers around the Cabinet Office's definition of Big Society: "encourage more Social Action and strengthen the voluntary sector through a programme to make it easier to run a voluntary sector organisation, get more resources into the sector and make it easier for the sector to work with the State". Specifics proposals include:-

- Support the creation of mutuals, co-operatives, charities and social enterprises;
- Explore how to make regular volunteering an element of civil service staff appraisals;
- Break down barriers to social action and volunteering;
- Launch a national day to celebrate social action;
- Train a new generation of community organisers;
- Fund and support the creation of neighbourhood groups.

2.3 All of these are particularly relevant to tackling our areas of deprivation.

2.4 The recent letter from the Secretary of State for the DCLG for local authorities to make it easier for people to have street parties, also points to a focus on events that bring people together and help develop an increased sense of community.

### **New Localism**

2.5 "A radical shift of power from Westminster to local people"; this is how the DCLG defines New Localism.

- 2.6 We can expect a Localism Bill to be passed in November 2011. We have already seen that New Localism will lead to a reduction in off shoots of central Government, for example, regional government, the Audit Commission and other quangos. It has also already led to the abolition of the Regional Spatial Strategies and current local government planning system
- 2.7 The Structural Reform Plan also includes proposals for giving residents the power to instigate local referendums on any local issue and veto excessive council tax increases. New Localism also suggests an increased focus on community engagement, through techniques like participatory budgeting and neighbourhood budgets.

### **Comprehensive Spending Review**

- 2.8 The financial backdrop to this is the impending Comprehensive Spending Review (20 October 2010), which will set out the Coalition Government's plans for deficit reduction. The size of the reductions and speed are still a matter of conjecture, but range from 25% to 40%; either way, they are significant and every head of service has been asked to complete an Options for Change pro-forma, detailing how they might achieve these reductions and the anticipated impact on service provision.
- 2.9 A local government resource review is also due to start in summer 2011, finishing sometime in 2012, which could see a change to how local government is funded. If the outcomes are consistent with New Localism, a move towards less central government funding and more local taxation may be in the offing.

### **Climate Change**

- 2.10 The Coalition Government has promised to be the "greenest ever". The Department of Energy and Climate Change's part of the Structural Reform Plan includes:-
- A reduction in central government's emissions by 10% in 12 months; and
  - Build support for the increase in the EU emissions reduction target to 30% by 2020 (and increase of 10 percentage points).
- 2.11 It would come as no surprise if the first commitment is passed onto local government and the second commitment would be a legal requirement.

### **3. Regional/Local Policy**

#### **Worcestershire Local Area Agreement**

- 3.1 The key strategic document which makes the link between national, regional and local policy is the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The current LAA is due to run out in March 2011. The Worcestershire Partnership fought a long battle with regional government to prevent the Worcestershire LAA being a means for imposing Whitehall targets in a local setting and it does broadly reflect Worcestershire priorities, not imposed Whitehall targets. The LAA is determined by a "Story of Place", which uses consultation and evidence to identify the main issues affecting Worcestershire. It is anticipated that the "Story of Place" will continue, that the LAA will not be replaced when it ends in March 2011 and that instead an updated Worcestershire Sustainable Community Strategy will include a tighter set of priorities, supported by appropriate indicators. It is important that the Leader and Chief Executive continue to work at a county level to ensure that the attainment and deprivation issues identified in Redditch are reflected in the new more tightly focused Strategy.

#### **Borough Community Strategy**

- 3.2 At a local level, we will still need a Borough Sustainable Community Strategy, which will provide a long term vision and business plan for the Borough, which the Leader of the Council in her role as Chair of the Redditch Partnership, can use to engage with partners and hold them to account. Currently, the Borough Sustainable Community Strategy is due to run out in March 2011 and is unfocused, containing 48 priorities. A new focused strategy is currently underdevelopment, with an expected four priorities:-
- Health inequalities;
  - Children and young people (with a focus on attainment);
  - Economic development; and
  - A geographic focus (starting with Winyates).

