



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 20TH APRIL 2022

AT 6.00 P.M.

PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE

MEMBERS: Councillors R. J. Laight (Chairman), A. J. B. Beaumont (Vice-Chairman), S. J. Baxter, S. R. Colella, R. J. Deeming, G. N. Denaro, S. P. Douglas, A. B. L. English, M. Glass, S. G. Hession, C.A. Hotham, R. J. Hunter, R. E. Jenkins, H. J. Jones, A. D. Kent, J. E. King, A. D. Kriss, L. C. R. Mallett, K.J. May, M. Middleton, P. M. McDonald, S. A. Robinson, H. D. N. Rone-Clarke, M. A. Sherrey, C. J. Spencer, P.L. Thomas, M. Thompson, J. Till, K. J. Van Der Plank, S. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

AGENDA

WELCOME

1. **To receive apologies for absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

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

3. **To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 23rd February 2022 (Pages 1 - 20)**

4. **To receive any announcements from the Chairman and/or Head of Paid Service**

5. **To receive any announcements from the Leader**

6. **To receive comments, questions or petitions from members of the public**

A period of up to 15 minutes is allowed for members of the public to make a comment, ask questions or present petitions. Each member of the public has up to 3 minutes to do this. A councillor may also present a petition on behalf of a member of the public.

7. **Urgent Decisions** (Pages 21 - 24)

8. **Outside Body Appointment**

To consider the appointment of Councillor H. Jones to replace Councillor A. Kent on the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel.

Members are asked to note that, to ensure that membership of the panel reflects the wider political balance of the West Mercia Police force area, the Councillor appointed to the Panel must be a member of the controlling group.

9. **Constitution Review Working Group Recommendations** (Pages 25 - 38)

10. **To receive and consider a report from the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Community Safety** (Pages 39 - 48)

Members are asked to note that this report focuses on community safety only. Environmental Services were the subject of a separate report from the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Community Safety considered in January 2022.

11. **Recommendations from the Cabinet** (Pages 49 - 50)

To consider the recommendations from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 30th March 2022.

12. **Background Information on the recommendations from the Cabinet**

(i) Land Drainage Watercourse Maintenance Operation (Pages 51 - 104)

(ii) Equalities Strategy (Pages 105 - 122)

(iii) Equalities Annual Report (Pages 123 - 138)

13. **To note the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 23rd February and 30th March 2022** (Pages 139 - 150)

14. **Questions on Notice** (Pages 151 - 152)

To deal with any questions on notice from Members of the Council, in the order in which they have been received.

A period of up to 15 minutes is allocated for the asking and answering of questions. This may be extended at the discretion of the Chairman with the agreement of the majority of those present.

15. **Motions on Notice (To Follow)**

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

A period of up to one hour is allocated to consider the motions on notice. This may only be extended with the agreement of the Council.

16. **To consider any urgent business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting**

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

8th April 2022

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

At the current time, seating at the meeting will be placed in such a way as to achieve as much space as possible for social distancing to help protect meeting participants.

Please note that this is a public meeting.

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

GUIDANCE FOR ELECTED MEMBERS ATTENDING MEETINGS IN PERSON

Members and Officers who still have access to lateral flow tests (LFTs) are encouraged to take a test on the day of the meeting. Meeting attendees who do not have access to LFTs are encouraged not to attend the meeting if they have common cold symptoms or any of the following common symptoms of Covid-19 on the day of the meeting: a high temperature, a new and continuous cough or a loss of smell and / or taste.

Whilst the Council acknowledges that it is no longer a legal requirement to wear face coverings, we would really appreciate if the Members and Officers who attend a meeting in person would consider wearing a face covering throughout the meeting unless they are exempt or speaking.

The meeting venue will be fully ventilated, and Members and officers may need to consider wearing appropriate clothing in order to remain comfortable during proceedings.

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE

Members of the public will be able to access the meeting if they wish to do so. Seating will be placed in such a way as to achieve as much space as possible for social distancing to help protect meeting participants. Whilst the Council acknowledges that it is no longer a legal requirement to wear face coverings, it would be really appreciated if members of the public who attend the meeting in person would consider wearing a face covering throughout the meeting unless they are exempt. It should be noted that members of the public who choose to attend in person do so at their own risk.

Members of the public who still have access to lateral flow tests (LFTs) are encouraged to take a test on the day of the meeting. Meeting attendees who do not have access to LFTs are encouraged not to attend if they have symptoms of a common cold or any of the following common symptoms of Covid-19 on the day of the meeting; a high temperature, a new and continuous cough or a loss of smell and / or taste.

Notes:

Although this is a public meeting, there are circumstances when Council might have to move into closed session to consider exempt or confidential information. For agenda items that are exempt, the public are excluded.



INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

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- You can inspect agenda and public reports at least five days before the date of the meeting.
- You can inspect minutes of the Council, Cabinet and its Committees/Boards for up to six years following a meeting.
- You can have access, upon request, to the background papers on which reports are based for a period of up to six years from the date of the meeting. These are listed at the end of each report.
- An electronic register stating the names and addresses and electoral areas of all Councillors with details of the membership of all Committees etc. is available on our website.
- A reasonable number of copies of agendas and reports relating to items to be considered in public will be made available to the public attending meetings of the Council, Cabinet and its Committees/Boards.
- You have access to a list specifying those powers which the Council has delegated to its Officers indicating also the titles of the Officers concerned, as detailed in the Council's Constitution, Scheme of Delegation.

You can access the following documents:

- Meeting Agendas
- Meeting Minutes
- The Council's Constitution

at www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

23RD FEBRUARY 2022, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors R. J. Laight (Chairman), A. J. B. Beaumont (Vice-Chairman), S. J. Baxter, S. R. Colella, R. J. Deeming, G. N. Denaro, S. P. Douglas, M. Glass, C.A. Hotham, R. J. Hunter, R. E. Jenkins (from Minute Item 93/21), H. J. Jones, A. D. Kent (until Minute Item 92/21), J. E. King (from Minute Item No. 92/21), A. D. Kriss, K.J. May, M. Middleton, P. M. McDonald, S. A. Robinson, H. D. N. Rone-Clarke, M. A. Sherrey, C. J. Spencer, P.L. Thomas, M. Thompson, J. Till, K. J. Van Der Plank and P. J. Whittaker

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, J Howse, Mrs. C. Felton, Mrs. J. Bayley-Hill and J Gresham

84\21 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors A. English, S. Hession, L. Mallett and S. Webb.

85\21 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

The Monitoring Officer advised that at the meeting of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee held on 15th July 2021 all Members were granted a dispensation to participate in the debate and vote on matters relating to the budget and Council Tax. Therefore, Members did not need to declare an interest and could participate in the debate and vote concerning the 2022/23 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 to 2024/25, the alternative budgets and the Council Tax Resolutions 2022/23.

86\21 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 26TH JANUARY 2022**

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 26th January 2022 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday 26th January 2022 be approved as a true and correct record.

87\21 **TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND/OR HEAD OF PAID SERVICE**

There were no announcements from the Chairman and Head of Paid Service on this occasion.

88\21 **TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE LEADER**

There were no announcements made by the Leader at the meeting.

89\21 **TO RECEIVE COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no comments, questions or petitions from members of the public.

90\21 **URGENT DECISIONS**

The Chairman advised that no urgent decisions had been taken since the previous meeting of Council.

91\21 **APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS**

The Vice Chairman of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee, Councillor P. Whittaker, presented a recommendation from the Committee on the subject of the appointment of the Council's external auditors for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28. The appointment process had been discussed at a meeting of the Committee held on 2nd February 2022. The Committee had been advised that the Council could independently procure an external auditor, could work with other Councils to procure an external auditor or could join the Public Sector Audit Appointments' (PSAA's) national scheme for the appointment of external auditors. The Committee had concluded that the PSAA's national scheme would be the most appropriate option for the Council.

RESOLVED to accept the Public Sector Audit Appointments' invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors to principal local government and police bodies for a procurement period of five financial years from 1 April 2023 (that is to say from 2023/24 to 2027/28).

92\21 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 16TH FEBRUARY 2022 (TO FOLLOW)**

Sustainable Warmth Funding

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Cultural Services and Climate Change presented a report on the subject of Sustainable Warmth funding. Members were informed that the Council had received £429,000 funding from the Government to help local property owners improve the energy efficiency of their buildings. The funding was designed to assist

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households on combined incomes below £30,000 per year and with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating D – G.

There were two main forms of funding that could be made available at this stage:

- Home Upgrade Grants (HUGs) Phase 1 – for properties that were not connected to the mains gas.
- Local Authority Delivery (LAD) Phase 3 – for properties connected to the mains gas.

The amount of action required to improve the energy efficiency of properties and the costs entailed would vary between properties. However, it was anticipated that on average £10,000 would need to be spent from this funding per property.

The report had been pre-scrutinised at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board and a number of questions had been raised. In response to the queries raised by the Board, the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Climate Change commented that the Council was aware of the EPC ratings for 63 per cent of properties in Bromsgrove District. The Council would work with Act On Energy to target eligible properties for funding and a communications strategy had been developed to accompany this approach. In total, as discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting, the Council was anticipating that approximately 40 properties would benefit from the funding.

After the report had been presented Members discussed the following points in detail:

- The positive impact that the funding would have on the energy efficiency of properties occupied by eligible homeowners.
- The need for further action to be taken to support residents living in the District in properties with low EPC ratings.
- The potential for the Government to provide the Council with more funding to help support additional property owners in the District.
- The difficulties experienced by park homeowners, who would not be eligible to apply for this funding, and the delays to funding in terms of previous schemes that had impacted on mobile homeowners.
- The need for the Council to lobby the Government to provide more funding to enable park homeowners to improve the energy efficiency of their properties.
- The impact of a fall in the availability of HGV drivers on the speed with which action could be taken locally to improve the energy efficiency of properties in the District.
- The typographical error in the report which referred to a Borough rather than District for Bromsgrove.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor M. Thompson and seconded by Councillor A. Kriss.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Capital and Revenue Budgets are increased to receive Bromsgrove District Council's Sustainable Warmth scheme allocation of £429,000; and
- 2) delegated authority is granted to the Head of Community and Housing Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Housing and Climate Change to administer the funding received in line with the grant conditions.

93\21

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 23RD FEBRUARY 2022 (TO BE TABLED)

The Chairman explained that recommendations had been made at the meeting of the Cabinet held earlier in the afternoon on Wednesday 23rd February 2022. A list of the recommendations that had been agreed at this meeting had been tabled for Members' consideration.

