
Redditch Council Plan update

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| Relevant Portfolio Holder | Councillor Jane Spilsbury (<i>Councillor Spilsbury was the relevant Portfolio Holder on the date of the Executive Committee meeting</i>) |
| 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-Metcalf 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 remained 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 1 of 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.

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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

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