## 4. Consultation

### Viewpoint

- 4.1 Worcestershire Viewpoint is a free survey conducted by the County Council's Research and Intelligence Unit. The survey was conducted in November and December 2009 and the results published in March 2010. The report measures residents' perceptions (like the Place Survey which has now been abolished). The headline results are as follows:-
- Redditch has had the most change year on year compared to any other district;
  - The % of residents satisfied with the Council has risen from 43.5% to 47.3%;
  - Satisfaction with the Redditch as a place to live has risen from 77.2% to 82.7%;
  - The % of residents who agree that they can influence decisions in their area has increased from 27.5% to 29.6%;
  - All the indicators around litter and waste have improved, with the satisfaction with doorstep recycling showing a marked improvement from 66.1% to 74.7%.
- 4.2 The results on community safety are also positive, with an 8 percentage point reduction in residents who think ASB is a problem in their area.
- 4.3 The continuation of Viewpoint is now under review. The Head of Customer Service would like to see a more localised survey that measures customer service and satisfaction with local services. The Head of Leisure and Cultural Services has also expressed a need for this type of data. The Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships supports this view.

### Community Engagement

- 4.4 To support the development of the Council Plan and budget deliberations, the Council has held a budget jury with residents, which mirrors the process that Members go through. The Priorities recommended by the Jury are:
1. Economic Development
  2. Housing
  3. Value for Money
  4. Community Safety
  5. Clean

4.5 For each recommended priority the jury identified the following key deliverables:

- 1) Economic Development
  - i) Job opportunities
  - ii) Apprenticeships and mentoring
  - iii) Attracting new business to the area
  
- 2) Housing
  - i) Affordable housing (developer percentage)
  - ii) Housing mix
  - iii) Loss of housing benefit
  - iv) Homelessness
  
- 3) Value for Money
  - i) Customer services / getting through / returning calls
  - ii) Land use – maximise the value
  - iii) Increase amount of council tax collected
  - iv) Shared services
  
- 4) Community Safety
  - i) Anti-social behaviour
  - ii) Street lighting
  - iii) Footpaths – repair / clean / clear from overgrown shrubs etc
  
- 5) Clean
  - i) Enforcement
  - ii) Community justice – payback
  - iii) (Underpinned by education)

## **5. Performance Position**

### **Performance Indicators**

5.1 There is some very good performance in Redditch. As previously mentioned, performance on the Clean and Green priority is strong, for example, visitors to the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre, visitors to the Palace Theatre, visitors to the Museum and Bordesley Abbey were all better than target in quarter 1 2010/11. The Council is also progressing on its climate change agenda with an 8% reduction in CO2 emissions from buildings; however, the Council has some distance to travel to achieve excellence; whilst the Clean and Green priority is generally good the Council appears to be generally weaker on processes, compared to the best in class:-

- Time taken to process benefit claims 12.6 days (best in class 5 days);
- % of invoices paid within 30 days 93.32% (best in class 98.24%);
- % of calls answered by switchboard and contact centre 77.7% (private sector would be looking for 90%);
- % of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting 23.06% (best in class 51.91%, although we are currently experiencing a 20% rejection rate from the MRF);
- Sickness levels are also on the high side at over 9 days (the private sector average is 7.5 days per FTE).

Services which strong processes are most suitable for techniques like lean systems (see Transformation and Customer Services section).

### **Audit Commission**

- 5.2 The Audit Commission is set to be abolished although some of performance regime for local government will continue, probably with a reduced number of National Indicators, increased transparency, some financial benchmarking, expanded private sector auditing of the financial accounts, particularly, around value for money and reserve powers for central government to intervene in failing local councils.
- 5.3 Although the Audit Commission is set to be abolished, the “red flag” for health inequalities and attainment in Redditch remains relevant. The issues still exist.

## **Transformation and Customer Service**

- 5.4 The Shared Services programme includes identifying six areas as suitable for a deeper transformation using private sector techniques like lean systems (particularly associated with manufacturing and therefore most suitable to workflow processes). Experience from other local authorities that have used these techniques suggests that can have a dramatic impact on customer service, for example, reducing benefits claim turnaround times by 70%.
- 5.5 Not all of the Council will be able to go through a deeper transformation, but is important that we drive improved customer service across the whole of the Council. Whilst customer service is seen as crucial by the private sector to retaining customers and increasing profits, the public sector has focused on either reducing costs or targets, neither of which has enabled a focus on the customer. The best example of this is letter writing and complaints handling. Customer service is also something that should be seen as part of everyone's job, not just those staff working in the Customer Service Centre. The Head of Customer Service will shortly be producing a Joint Customer Service Strategy for both councils. The intention is to re-launch customer service, develop customer standards for each team, provide training on letter writing and customer service in general and in the longer term work towards achieving the Customer Service Excellence accreditation for the whole council, which is like Investors in People, but for customer service.
- 5.6 We will also need to focus on the Customer Service Centre and how it interfaces with the rest of the Council. Current performance levels could be higher and anecdotal evidence suggests call waiting times can be an issue. Working with service departments should address this in the medium term.