Pay Policy Statement 2022/23

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling presented the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23. Members were informed that the Localism Act 2011 required Council to consider and approve a Pay Policy Statement by 31st March each year, for the following financial year. The report detailed the wages paid to the most senior staff as well as the most junior staff and explained the differences between the two. As Bromsgrove District Council shared many services with Redditch Borough Council, the costs of employing staff were generally shared equally and so the Council only had to pay 50 per cent of the costs.

Members discussed the report and in doing so questioned what was meant by a "statement" in this context. Officers clarified that the Pay Policy Statement was a factual statement of the remuneration provided to staff.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor G. Denaro and seconded by Councillor K. May.

RESOLVED that the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 be approved.

2022/23 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 to 2024/25

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling presented the 2022/23 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2022/23 to 2024/25. In presenting the report, he explained that there were three main aims in the budget:

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- Firstly, to maintain all the Council's services which had been achieved without any cuts and with a balanced budget.
- Secondly, to invest in the future, capitalising on the opportunities that the levelling up funding presented for the town and acknowledging the importance of engaging with the Council's customers digitally and in ways that supported service provision moving forward.
- Thirdly, to maintain the Council's general fund balances as a buffer for the future and to confirm the authority's financial stability as recognised by the External Auditors.

The 2022/23 budget and MTFP 2022/23 to 2024/25 was proposed by Councillor G. Denaro and seconded by Councillor K. May.

During consideration of this item, Councillor P. McDonald proposed an alternative budget from the Labour Group, as detailed in the main agenda pack. The alternative budget from the Labour Group was seconded by Councillor H. Rone-Clarke.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor McDonald explained that the alternative budget had been developed in a context in which people's living standards were increasingly under pressure. Inflation was likely to increase to 7 per cent by April 2022 and energy costs had already increased significantly. In addition, many residents were not experiencing increases to their wages in line with inflation, which impacted on people's ability to manage costs. Many residents were increasingly turning to food banks and this included key workers who had played an essential role during the pandemic. In these circumstances, Councillor McDonald commented that it would be inappropriate to increase Council Tax and instead the alternative budget proposed to reduce Council Tax by 1 per cent. The costs arising from this would be offset by not approving budget bids for a new Business Improvement Advisor for the Council, not agreeing to procure consultants to undertake work on the low carbon vehicle fleet for the Council and not continuing to work with the consultants Mott McDonald.

In seconding the alternative budget, Councillor Rone-Clarke commented that increasing costs were impacting on some of the most vulnerable members of society who were struggling to manage their household budgets. The alternative budget would help to take the pressure off some of the residents in this position without having a detrimental impact in the long-term on the Council's budget.

Members subsequently discussed the Labour Group's alternative budget in some detail and in doing so highlighted the following points:

- The financial challenges faced by the Council and the cumulative impact that a 1 per cent cut to Council Tax in 2022/23 would have on subsequent financial years.
- The need to provide support to the most vulnerable residents living in the District who were impacted by increases in the costs of living.

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- The essential services provided by the Council to local residents and the impact that a cut in funding could have on the sustainability of these services.
- The discussions that had been held at meetings of the Finance and Budget Working Group regarding the Council's budget and challenges facing future funding for local government.
- The duty of care that the Council had to local residents.
- The need for the Government to undertake a review of the Council Tax system and to provide greater clarity to Councils about future funding arrangements moving forward.
- The level of expenditure by the Council on external consultants and the extent to which this work could be undertaken inhouse.

During consideration of the alternative Motion from the Labour Group, Councillor McDonald expressed concerns that Officers had added comments to the alternative budget text that had been included in the agenda for Members' consideration and he questioned whether this represented interference in the democratic process. Officers clarified that the Section 151 Officer had a statutory duty to provide Members with professional advice and this had occurred in this instance to aid Members with their decision-making. However, the content of the alternative budget had not been altered.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the alternative budget from the Labour Group was subject to a named vote.

Members voting FOR the alternative budget from the Labour Group:

Councillors P. McDonald and H. Rone-Clarke (2).

Members voting AGAINST the alternative budget from the Labour Group:

Councillors S. Baxter, A. Beaumont, S. Colella, R. Deeming, G. Denaro, S. Douglas, M. Glass, C. Hotham, R. Hunter, R. Jenkins, H. Jones, J. King, A. Kriss, K. May, R. Laight, M. Middleton, S. Robinson, M. Sherrey, C. Spencer, P. Thomas, M. Thompson, J. Till, K. Van Der Plank and P. Whittaker. (24)

Members voting to ABSTAIN on the alternative budget from the Labour Group:

None (0).

The vote on the alternative budget from the Labour Group was therefore lost.

Members subsequently considered an alternative budget submitted collectively by the Bromsgrove Independent East District Group, the Bromsgrove Independents West and Central District Group and the

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Liberal Democrat Group. This alternative budget was proposed by Councillor C. Hotham and seconded by Councillor S. Robinson.

In proposing the alternative budget, Councillor Hotham commented that he agreed with 98 per cent of the leading group's proposed budget. However, there were some opportunities available to the Council, through the use of earmarked reserves, to undertake some actions in addition to the measures proposed in the administration's budget. Members were advised that, instead of returning £382,000 from earmarked reserves to balances, the Council could hold back £75,000 of these earmarked reserves. This could then be invested in the following areas:

- A Community Grants Scheme, using £55,000 of the earmarked reserve funds in 2022/23.
- A business case reserve of £20,000, to fund the development of business cases focusing on a rural minibuss scheme and free car parking in the town centre car parks for blue badge holders.

Councillor Hotham highlighted that the Council's balances were projected to fall below the minimum levels that the Section 151 Officer considered to be acceptable by 2024/25. The actions proposed in the alternative budget would simply bring this stage forward by a few days and represented a small adjustment to the budget.

In seconding the alternative budget, Councillor Robinson explained that she recognised that the Council was in a challenging financial situation. However, the actions proposed in the alternative budget would help to benefit local residents. In particular, Members were asked to note that whilst blue badge holders paid to park in the town's car parks the same charge was not levied by some other Councils in the country. The removal of a charge for blue badge holders would also potentially help to reduce the number of blue badge holders who chose to park on double yellow lines, which could impact on traffic and residents. In relation to the Community Grants Scheme, Members were informed that the Council had funded a range of important Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) groups for projects that had benefited the local community over the years. There was a risk that these groups would struggle to continue to deliver these valuable activities should Council funding cease to be available.

After the presentation of the alternative budget, Members discussed the content in detail and in so doing noted the following matters:

- The important role of VCS groups in addressing some of the negative outcomes of the Covid 19 pandemic.
- The value added by the Community Grants Scheme in recent years.
- The need for the Council to have a balanced budget and to return funding to balances to help achieve this.

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- The opportunity to review charges for blue badge holders in local car parks holistically as part of a wider review of car parking arrangements.
- The bid for funding that had been submitted by Worcestershire County Council to the Department of Transport for public transport and the action that was being taken to encourage the Council to invest some of this funding in a rural transport service in the District.
- The fact that no announcement had yet been made about whether Worcestershire County Council would receive this funding.
- The potential for the Demand Response bus service to be extended to rural areas of the District.
- The discussions that had been held at meetings of the Finance and Budget Working Group in respect of some of the ideas in the alternative budget.
- The inclusion of a £5 increase to Council Tax within the alternative budget.
- The benefits of investing in business case reviews that could help to clarify the exact costs of withdrawing charges from blue badge holders for car parking and of determining the costs of operating a minibus service in rural locations.
- The need for the Council to receive a long-term financial settlement from the Government in order to secure greater certainty about service sustainability moving forward.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the alternative budget from the Bromsgrove Independent East Group, the Bromsgrove Independents West and Central group and the Liberal Democrats Group was subject to a named vote.

Members voting FOR the alternative budget from the Bromsgrove Independent East Group, the Bromsgrove Independent West and Central Group and the Liberal Democrat Group:

Councillors S. Baxter, S. Colella, S. Douglas, C. Hotham, R. Hunter, R. Jenkins, J. King, S. Robinson and K. Van Der Plank (9)

Members voting AGAINST the alternative budget from the Bromsgrove Independent East Group, the Bromsgrove Independent West and Central Group and the Liberal Democrat Group:

Councillors A. Beaumont, R. Deeming, G. Denaro, M. Glass, H. Jones, A. Kriss, R. Laight, K. May, M. Middleton, P. McDonald, H. Rone-Clarke, M. Sherrey, C. Spencer, P. Thomas, M. Thompson, J. Till and P. Whittaker. (17).

Members voting to ABSTAIN in the vote on the alternative budget from the Bromsgrove Independent East Group, the Bromsgrove Independent West and Central Group and the Liberal Democrat Group:

None (0).

The vote on the alternative budget from the Bromsgrove Independents East group, the Bromsgrove Independents West and Central group and the Liberal Democrat group was therefore lost.

Members subsequently returned to discussing the proposals in respect of the 2022/23 Budget and MTFP 2022/23 to 2024/25 detailed in the agenda. Councillor Denaro, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling, reintroduced the report and explained that the 2022/23 Budget and MTFP 2022/23 to 2024/25 report had been drafted in a new format, which was designed to ensure that background information was provided to give Members a clear picture of the Council's position. The Council had gone through difficult times and in many ways the budget was transitional, inasmuch as it took the authority from the battle with the pandemic to a situation whereby the Council and community would be living with Covid. It was hoped that a clearer understanding of the implications of this for the Council would be available by February 2023.

The unexpected receipt of £700,000 from the Government for the 2022/23 budget had transformed the authority's financial challenges from a deficit of over £1 million to approximately £300,000, which had finalised at £411,000. Nevertheless, with no guarantee for future years, the Council had to continue to look at every means of reducing costs and improving income across all areas. The figures provided for the Council's general fund showed that this work was urgent and the Council aimed to start without delay.

On a positive note, in addition to maintaining business as usual throughout the pandemic, as frontline service officers continued to deliver in the most difficult circumstances, the Council had delivered grants to local businesses, supported the most vulnerable in the local community and supported health organisations to enable a vaccination site and a testing site to be made available in the town for the benefit of local residents. The Council's Facilities Management team had supported these sites throughout the pandemic and continued to do so for the benefit of local residents. In the face of these challenges, the Council had been able to complete this budget without any reduction in services.

An increase in the Council Tax charge for Band D equivalent properties of £5 per annum, or under 50p a month, was considered to be a small contribution that would enable the Council to maintain the provision of all of the authority's much needed and valued services.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling thanked the Finance and Budget Working Group and Overview and Scrutiny Board for their hard work and support in delivering the budget. Members had worked together to ensure that all Councillors were cited and had an opportunity to feed into the budget setting process.

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Members were informed that there were a number of key aspects impacting on the content of the budget. This included a decline in income from car parking charges and in the contribution from Leisure Services as a result of the impact of the pandemic. In 2019, car parking income was in the region of £95,000 to £100,000 per month. By contrast, the Council received £74,650 from car parking income in December 2021, highlighting the gap that needed to be addressed. Covid had also had an enormous impact on the income that had been forecast from the delivery of local leisure providers and this challenge was ongoing. This situation was mirrored nationally, but it was felt that the Council should continue to support leisure services to help residents maintain their health and wellbeing.

The Council had received some Covid grant funding from the Government during the pandemic. The figures available showed a projected remaining balance of £397,000 by 31st March 2022 which was likely to be fully utilised to cover shortfalls in income.

The Council continued to encourage residents to return to the town centre and for this reason a decision had been taken not to increase car parking charges.

A difficult decision had had to be taken regarding the Council's previous Community Grants Scheme, which had previously been funded from the New Homes Bonus (NHB). The Council had received £363,000 in NHB funding for 2022/23, which was almost half of the receipts in 2021/22. With such pressure on the Council's General Fund balances, the conclusion had been reached that the Council could not have topped up the £16,000 which would have been available for a scheme. There would therefore be no Community Grants Scheme in 2022/23.

The Council had embraced the opportunities that had been presented as a result of the pandemic. The budget included revenue bids to provide funding for IT in support of the authority's Digital Strategy and the Council's desire to enable residents to access services in multiple ways. The pandemic had enabled a move organisationally to hybrid working and this in turn had created new and exciting opportunities for the use of Council accommodation. Additional IT support would also ensure the authority could continue to enable residents to access popular meetings remotely when necessary. This much needed evening cover was vital in enabling these changes.

There had been a review of the Council's Earmarked Reserves and £382,000 had been identified which could be returned to the General Fund, following completion of the year end for the 2021/22 financial year.

In conclusion, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling commented that this was a budget that protected services going forward but recognised the difficulties faced by the Council. The Executive Director

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of Finance and Resources and the Financial Services team were thanked for producing the report under difficult circumstances.

In seconding the 2022/23 Budget and MTFP 2022/23 to 2024/25, Councillor May thanked both officers and the Finance and Budget Working Group for their hard work in respect of the budget. Members were asked to note that the pandemic had been one of the greatest challenges faced by the country since World War II. In this context, the allocation of £14.5 million Levelling Up funding to the Council would be really helpful for Bromsgrove District. The funding would be invested in the regeneration of two brownfield sites. Bromsgrove District would also be receiving funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. In addition to this, the redevelopment of the Burcot Lane site would result in the introduction of much needed affordable housing in the town.

In concluding her remarks, Councillor May commented that the 2022/23 Budget was balanced and robust. The proposals detailed in the 2022/23 Budget and MTFP 2022/23 to 2024/25 also supported the Council's strategic purposes. There remained financial challenges for local government but the Council would continue to lobby the Government for a fairer funding deal and action would start immediately on preparing the 2023/24 Budget for the authority.

The content of the 2022/23 budget and MTFP 2022/23 to 2024/25 was subsequently discussed in detail and in doing so Members raised the following matters:

- The important roles of the Finance and Budget Working Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Board in reviewing the budget.
- The Finance and Budget Working Group's debate earlier in the municipal year in respect of the introduction of Council Tax premiums on empty homes and the potential impact of the subsequent introduction of these premiums.
- The need for the Finance and Budget Working Group to be involved earlier in the budget setting process in future years.
- The reasons why the 2022/23 Budget and MTFP 2022/23 to 2024/25 included a £5 increase in Council Tax, which was considered crucial to help ensure that services remained financially sustainable moving forward.
- The extent to which a £5 increase in Council Tax for the Council could be considered to be a relatively small contribution, in a context in which the costs of general goods and services were increasing.
- The number of alternative budgets that had been put forward by opposition groups in recent years.
- The need for the Council to fund actions that would have a beneficial impact on climate change.
- The need for urgent action and potentially difficult decisions to be taken to ensure that the Council's budget remained sustainable moving forward.

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In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the 2022/23 Budget and MTFP 2022/23 to 2024/25 was subject to a named vote.

Members voting FOR the 2022/23 Budget and MTFP 2022/23:

Councillors S. Baxter, A. Beaumont, S. Colella, R. Deeming, G. Denaro, S. Douglas, M. Glass, C. Hotham, R. Jenkins, H. Jones, A. Kriss, R. Laight, K. May, M. Middleton, M. Sherrey, C. Spencer, P. Thomas, M. Thompson, J. Till and P. Whittaker (20).

Members voting AGAINST the 2022/23 Budget and MTFP 2022/23 to 2024/25:

Councillors R. Hunter, P. McDonald, S. Robinson, H. Rone-Clarke and K. van Der Plank (5).

Members voting to ABSTAIN in the vote on the 2022/23 Budget and MTFP 2022/23 to 2024/25:

Councillor J. King (1).

The vote on the 2022/23 Budget and MTFP 2022/23 to 2024/25 was therefore carried.

RESOLVED

- 1) To approve the overall net general fund revenue budgets of:

2022/23:	£12.069m
2023/24:	£11.947m
2024/25:	£12.076m

- 2) To approve the unavoidable costs:

2022/23:	£0.250m
2023/24:	£0.016m
2024/25:	£0.016m

- 3) To approve the Revenue Bids:

2022/23:	£0.148m
2023/24:	£0.107m
2024/25:	£0.086m

- 4) To approve the Identified Savings:

2022/23:	£0.176m
2023/24:	£0.176m
2024/25:	£0.176m

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- 5) That an increase of the Council Tax per Band D equivalent of £5 for 2022/23 be approved;
- 6) That the transfer from General Fund Balances of £0.411m for 2022/23 be approved;
- 7) That the planned reallocation of £0.382m from Earmarked reserves to General Fund Balances be approved;
- 8) To approve the General Fund capital programme:

2022/23:	£2.410m
2023/24:	£1.390m
2024/25:	£1.946m
- 9) the 2020/21 Capital Outturn be noted; and
- 10) the Chief Financial Officer's (CFO) Opinion on Estimates and Reserve Levels be noted.

Council Tax Resolutions 2022/23

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling presented the Council Tax Resolutions 2022/23 for Members' consideration. Council was informed that this was a technical report that had to be approved on an annual basis.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the Council Tax Resolutions were subject to a named vote.

Members voting FOR the Council Tax Resolutions 2022/23:

Councillors S. Baxter, A. Beaumont, S. Colella, R. Deeming, G. Denaro, S. Douglas, M. Glass, C. Hotham, R. Hunter, R. Jenkins, H. Jones, J. King, A. Kriss, R. Laight, K. May, M. Middleton, P. McDonald, S. Robinson, H. Rone-Clarke, M. Sherrey, C. Spencer, P. Thomas, M. Thompson, J. Till, K. Van Der Plank and P. Whittaker (26).

Members voting AGAINST the Council Tax Resolutions 2022/23:

None (0).

Members voting to ABSTAIN in the vote on the Council Tax Resolutions 2022/23:

None (0).

The vote on the Council Tax Resolutions 2022/23 was therefore carried.

RESOLVED that Council approve

- 1) the calculation for the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2022/23 (excluding Parish precepts) as **£8,937,309.38**;
- 2) the following amounts be calculated for the year 2022/23 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - (a) £43,846,702 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act (taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils) (*i.e.*, *Gross expenditure*);
 - (b) £33,847,101 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act. (*i.e.*, *Gross income*);
 - (c) £9,999,601 being the amount by which the aggregate of 1.2.2(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 1.2.2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act);
 - (d) £266.58 being the amount at 1.2.2 (c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1.1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts);
 - (e) £1,071,812 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act (as per the attached **Schedule 3**);
 - (f) £238.00 being the amount at 1.2.2 (d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 1.2.2 (e) above by Item T (1.1 (a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates;
 - (g) The amounts shown in Column 3 of **Schedule 1**. These are the basic amounts of the council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of the Council's area shown in Column 1 of the schedule respectively to which special items relate, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act. (District and Parish combined at Band D);
 - (h) The amounts shown in Column 5 of **Schedule 1** being the amount given by multiplying the amounts at 2.2.2(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion

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is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands;

- 3) It be noted that for the year 2022/23, Worcestershire County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia and Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwelling in the Council's area as indicated below:

	Valuation Bands							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Worcestershire County Council	931.19	1,086.38	1,241.58	1,396.78	1,707.18	2,017.57	2,327.97	2,793.56
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	166.44	194.18	221.92	249.66	305.14	360.62	416.10	499.32
Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority	59.60	69.53	79.47	89.40	109.27	129.13	149.00	178.80

- 4) having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 1.2.2(h) and 1.2.3 above, that Bromsgrove District Council in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby sets the amounts shown in **Schedule 2** as the amounts of Council Tax for 2022/23. for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings:
- 5) the Executive Director Finance & Resources be authorised to make payments under Section 90(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the Collection Fund by ten equal instalments between April 2022 to March 2023 as detailed below:

	Precept £	Deficit on Collection Fund £	Total to pay £
Worcestershire County Council	52,394,684.00	991,717.00	53,386,401.00
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	9,365,008.74	177,384.00	9,542,392.74
Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority	3,353,491.52	65,913.06	3,419,404.58

- 6) the Executive Director Finance & Resources be authorised to make transfers under Section 97 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the Collection Fund to the General Fund the sum of £10,171,181 being the Council's own demand on the Collection

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Fund (£8,927,789.21) and Parish Precepts (£1,071,812) and the distribution of the Deficit on the Collection Fund (£171,580);

- 7) the Executive Director Finance & Resources be authorised to make payments from the General Fund to Parish Councils the sums listed on **Schedule 3** by two equal instalment on 1 April 2022 and 1 October 2022 in respect of the precept levied on the Council;
- 8) the above resolutions to be signed by the Chief Executive for use in legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court for the recovery of unpaid Council Taxes;
- 9) notices of the making of the said Council Taxes signed by the Chief Executive are given by advertisement in the local press under Section 38(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992;
- 10) authority be delegated to the Head of Finance and Customer Services (Interim S151) following consultation with the finance portfolio holder to amend the resolution should the Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority Service not approve the estimated figure that is being used in this report. This is due to the Hereford and Worcester Authority Service having their approval meeting after this resolution report has been brought to Council.