## 6. Strategic Direction

### Vision

6.1 The Council's Vision is:-

“An enterprising community, which is safe, clean and green.”

6.2 This Vision is still considered appropriate.

### Priorities

6.3 Based on the analysis:-

<b>Current Priority</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Report Ref.</b>
Enterprising Community	The critical priority for the Council. The Council is not directly responsible for economic development and education, but we are the community leader for the Borough and must continue to engage our partners on this agenda.	1.7 -1.26 1.28
Safe	Actual crime levels have fallen as has the perception of crimes, in particular, ASB. Community cohesion and drink fuelled violence in the town centre remain an issue.	1.27
Clean and Green	Although a priority, this is already an area that is performing well. We may need to look at moving resource from this priority towards the enterprising community priority; however, tackling climate change will require further resource.	5.1 2.10
A Well Managed Organisation	Along with “Enterprising Community”, the key priority for the Council. The forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Assessment will see a 25% to 40% reduction in central government spending. The Council is well placed to respond as a result of shared services.	2.8

### Key Deliverables

6.5 The budget bids and performance measures for each proposed priority will need to be “worked up” through the business planning process, budget process and production of the Council Plan 2009/2012 (March 2009

Cabinet). The outline key deliverables/areas of focus for each priority are:-

Priority	Areas of Focus
Enterprising Community	<p>Developing focused sustainable community strategy and ensuring Council has capacity to support this.</p> <p>Development of Core Strategy that supports an enterprising community, in particular, using planning to regenerate areas of deprivation, land for economic development and housing growth that supports improved infrastructure; whilst maintaining the green and open spaces of the Borough.</p> <p>Continued development of north Worcestershire EDU (including improved marketing).</p> <p>Increasing capacity of voluntary sector, with particular, focus around areas of deprivation, including use of possible social enterprise company.</p> <p>Agree outcomes of HRA review improve tenant involvement and align housing strategy to sustainable community strategy.</p> <p>Public art and infrastructure that improves pride and perception of town.</p> <p>Increased engagement with our communities.</p>
Safe	<p>Focus on communications to help improve perception.</p> <p>Sustainability of front line delivery officers.</p> <p>Community cohesion.</p> <p>Improved mulit-agency/cross tenure working.</p> <p>New PACT process.</p> <p>Continue link with Worcestershire Regulatory Services and economic support</p>

	<p>in general.</p> <p>Pro-active interventions on key outcomes e.g. burglary, alcohol related crimes etc.</p>
Clean and Green	<p>Improve the recycling rate (including green waste/garden waste).</p> <p>Enhance car parking provision.</p> <p>New measured street cleansing schedules.</p> <p>Reduce Council CO2 emissions through spend to save schemes and work with partners on climate change e.g. insulation etc.</p> <p>Ensure Council services risk assessed for impact of climate change.</p> <p>Abbey Visitor Centre utilisation and management of. Palace Theatre utilisation.</p> <p>Numbers, quality and utilisation (for pitches, allotments, play and open spaces and sports facilities).</p>

## A Well Managed Organisation

6.5 Delivering these priorities is underpinned by being a well managed organisation. Particular areas of focus are:-

### ✚ Managing Finances

Medium Term Financial Strategy (post CSR), improved budget consultation and integrated financial/performance reporting.

### ✚ Governing the Business

Continued focus on procurement and improved corporate and risk management systems.

### ✚ Managing Resources

Asset Management, in particular, building utilisation and community assets. Workforce Planning Strategy.

### ✚ Managing Performance

Data quality, project management, performance management arrangements and improved value for money measures.

✚ Customer Processes

Focus on customer need, reduce demand by getting right first time, develop a joint customer service strategy, review access channels and one stop shop provision.

✚ Political Governance

Member development, Standards, Strong Leader and Localism Bill.

✚ Shared Services/Transformation

Shared Services programme, Transformation programme, improved IT communication systems, single financial ledger.

✚ Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier

Continue roll out of WRS. Seek further opportunities.

✚ Planning

Core Strategy. Improved ICT. Increased income from areas like building control.

✚ Learning and Development

Workforce Planning Strategy. Competency Framework. Corporate Training Plan.

✚ HR Modernisation

Harmonisation of terms and conditions. Single Status.

✚ Positive Employee Climate

Internal communications, visible leadership, recognition and celebration of achievements, performance management, sickness absence and Employee Survey.

- 6.6 These are still considered appropriate at this outline stage, but will be subject to further consideration as we work through the service business plans and Council Plan.