(At the start of this item Councillor A. Kent left the meeting. He was therefore not present during the votes in respect of the alternative budgets, the 2022/23 Budget and MTFP 2022/23 to 2024/25 or the Council Tax Resolutions 2022/23 and as such his name does not appear in the record of the named votes on these items).

94\21

TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16TH FEBRUARY 2022 (TO FOLLOW)

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 16th February 2022 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 16th February 2022 be noted.

95\21

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The Chairman explained that four Questions on Notice had been received for consideration at the meeting and would be taken in the order in which they had been included on the agenda. A maximum of 15 minutes had been allocated to the consideration of Questions on Notice and the answers provided to those questions and no supplementary questions would be permitted.

Question Submitted by Councillor R. Hunter

“What actions are the Cabinet taking to lobby Government to provide a much needed longer term financial settlement for councils such as BDC?”

The Leader responded by explaining that the Council continued to work through the Local Government Association (LGA) and District Councils' Network (DCN) to add the authority's voice to the sector's request for a multi-year financial settlement. On the Council's behalf, the LGA were campaigning for local services to be provided with a long-term, sustainable future which gave Councils clarity and certainty over their funding. In the recent collective response to the one-year settlement, the DCN also called on the Government to deliver a multi-year financial settlement for district Councils.

In addition, Members were advised that the Leader continually raised this issue in discussions with the Bromsgrove MP, who then reported these concerns on to central government.

Question Submitted by Councillor J. King

“In 2019 this Council declared a climate emergency and set up a working group to drive efforts to decarbonise our activities. Yet despite all the work that has been done, a recent scorecard of UK local authorities' climate change progress, compiled by Climate Emergency UK, put Bromsgrove very close to the bottom of our peer group, with a 10% achievement score. What are you doing to restore our reputation and ensure Bromsgrove is recognised as a leader in tackling climate change?”

In response to the question, the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Climate Change advised that the scorecard rating referred to, was undertaken by Climate Emergency UK using a methodology of only scoring local authorities' climate change strategies and action plans. This did not consider any actions the Council was already undertaking in tackling climate change. The Council fully appreciated that it had a great deal to do and would use the tools and data arising from this survey and that of Sustainability West Midlands to learn and inform the authority's Climate Change Strategy and action plan. This would ensure that a strong and robust strategy and action plan was developed and regularly reviewed to demonstrate the authority's progress.

The Council was in the process of developing its Climate Change Strategy and a detailed Action to Reduce Carbon (ARC) Plan to have progressive longer-term plans in place and address the areas where improvements were needed.

There were nine identified themes for the ARC.

- Theme 1: Sustainable Buildings and Workplaces
- Theme 2: Renewable Energy

- Theme 3: Transport and Travel
- Theme 4: Planning / Building Control and Retrofit
- Theme 5: Community
- Theme 6: Waste
- Theme 7: Biodiversity
- Theme 8: The Low Carbon and Circular Economy and Resources
- Theme 9: Procurement

Whilst the strategy and action plan were in the process of being developed, the Council had, and continued to undertake, some significant carbon reduction projects such as the Electric Vehicle Chargers for Taxis, the District Heat Network scheme, development of low carbon homes on the Burcot Lane development and Carbon Literacy training for Members and Officers. In addition to these significant projects, the Energy Savings Trust had produced a free report for Bromsgrove Council in respect of potential electrification of the Council's fleet of vehicles with a recent presentation given to the Climate Change Working Group. The Council had allocated additional funds to commission expert consultants to assess the right fuel type for every vehicle to enable the authority to draw up a revised fleet replacement programme and infrastructure plan.

Question Submitted by Councillor S. Robinson

"Is there a future for district councils such as BDC given the Government's Levelling Up White Paper sees us as merely being 'non-constituent members' of the new regime for local decision making?"

The Leader responded by commenting that the simple and straight forward answer to the question was "yes". In explaining the justification for this answer, the Leader advised that there was no new regime for decision making proposed under the White Paper. This applied only if an area was looking to pursue a "County Deal" or some other form of devolution deal. There was no change to the sovereignty of District Councils or any other type of Council.

The Leader subsequently explained that District Councils would play a big role in delivering the White Paper's four key aims:

1. Fostering economic prosperity

- The Council had secured £14.5m from the Levelling Up Fund (focusing on Windsor Street and Hanover Street). There was also work on other key strategic sites in the Town (including Burcot Lane), and the 2040 vision for the Town Centre, the work in local centres and utilisation of the Welcome Back fund. The Council would also be reviewing the Centres Strategy. All of these actions would help to achieve the overall levelling up aim to "Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living" standards.

Spreading opportunity

- District Councils were fundamental to achieving at least two of the main Levelling Up White Paper missions of health and wellbeing and the Council was working closely with colleagues in the health sector, as well as other partners.

Restoring a sense of community

There were three missions here which were:

- Pride in Place
- Housing
- Crime

District Councils had a crucial role in terms of addressing all of these missions.

Empowering local leaders.

- The mission here was to empower local leaders and communities. District Councils were working closely with partners through such initiatives such as ABCD work to identify and empower people.

In addition to the Levelling Up Fund White Paper, the Council had received high level details of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which would be allocated to District Councils.

The Leader expressed disappointment that the white paper made the reference to non-constituent membership of a potential county deal for District Councils. Members were advised that the Leader would continue to lobby the Government, alongside District Council colleagues, to address this.

In conclusion, the Leader commented that there was a future for District Councils and she expressed the view that the role of District Councils would be an even more important one than before moving forward.

Question Submitted by Councillor S. Baxter

“I congratulate the Council on being awarded the levelling up grant of £14m and recognise that there will be an indirect benefit of having a prosperous town centre for the whole district, however, bearing in mind that Bromsgrove’s grant equates to one of the largest per capita awards in the country, please can the leader explain how delivering the project will achieve a levelling up to those areas of greatest need across the district?”

The Leader responded by explaining that the Levelling Up Fund grant had very stringent criteria and there was a need to focus on brownfield sites.

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The proposed commercial and cultural hub at the former Market Hall site would provide support for businesses across the District, not just the town centre. Also, the employment opportunities envisaged to be generated by the businesses supported by the hub would be open to all residents in the District, not just residents living close to the town centre. Indirectly, this investment would act as a catalyst for further private sector investment, which in turn would generate supply chain and further employment opportunities in the district.

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MOTIONS ON NOTICE

The Chairman advised that one Motion on Notice had been received for consideration at the meeting. Prior to the meeting, group leaders had agreed that the subject of the Motion should be a standing item on the agenda for consideration at group leaders' meetings. In this context, the Councillor who had submitted the Motion, Councillor S. Colella, had agreed that the Motion should not be debated at the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.09 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER URGENCY PROCEDURES

Subject: Levelling Up Fund – former Market Hall and Windsor Street sites

Brief Statement of Subject Matter:

1. In November 2021, the government approved a £14.492,000 grant for Bromsgrove District Council from the Levelling Up Fund (LUF). The grant will support the redevelopment of the former Market Hall site and pre-development works (demolition and remediation) on the Windsor Street site to enable a future site redevelopment. Windsor Street site is owned by the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) and Worcestershire County Council (WCC). In addition, Bromsgrove District Council committed £1.610m in match funding, as required by the LUF programme.
2. In January 2022, the Cabinet approved the acquisition of the HWFRS site. A copy of the Cabinet Report is attached in Appendix 1. In March 2022, the WCC site became available for purchase. Its acquisition would give the council 100% control over the site and the future development options. Member approval is therefore required to enable the purchase of the County Council site.
3. Subject to this approval a purchase price of £1.806 million has been agreed (conditionally) with both HWFRS and WCC for the combined purchase of both organisations' sites on Windsor Street. Whilst the precise allocation from this figure to each of these organisations will be subject to the outcomes of negotiation, the overall price will not exceed this figure.
4. External advice has been sought and received from Savills confirming that the proposed purchase price of £1.806 million for the combined site satisfies that Councils requirement to demonstrate that best value has been achieved in respect of expenditure of the levelling up funding on the redevelopment of the site. At this purchase price, a maximum SDLT of £79,800 would also be due.
5. Recognising the historic use of the site officers commissioned an external professional feasibility study, including ground investigations, for the entire Windsor Street site. This included consideration of external survey advice on land contamination. In considering proposals to extend the site to include WCC's land, the Council has received confirmation from their advisors that no additional issues with land contamination have been identified.
6. To enable the proposed acquisition of the entire Windsor Street site to be completed by 31 March 2022, the project requires Cabinet approval to purchase the County Council site and Council approval to reprofile the expenditure of the grant funding allocated to enable £385,800 of capital funding originally allocated to 2022/23 into 2021/22 to be brought forward to 2021/22 to enable the purchase both sites at the agreed sums. This will then result in a need to reprofile the accounts to take account of this as an underspend in 2022/23. A separate Urgent Decision Notice requesting this financial approval has been submitted to the Council.

Agenda Item 7

Decision:

Approval is required for the purchase of the Worcestershire County Council site on Windsor Street Bromsgrove at the asking price (pro-rata).

Date: March 2022

RESOLVED:

Cabinet RESOLVE that authority be delegated to the Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWedR), following consultation with the Section 151 Officer, the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services and the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Town Centre and Strategic Partnerships to complete the purchase of the Worcestershire County Council site at Windsor Street, Bromsgrove.

Grounds for Urgency:

The Levelling Up Fund grant allocated for the Windsor Street site acquisition must be spent by 31 March 2022.

DECISION APPROVED BY:

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Chief Executive

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Dated

.....
Section 151 Officer

.....
Dated

.....
Monitoring Officer

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Dated

.....
Leader

.....
Dated

.....
Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny Board

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Dated

.....
Chairman

.....
Dated

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

RECORD OF COUNCIL DECISION TAKEN UNDER URGENCY PROCEDURES

Subject: Levelling Up Fund – former Market Hall and Windsor Street sites

Brief Statement of Subject Matter:

1. In November 2021, the government approved a £14,492,000 grant for Bromsgrove District Council from the Levelling Up Fund (LUF). The grant will support the redevelopment of the former Market Hall site and pre-development works (demolition and remediation) on the Windsor Street site to enable a future site redevelopment. Windsor Street site is owned by the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) and Worcestershire County Council (WCC). In addition, Bromsgrove District Council committed £1.610m in match funding, as required by the LUF programme.
2. In January 2022, the Cabinet approved the acquisition of the HWFRS site. A copy of the Cabinet Report is attached in Appendix 1. In March 2022, the WCC site became available for purchase. Its acquisition would give the council 100% control over the site and the future development options.
3. The funding allocation outlined above is sufficient to purchase the combined sites at a cost of £1.806 million and SDLT of £79,800 although the allocation of funding in respective financial years will need to be adjusted to enable the purchase to be completed by the end of March 2022. For the purposes of this decision the overall funding envelope remains unchanged it is merely the allocation in respective financial years and the consequential adjustment to the budget and capital programme that requires approval.
4. Members are therefore asked in this urgent decision to agree to reprofile the capital programme, so that £385,800 originally allocated for expenditure in 2022/23 can be brought forward for use in the 2021/22 financial year and that the consequential underspend in 2022/23 be similarly approved.

Decision:

The project requires Council approval to bring forward £385,800 of capital funding originally allocated to 2022/23 into 2021/22 to purchase the site. This will then result in an amended budgetary underspend in 2022/23.

Date: March 2022

RESOLVED:

Council RESOLVE that

The capital programme be amended, so that £385,800 of capital funding originally allocated to the 2022/23 financial year is brought forward into the 2021/22 financial year to enable the purchase of the site and the that the consequential underspend in 2022/23 be approved.

Agenda Item 7

Grounds for Urgency:

The Levelling Up Fund grant allocated for the Windsor Street site acquisition must be spent by 31 March 2022.

DECISION APPROVED BY:

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Chief Executive

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Dated

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Section 151 Officer

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Dated

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Monitoring Officer

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Dated

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Leader

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Dated

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Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny Board

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Dated

.....
Chairman

.....
Dated

Council
2022

20th April

Recommendations from the Constitution Review Working Group

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services
Report Author Claire Felton	Job Title: Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services Contact email: c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	An Effective and Sustainable Council
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Council is asked to RESOLVE that:-

- 1) **The Council should introduce Parental Leave Guidance for Councillors;**
- 2) **The Chief Executive should be granted delegated authority to act in the event of an emergency, including a cyber security attack on the Council; and**
- 1) **as a general rule there should be no full Council meetings in the pre-election period before a District Council election, unless the Proper Officer determines that a meeting is required.**

2. BACKGROUND

Parental Leave Guidance for Councillors

- 2.1 A Motion on Notice on the subject of parental leave arrangements for Councillors was submitted by Councillor S. Robinson for consideration at a Council meeting held on 26th January 2022. Prior to the meeting, group leaders agreed that the subject of the Motion should be referred to the Constitution Review Working Group (CRWG) for further consideration and therefore the Motion was not debated at Council.

- 2.2 The CRWG subsequently discussed the subject of parental leave arrangements for Members at a meeting held on 28th February 2022.
- 2.3 At this meeting of the CRWG, Members considered the content of the Motion alongside Parental Leave policies / guidance for Councillors already in place at other local authorities, including North Hertfordshire Council and Redditch Borough Council. In addition, the group reviewed the content of the Local Government Association's (LGA's) Parental Leave Policy for Councillors.
- 2.4 Based on their discussions, the CRWG concluded that Parental Leave Guidance should be introduced for Councillors at Bromsgrove District Council to help provide Members with clarity about arrangements in cases where Councillors intend to take maternity, paternity or adoption leave.
- 2.5 A copy of the proposed Parental Leave Guidance for Councillors can be found at Appendix 1.

Officer Scheme of Delegations – Emergencies

- 2.6 During the meeting of the CRWG held on 28th February 2022, Members also discussed the arrangements that would be in place should there be an emergency.
- 2.7 In considering this matter, Members review the existing delegations in place for officers in the event of an emergency, alongside delegations in place for other councils, including Calderdale Council and Cumbria County Council.
- 2.8 Currently, the Chief Executive and senior officers have delegated authority to take action in accordance with the Council's Emergency Plan, to undertake appropriate communications during an emergency and to incur expenditure to meet immediate needs during an emergency. An extract from the current Officer Scheme of Delegations providing further detail on existing delegations in the event of an emergency has been attached at Appendix 2.
- 2.9 There is the risk that various civil emergencies could occur at any point which might impact on the Council and / or on the community or groups living within the community in Bromsgrove District. Should an emergency occur, the CRWG concluded that the Council would need to be able to respond quickly and therefore it would be helpful to delegate additional authority to the Chief Executive to enable him to act swiftly in those circumstances.

- 2.10 In December 2021, it was reported that Gloucester City Council had been subjected to a cyber security attack. This was the second cyber security attack against the Council in a decade and demonstrated that District Councils could be subject to such attacks.
- 2.11 A cyber security attack on Bromsgrove District Council's systems could have serious consequences which would need to be resolved quickly. In this context, the CRWG is proposing that the delegations to the Chief Executive to act in the event of an emergency should be extended to cover situations in which the Council is managing the outcomes of a cyber security incident.
- 2.12 The CRWG was keen to ensure that, should the Chief Executive need to use delegated authority in the event of an emergency, Members should be informed of the situation and the circumstances underpinning the use of the delegated authority as soon as possible. For this reason, it is proposed that where action and decisions are taken in the event of an emergency under delegated authority, this should be reported for Members' consideration at the following meeting of Council.
- 2.13 A copy of the proposed amended delegations that would apply in the event of an emergency has been attached at Appendix 3 for Members' consideration.

Full Council Meetings – Pre-Election Period

- 2.14 Currently Council meetings take place approximately 9 times per municipal year, with a final meeting usually taking place in March or April.
- 2.15 However, in the pre-election period there are limits placed on the Council, in terms of the communications that can be issued and the policy developments that can occur. The Council and Officers need to remain neutral, even as services continue to be delivered.
- 2.16 Many other Councils do not hold Council meetings during the pre-election period, which means that their authorities are not placed in a position where decisions need to be taken that would impact on the policy direction of the authority.
- 2.17 The Constitution Review Working Group concluded that it would be sensible to avoid holding a Council meeting in the pre-election period in Bromsgrove. Instead, the final Council meeting in an election year could take place in early or mid-March.

- 2.18 There is an opportunity if the business requires, for the Proper Officer to determine that there should be a meeting of Council in the pre-election period.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 No specific financial implications have been identified.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Review and revision of the Constitution is governed by Article 15 of the Constitution.
- 4.2 Councillors on maternity, paternity or adoption leave should be mindful of their legal duty under the Local Government Act 1972 to attend a meeting of the Council, including Committee meetings, within a six month period unless the Council Meeting agrees to an extended leave of absence prior to the expiration of that six month period.
- 4.3 Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) gives a general power to local authorities to discharge functions through Officers. Local Authorities are required by the same Act to maintain a list of these, which is referred to as the Scheme of Delegation. This sets out those powers of the Council which can be carried out by Officers of the Council.

5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 5.1 The actions proposed in this report will help to ensure that the Council is effective and sustainable, including in the event of an emergency.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 There are no specific climate change implications.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.1 The introduction of Parental Leave Guidance for Councillors helps to ensure that the Council is inclusive and welcoming to Members from all backgrounds and at all stages in their personal lives.

Operational Implications

- 6.2 The Council's Constitution currently requires that the Officer Scheme of Delegations be approved by Members at the Annual Meeting of the Council. However, additional updates can be made throughout the year to the constitution to ensure that the content remains relevant.
- 6.3 Bromsgrove District Council holds District Council elections every four years. Should Members agree that Council meetings should not take place during the pre-election period, this would have implications for the timing of the Council meeting at the end of the fourth year of Members' term of office. Other years would remain unaffected.
- 6.4 There is currently a Council meeting booked to take place on 29th March 2023, which is a year when local elections are due to take place. Should Members agree that Council meetings should not take place in future in the pre-election period, this meeting, and the Cabinet meeting reporting to that Council meeting, will need to be rescheduled.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are failure to comply with governance requirements which may expose the Council to the risk of challenge by way of judicial review or appeal which may result in awards of damages and costs against the Council and loss of reputation.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Proposed Parental Leave Guidance for Councillors.

Appendix 2 – Extract from the Scheme of Delegations – Current Delegations to the Chief Executive in the Event of an Emergency

Appendix 3 - Proposed Amendments to the Scheme of Delegations in the Event of an Emergency

Background Papers:

Calderdale Council's Scheme of Delegations: [Officer delegation scheme \(calderdale.gov.uk\)](https://www.calderdale.gov.uk)

Cumbria County Council's Scheme of Delegations: [Constitution - Part 3A - Scheme of Delegation to Officers | Cumbria County Council](#)

Council
2022

20th April

The Local Government Association’s (LGA’s) Parental Leave Policy for Councils: [Parental Leave Policy for Councils | Local Government Association](#)

North Hertfordshire Council’s Councillor Parental Leave Policy: [Councillor Parental Leave Policy 23.9.21.pdf \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](#)

Redditch Borough Council’s Parental Leave Guidance for Councillors: [Parental Leave Guidance for Councillors.pdf \(redditchbc.gov.uk\)](#)

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro	
Lead Director / Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	18 th March 2022
Financial Services	James Howse, Executive Director of Resources	
Legal Services	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	18 th March 2022

Appendix Parental Leave Guidance for Councillors

Members are asked to note that any Member who takes maternity, shared parental or adoption leave retains their legal duty under the Local Government Act 1972 to attend a meeting of the Council within a six month period unless a Council meeting agrees to an extended leave of absence prior to the expiration of that six month period.

Introduction

This guidance provides useful information about maternity, paternity, shared parental and adoption leave for elected Councillors and relevant allowances.

The objective of the guidance is to ensure that insofar as possible Members are able to take appropriate leave at the time of birth or adoption, that both parents are able to take leave, and that reasonable and adequate arrangements are in place to provide cover for portfolio-holders and others in receipt of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) during any period of leave taken.

Improved provision for new parents will contribute towards increasing the diversity of experience, age and background of local authority councillors. It will also assist with retaining experienced councillors – particularly women – and making public office more accessible to individuals who might otherwise feel excluded from it.

There is at present no legal right to parental leave of any kind for people in elected public office. This applies to MPs as well as councillors, and has been the subject of lengthy debate. These policies can therefore only currently be implemented on a voluntary basis. Discussions are ongoing about changing the law to enable compulsory provision, but until then these policies constitute best practice.

Legal advice has been taken on this guidance and it conforms with current requirements.

1. Leave Periods

1.1 Members giving birth are entitled to up to 6 months maternity leave from the due date, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by agreement if required.

1.2 In addition, where the birth is premature, the Member is entitled to take leave during the period between the date of the birth and the due date in addition to the 6 months' period. In such cases, any leave taken to cover prematurity of 28 days or less shall be deducted from any extension beyond the initial 6 months.

1.3 In exceptional circumstances, and only in cases of prematurity of 29 days or more, additional leave may be taken by agreement, and such exceptional leave shall not be deducted from the total 52 week entitlement.

Agenda Item 9

1.4 Members shall be entitled to take a minimum of 2 weeks paternity leave if they are the biological father or nominated carer of their partner/spouse following the birth of their child(ren).

1.5 A Member who has made Shared Parental Leave arrangements through their employment is requested to advise the Council of these at the earliest possible opportunity. Every effort will be made to replicate such arrangements in terms of leave from Council.

1.6 Where both parents are Members, leave may be shared up to a maximum of 24 weeks for the first six months and 26 weeks for any leave agreed thereafter, up to a maximum of 50 weeks. Special and exceptional arrangements may be made in cases of prematurity.

1.7 A Member who adopts a child through an approved adoption agency shall be entitled to take up to six months adoption leave from the date of placement, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by agreement if required.

1.8 Any Member who takes maternity, shared parental or adoption leave retains their legal duty under the Local Government Act 1972 to attend a meeting of the Council within a six month period unless the Council Meeting agrees to an extended leave of absence prior to the expiration of that six month period.

1.9 Any Member intending to take maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave will be responsible for ensuring that they comply with the relevant notice requirements of the Council, both in terms of the point at which the leave starts and the point at which they return.

1.10 Any Member taking leave should ensure that they respond to reasonable requests for information as promptly as possible, and that they keep officers and colleagues informed and updated in relation to intended dates of return and requests for extension of leave.

2. Basic Allowance

2.1 All Members shall continue to receive their Basic Allowance in full whilst on maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

3. Special Responsibility Allowances

3.1 Members entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) shall continue to receive their allowance in full in the case of maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave.

3.2 Where a replacement is appointed to cover the period of absence, that person shall receive an SRA on a pro rata basis for the period of the temporary appointment.

3.3 The payment of SRAs, whether to the primary SRA holder or a replacement, during a period of maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave, shall

continue for a period of six months, or until the date of the next Annual Meeting of the Council, or until the date when the Member taking leave is up for election (whichever is soonest). At such a point, the position will be reviewed, and will be subject to a possible extension for a further six month period.

3.4 Should a Member appointed to replace the Member on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave already hold a remunerated position, the ordinary rules relating to payment of more than one SRA shall apply.

3.5 Unless the Member taking leave is removed from their post at an Annual General Meeting of the Council whilst on leave, or unless the Party to which they belong loses control of the Council during their leave period, they shall return at the end of their leave period to the same post, or to an alternative post with equivalent status and remuneration which they held before the leave began.

4. Resigning from Office and Elections

4.1 If a Member decides not to return at the end of their maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave they must notify the Council at the earliest possible opportunity. All allowances will cease from the effective resignation date.

4.2 If an election is held during the Member's maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave and they are not re-elected, or decide not to stand for re-election, their basic allowance and SRA if appropriate will cease from the Monday after the election date when they would technically leave office.

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Agenda Item 9

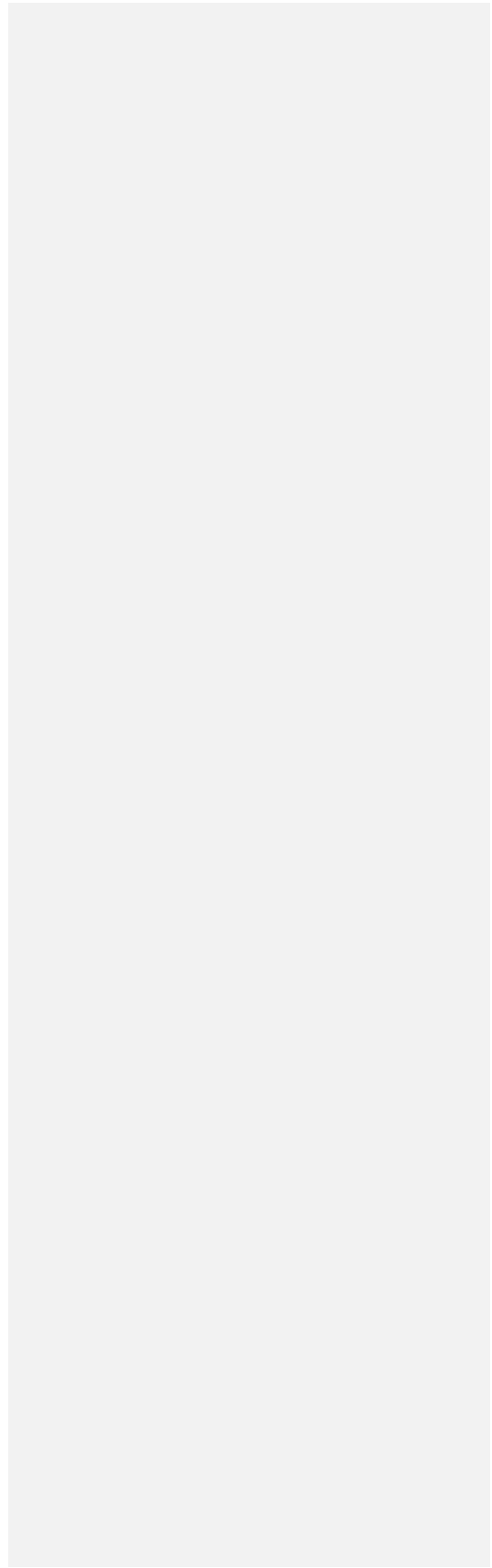
**Bromsgrove district council – Extract from the Scheme of Delegations:
Powers in Emergencies**

<p>Emergencies.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To act in accordance with the delegated procedures set out in the Emergency Plan. 2. To enable Officers to undertake appropriate communications activity during an emergency without recourse to members, should the situation require an immediate response. 3. To incur expenditure essential to meet any immediate needs created by an emergency in accordance with the Financial Regulations. 	<p>1. - 3. Cabinet / Leader.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Deputy Chief Executive , Executive Director & Heads of Service. 2. Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Executive Director. 3. Heads of Service with agreement of the Cabinet/ Leader or, if the Cabinet/ Leader is unavailable and in cases of extreme emergency only, the relevant Portfolio Holder.
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Appendix 3: Proposed Amendments to the Scheme of Delegations – Delegations in the Event of Emergencies

<p>Emergencies.</p>	<p>1. To act in accordance with the delegated procedures set out in the Emergency Plan.</p> <p>2. To enable Officers to undertake appropriate communications activity during an emergency without recourse to members, should the situation require an immediate response.</p> <p>3. To <u>take any action and to incur expenditure essential to meet any immediate needs created by an emergency, including a cyber security attack,</u> in accordance with the Financial Regulations.</p> <p>4. <u>To take any decisions, including key decisions, where any delay in taking the decision would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public interest to the extent that it is appropriate to exercise emergency powers. The Chief Executive will report any such decision to the next meeting of Council.</u></p>	<p>1. - 3. Cabinet / Leader.</p>	<p>1. Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Deputy Chief Executive, Executive Director & Heads of Service.</p> <p>2. Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Executive Director.</p> <p>3. Heads of Service with agreement of the Cabinet/ Leader or, if Cabinet/ Leader is unavailable and in cases of extreme emergency only, the relevant Portfolio Holder.</p> <p>4. <u>Chief Executive or other Directors in his/her absence, following consultation with the Leader or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Lea</u></p>	<p>Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial</p> <p>Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial, Bold, Font color: Red</p> <p>Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial, Font color: Red</p> <p>Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial</p> <p>Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial, Bold, Font color: Red</p> <p>Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial, Bold</p> <p>Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial, Bold, Font color: Red</p> <p>Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial</p> <p>Formatted: Font: Bold, Font color: Red</p> <p>Formatted: content, Space Before: 5.25 pt, After: 7.5 pt, Line spacing: single, Numbered + Level: 1 + Numbering Style: 1, 2, 3, ... + Start at: 1 + Alignment: Left + Aligned at: 0.63 cm + Tab after: 1.27 cm + Indent at: 1.27 cm</p> <p>Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial</p> <p>Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial, 12 pt, Bold, Font color: Red</p> <p>Formatted: Font: Bold, Font color: Red</p> <p>Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial, 13 pt, Bold, Font color: Red</p> <p>Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial, Bold</p> <p>Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial</p> <p>Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial</p>
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Portfolio Holder Report

Portfolio Holder Report - (CCTV and Community Safety)

Introduction and Overview:

At Bromsgrove District Council Portfolio Holders provide an annual update to Council on services within their portfolio remit. These services are delivered in accordance with the Council's Strategic Purposes, as detailed in the Bromsgrove District Council Plan 2019 – 2023.

This report provides an outline of services and activities within the remit of this particular Portfolio Holder. Information is included in relation to the Council's Strategic Purposes, relevant key activities, partnership working, projects and programmes and news stories.

A version of this report, focusing on each Portfolio Holder's remit in turn, will be considered at each meeting of Council (except for the Annual Council meeting).

Whilst services will be contributing information into this report it is worth noting that not all sections of the report will be relevant to all service areas. In this circumstance, some sections may not be completed by all services.

The report will be structured as follows:

- 1) Update on Strategic Purposes
- 2) Partnership working
- 3) Key activities and priorities
- 4) Good news stories and awards (if applicable)
- 5) Other

The Council has the following Strategic Purposes and Priorities:

Strategic Purposes	Council Priorities
Run and grow a successful business	Economic development and regeneration
Work and financial independence	Skills for the future
Living independent, active and healthy lives	Improving health & well being
Affordable and sustainable homes	A balanced housing market
Communities which are safe, well maintained and green	Reducing crime & disorder
The Green Thread runs through the Council Plan	Internal priorities
	Financial stability
	High quality services
	Sustainability



Portfolio Holder Report

1. Update on Strategic Purposes – Community Safety

Relevant Strategic Purpose.

Community Safety supports the strategic purpose “**Communities which are safe, well maintained and green**”, and Council Priorities of *Reducing Crime and Disorder*.

This report focuses on the services of CCTV and the Community Safety Team.

CCTV

Purpose: To inspire public confidence by ensuring that all public area Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) systems which are linked to the CCTV control room are operated in a manner that will secure their consistent effectiveness and preserve the civil liberty of law-abiding citizens at all times.

The CCTV operation aims to:

- Reduce the fear of crime.
- Help detect crime by providing evidence in criminal proceedings.
- Prevent and reduce crime, public disorder and anti-social behaviour.
- Help the police track and capture people suspected of committing crime
- Help identify witnesses
- Assist the Local Authority in its enforcement and regulatory functions
- Work in Partnership to achieve objectives set by the NWCSF

To promote public confidence by developing a safe and secure environment for the benefit of those living, working, visiting or using the area. The BDC CCTV Scheme is accredited to the Surveillance Commissioners Code of Practice, assessed through external annual audit. It is monitored by formally trained staff who have achieved the accredited standard required by the Private Security Industry Act 2001 and DBS checked. The system is operated and managed in accordance with current legislation and detailed CCTV Codes of Practice and Operational Procedures Manual.

Community Safety

The Community Safety Team works with partners, other service areas and local communities to fulfil the councils’ statutory duties under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 and all subsequent community safety legislation. The team provides information and guidance about crime prevention and delivers projects and interventions to reduce crime and disorder, ASB and the fear of crime in local neighbourhoods. Reducing Crime & Disorder is a corporate priority and the team uses its considerable expertise and experience to help other council services embed crime and ASB prevention into mainstream corporate service delivery.



Portfolio Holder Report

Relevant Strategic Purpose 2: Living independent, active and healthy lives

Another area the Community Safety Team co-ordinates is support for residents and communities who are victims of crime or more susceptible to crime and disorder to help them to move toward a better quality of life, free from the fear of crime. The team works with partners and voluntary sector services to provide support to those who have experienced crime and disorder, for example providing security assessments for Domestic Abuse survivors, encouraging and supporting victims of hate incidents to make reports and seek help and co-ordinating a problem solving approach those experiencing anti-social behaviour. The team also co-ordinates activity and interventions to help protect young people who are at more risk of becoming victims of crime and providing interventions for young people at risk of falling into criminality and anti-social behaviour.

Key activities since last report:

CCTV

Following a short sharp review of the CCTV scheme by members, a review of the aging analogue system and funding for CCTV becoming available from the Police Crime Commissioner work has been undertaken to upgrade the system. This has included:

- Digital upgrade to the core monitoring centre system and recording facility. Resulting in:
 - Increased capacity for additional cameras.
 - Future proof for advancing technology i.e. Biometrics, remote access, Artificial Intelligence
 - Ability to integrate other camera systems.
 - Faster playback and faster evidence production.
 - More accurate and easier to apply privacy zones.
 - Configurable monitor wall allowing hot spot areas to be high lighted. Showing up to 96 images where previously only 54 at a time.

- Relacing some analogue BT Redcare circuits with a wireless network where locations are suitable. Upgrading some analogue circuits to digital. Resulting in:
 - Revenue cost savings on BT costs
 - Clearer images
 - More reliable connectivity

- A fourth CCTV work station was added into the Monitoring Centre to ensure that when the operation is fully staffed with four operators Monday – Saturday 10am to 4pm, every operator has full access to the CCTV system. This increases proactive monitoring and response times.



Portfolio Holder Report

- Replaced old obsolete analogue cameras with digital cameras where transmission has been upgraded to digital and hybrid cameras where transmission is still analogue. Resulting in:
 - Superior camera control
 - Enhanced zoom capability
 - Excellent image clarity
 - Reduced faults and down time
- Additional camera at Sanders Park covering the skate park.
- Internally developed incident logging system to ensure:
 - Every operator has access to the system at their workplace
 - Easier access to data for reports and statistics.

Other activities include:

- Ongoing work to improve communications with West Mercia Police:
 - Briefing paper
 - Streamlined telephony access
 - Monitoring Centre visits for officers
- Pilot scheme to trial phone access for local shops and business in a CCTV locality.
 - Pilot area Wythall.
- Comprehensive CCTV training package delivered to all staff new and existing employees.

Community Safety

In March 2021, North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) agreed its 3 year action plan for 2021-2024 identifying the Partnership’s priorities based on data and information about crime & disorder and ASB as detailed in the Community Safety Strategic Assessment. The Partnership Plan outlines NWCSP’s aim to reduce: -

	Key Priorities
Violence and Abuse	Public Place Violence
	Domestic Abuse
Theft & Acquisitive Crime	Burglary
	Doorstep Crime & Scams
ASB, Damage & Nuisance	Neighbourhood Nuisance
	Criminal Damage & Environmental Problems

The Partnership also agreed two cross-cutting themes of reducing the harm caused by drugs & alcohol and reducing re-offending which both impact across all priority areas.



Portfolio Holder Report

The Community Safety Team has a dedicated Community Safety Project Officer for Bromsgrove District. The Officer works with local residents, partners and other services to address community safety and crime prevention issues across Bromsgrove. The Officer also chairs the North Worcestershire ASB forum, pulling together housing association representatives, police colleagues and other partners to discuss and develop solutions to complex ASB cases that require a multi-agency approach.

The team has qualified Designing out Crime Officers (DOCO) and they regularly examine and comment on applications for Planning making detailed recommendations based on the principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). Officers made recommendations on 11 medium to large scale development applications covering 364 residential units and 9 commercial units.

The team promote and implement the CSP's Nominated Neighbour Scheme in Bromsgrove which aims to provide protection for vulnerable and elderly residents against doorstep crimes and rogue traders. Despite promotion of the scheme being reduced due to a lack of community events as a result of covid regulations, the project continues and is promoted via partners and social media. The Community Safety Team also monitor and circulate information from partners and colleagues about current scams targeting residents, the most recent being a home insulation scam highlighted by the Private Sector Housing Team.

The team has an Officer with a dedicated remit around Youth Intervention and supporting Vulnerable Communities. The Officer manages and coordinates the Respect Schools programme which provides 1-2-1 mentoring support, group work and school assemblies on a variety of community safety and crime prevention subjects. The Officer also co-ordinated outreach and detached youth work in partnership with the Bromsgrove Youth Hub, deploying a team of outreach youth workers to neighbourhood areas that are experiencing ASB concerns. In the summer, the team implemented a successful youth diversion project using multi sports activities to address complaints of ASB at ASDA Multi-story carpark. After the Summer sessions ended, the youth team has continued to engage with a cohort of approx. 50 young people that were identified, creating a programme of Friday night diversionary sessions during the winter months.

Anticipated Activities/Key Milestones For Next Period

CCTV

Work with Bromsgrove Town Centre Manager to improve Shop/Pub watch radio system.

Review CCTV maintenance contract.

Adopt strong Carbon reduction policy.



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Portfolio Holder Report

Establish base line monitoring data on new system:

- Incident by camera
- Incident by area
- Number of proactive incidents
- Number of reviews
- Number of seizures

Signage survey and replacement to ensure appropriate signage is in place.

Community Safety

The Community Safety Team were successful in recruiting a dedicated Enhanced Youth Support Worker using Contain Outbreak Covid funding from Public Health. The role has been funded for 3yrs and has been implemented to provide support and activities to young people adversely affected by the pandemic. Research has shown that young people, particularly those with difficult and chaotic home lives, have experienced significant negative effects of the coronavirus restrictions.

The Community Safety Team works closely with various youth & community groups in Bromsgrove and assisted in obtaining significant amounts of external grant funding to deliver youth interventions and activities for disadvantaged and disaffected young people. For example: -

£24,000	Funding from Youth Music over two years to support Reach Out Bromsgrove's outreach music project with the hardest to reach young people
£8,000	For Outreach youth work in Bromsgrove district from the Grantham York Trust
£10,000	From the Big Lottery to support ongoing work at Bromsgrove Youth Hub
£7,200	2 nd grant from Active Hereford and Worcestershire for the Friday night diversion project. This follows the success of the ASDA Car Park Multi Sports scheme which benefited from an initial grant of £4,755 awarded in early 2021
£17,640	Funding from the Postcode Lottery for the Hub to continue delivery of the Community Safety Empowering Young People programme

2. Partnership Working:

The Council works with a range of partner organisations to meet the needs of residents and businesses in the District. The following section details work delivered within the remit of this Portfolio Holder.

The CCTV operation is a shared service covering the towns of North Worcestershire, including Bromsgrove District Council, Redditch Borough Council and Wyre Forest District Council.

Partnership working is key to CCTV service delivery for intelligence gathering and successful outcomes.



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Portfolio Holder Report

Partnership working examples:

CCTV

Members of the CCTV Team regularly attend Partnership meetings:

- Safer Bromsgrove
- Bromsgrove Town Centre Management
- Pubwatch
- North Worcestershire Serious Organised Crime Focus Group.
- Mates – Multi Agency Tasking (Operational level)

These interactions have allowed us to form strong links with West Mercia Police, WCC, BDHT, WRS, Probation Services, Street Pastors, and Wyre Forest District Council.

The team also work closely with other Council departments, such as Environmental Services, Community Safety, and Housing.

Community Safety

Alongside the Council's statutory duty to work in partnership to address crime and disorder via North Worcestershire CSP, the council is represented on a number of sub-groups and multi-agency forums to address specific community issues. For example: -

Safer Bromsgrove, Town Centre Management Group and Pub Watch all work together to address a number of local issues affecting Bromsgrove residents such as ASB, Crime and Disorder in Town centres and crime and disorder affecting the night-time economy.

North Worcestershire Hate Crime Partnership was the first of its kind in the West Mercia Region and brings together partners, community groups and support agencies to discuss hate incidents and crimes in the area. The group shares best practice and promotes reporting mechanisms to encourage victims and witnesses to come forward and seek help and support.

North Worcestershire Serious Organised Crime Focus Group is a multi-agency forum that discusses and identifies areas at risk of being targeted by Organised Criminals. This restricted group share data and intelligence to allow operational officers to look out for suspicious activity and signs of concern and feed this back to enforcement agencies.

Key activities since last report:

CCTV

The Project Team for the CCTV digital upgrade included key members of the Community Safety Partnership and Senior West Mercia Police Officers. The team met on a regular basis, agreeing plans, targets and actions to ensure the project remained on track and the best use of resources was agreed.



Portfolio Holder Report

We have been part of the multi-agency response to issues identified on Worcester Road Bromsgrove, Tibberton Court Charford and Shawfields Wythall.

A new initiative developed with the Community Safety partnership purchased three re-deployable cameras that can be used at locations across the district, for up to 12 weeks, in line with the “Re-deployable Camera Procedure”. We have worked in Partnership with WMP, BDHT, WCC Highways, at these sites to ensure deployment is proportionate, appropriate, and safe. Deployments in Bromsgrove include:

- Morris Walk / Rock hill
- King George Recreation Car Park, Sidemoor
- Tibberton Court, Charford.
- Collis Close, Charford.
- Shawfield Wythall

Community Safety

Community Safety Partnership Funding 2021-22 provided by the West Mercia PCC was allocated as follows and end of year monitoring and evaluation reports are being prepared to detail the outcomes achieved with the funding: -

NWCSP Project	Allocation
Contribution to West Mercia CSP Analyst Team	£20,000.00
Contribution West Mercia Integrated Offender Mgt.	£5,000.00
Empowering Young People Programme – Bromsgrove & Redditch	£30,000.00
Outreach/Detached Youth Work – Bromsgrove & Redditch	£20,000.00
Safer Bromsgrove - Town Centre Issues	£4,084.00
Safer Redditch – Town Centre Issues	£6,083.00
Virtual Decisions – North Worcs. Knife Crime Project	£5,500.00
Safer Wyre Forest Projects	£48,583.00
Total Grant	£139,250.00

Responding to Government consultations - North Worcestershire CSP responded to government consultations about the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, new Protect Duty being developed, linked to the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and discussions around a new duty to address Serious Violence which is being developed as part of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2021. Discussions and Countywide delivery forums have been established or are being discussed as statutory guidance and development information emerges.

Anticipated Activities/Key Milestones and Priorities For Next Period

Continue to improve working relations with the Police

- Explore access to airwave radio.
- Explore appetite for police to collect data electronically.
- Continue encouraging Officers to visit Monitoring Centre at peak periods to support the operation and Officers on the ground.



Portfolio Holder Report

3. Good News Stories and Awards (if applicable)

CCTV

Title of news story / award: Surveillance Camera Code Compliance

Surveillance Camera Code of Practice Certificate of Compliance was awarded following an onsite, third party, audit carried out by accreditation body IQ Verify.



Valid Until
October 2026

This demonstrates that the Council CCTV system is fully compliant with the provisions of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Code. So, the Council and more importantly the public, may be reassured that surveillance camera systems which intrude upon their privacy are being demonstrably operated ethically and legitimately to an appropriate standard.

Title of news story / award: Secondary monitoring facility at Parkside for business continuity.

Following a review of business continuity within the Lifeline Service a secondary location was set up at Parkside for any such incident that could leave the Town Hall, Redditch inaccessible. As part of the digitization of the CCTV system, remote monitoring became an option. We have now set up a CCTV workstation with access to all camera location in our mini-Monitoring Centre at Parkside. This is utilized regularly.

Title of news story / award: SIA training licence compliance

2019/2020 saw an unusually high turnover of staff, of 50%. This resulted in the appointment of 10 new members of the team. New Monitoring Centre Operators have brought new ideas and eagerness to the team. Training and induction has been steady due to the difficulties of training whilst maintaining social distance and other new Covid secure requirements. However, never a team to be halted, we are proud to say that all Operators have passed their CCTV level 2 examinations and are licenced to the Security Industry Authority.

Community Safety

Title of news story / award: Local Area Improvement funded by Community Safety Partners

Following a site visit with the Ward Member for Charford, the Community Safety Team has pulled together a multi-agency partnership to initiate an estate improvement project in a confined neighbourhood area which has experienced significant anti-social behaviour which has negatively impacted on community cohesion. Drawing together council resources from Community Safety, Environmental and Community Services and working with the Police, BDHT and the local church initiatives the project team has identified a number of actions to address environmental factors contributing to the community safety issues in the area.



Portfolio Holder Report

Despite delays caused by Covid restrictions the project proceeded through 2021, with substantial changes being made to the built environment using the principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPtED) directed by the two Community Safety Team DOCOs. The project will continue through the first half of 2022, entering a phase of community engagement utilising the experience within the project team supporting Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) and working with the Ward Member on the provision of positive youth diversion and engagement opportunities in the wider area. It is envisaged that the experience of this project will provide a model that can be transferred to other similar locations.

NWCSP Funding for 2022-23 from the West Mercia PCC has been allocated at similar amounts as previous years and partners are currently working on community safety project proposals for the forthcoming year.

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNCIL

Cabinet meeting 30th March 2022

Land Drainage Watercourse Maintenance Operation

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) an additional budget of £45k for Land Drainage – Watercourse Maintenance Operations be included in the general fund for the 2022/2023 financial year; and
- 2) a budget of £45k for Land Drainage – Watercourse Maintenance Operations be included in the Medium Term Financial Plan for future years.

Equality Strategy 2022 - 2026

RECOMMENDED that the Equality Strategy 2022-2026 as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be endorsed by Council.

Equality Annual Report 2021

RECOMMENDED that the Equality Annual Report 2021 be endorsed.

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LAND DRAINAGE - WATERCOURSE MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Margaret Sherrey
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Head of Service		Guy Revans - Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services
Report Author	Job Title: Engineering Team Leader Contact email: pete.liddington@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 534108	
Wards Affected	All except: Rubery South, Cofton, Wythall East, Wythall West, Drakes Cross, Alvechurch Village, Lickey Hills, Tardebigge, Rock Hill and Perryfields Wards	
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No	
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	Communities which are safe, well maintained and green	
Key Decision		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet **RECOMMEND** that:-

- 1) **an additional budget of £45k for Land Drainage – Watercourse Maintenance Operations be included in the general fund for the 2022/2023 financial year; and**
- 2) **a budget of £45k for Land Drainage – Watercourse Maintenance Operations be included in the Medium Term Financial Plan for future years.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) owns approximately 8 km of watercourses, primarily through recreational grounds and as part of adopted open spaces within developments.
- 2.2 In addition to this, North Worcestershire Water Management (NWWM), on behalf of BDC, routinely maintain several stretches of watercourses which are un-registered (with no responsible person(s) being identified through investigations), in order to manage flood risk in those locations. This brings the total length of watercourses maintained by BDC/NWWM to over 9 km. This report does not include third party

Cabinet30 March 2022

locations, BDC owned or maintained ponds, wetlands/SuDS features, or County Council owned roadside ditches.

- 2.3 Recently, several areas of watercourse have required urgent major maintenance work, to address local flood risk issues.
- 2.4 NWWM have produced a detailed Watercourse Maintenance Schedule (Appendix 1), with the aim of the document being to proactively schedule routine inspections and maintenance of each section of watercourse. This should avoid both major maintenance works and several locations necessitating work at the same time, consequently being more efficient and cost-effective. It also allows targeted activities, such as Himalayan Balsam removal, to be scheduled to help reduce growth in future years. (Appendix 2 shows locational details of the watercourses).
- 2.5 The first year of this maintenance plan is to be viewed as a pilot, where there is likely to be more emphasis on inspections. This will allow the operatives to familiarise themselves with each site and its specific requirements, allowing also for prioritisation of any maintenance work which may be required. Some activities may need to be undertaken more or less frequently, depending upon season for instance, and this can be refined over time.
- 2.6 The maintenance schedule should be viewed as a 'live document,' and will be updated as new sites are adopted, or when frequency of a certain activity changes.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 It is anticipated that the maintenance works can be undertaken in the main by the Council's approved Contractor, appointed as the successful tenderer for the Minor Civil Engineering and Ancillary Works Contract (MCEAWC) (2022-2025). This Contract is shortly to be out to tender, and provision has been made for the tenderer to provide their specific rates for this work. Such rates will be fixed for the contract period of three initial years, with an option to extend for a further year. Other minor works associated with these watercourse maintenance operations, will be undertaken and absorbed by the relevant Place or Parks' Team's current operations.
- 3.2 As tenders for the MCEAWC will not be finalised for some weeks, with an appointment being made for the successful Contractor, the tendered rates will unfortunately not be available for the Cabinet meeting date. However, it is estimated at this stage that the figure of £45k/annum will be sufficient to accommodate the required works.

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4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Where the Council owns the watercourse, then they become a Riparian Owner, and as such, they have the following responsibilities:

- You have a duty to pass on flow without obstruction, pollution or diversion affecting the rights of others;
- You must accept flood flows through your land, even if these are caused by inadequate capacity downstream. There is no duty in common law for any landowner to increase the drainage capacity of a watercourse on their land;
- You must maintain the bed and banks of the watercourse, as well as the trees and vegetation growing on the banks. This includes keeping the bed and banks free of debris, both natural and man-made, even if it did not originate from your land;
- You must keep the surrounds of the watercourse free of loose debris which would be washed into the stream during heavy storms or high flows, causing blockages downstream. This also includes debris which could impact on water quality should they be washed into the watercourse (for example, grass cuttings, litter and chemical containers);
- You must keep any structures that you own (for example culverts, trash screens, weirs, mill gates, bridges) free of debris and ensure they are in good working condition;
- You are responsible for controlling any invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam.

4.3 The various legislation covering Riparian Owner responsibilities are:

- The Public Health Act 1936;
- The Land Drainage Acts of 1991 and 1994;
- Water Resources Act 1991;
- Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

4.2 With regards to un-registered watercourses, these cannot be left without due maintenance being undertaken. Of course, any resultant flooding incidents, which almost certainly will occur during heavy

rainfall events, due to the lack of maintenance, will be seen by the general public as the failure of the Council to act responsibly.

5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 5.1 **Communities which are safe, well maintained and green** – keeping watercourses well maintained benefits the community as a whole. If an area experiences frequent flooding, this becomes a nuisance to the community, can restrict access to property, makes everyday living difficult, and results in considerable expense and inconvenience for those that have been flooded. If a watercourse is carefully maintained, it can create an excellent habitat for wildlife including protected species, such as native crayfish, water voles, great crested newts, nesting birds and bats.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 Climate predictions indicate more intense rainfall which could lead to increased flooding, especially during the summer months, when vegetation growth is most likely to restrict narrow watercourses. The UK has been on average 6% wetter over the last 30 years, with 2020 being the 5th wettest year on record.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.1 There are no equality impacts arising from this report.

Operational Implications

- 6.2 Within the new MCEAWC, provision has been made for the tenderers to provide specific rates for these maintenance works, so that they will be aware of their work requirements from day one of the contract. Had the maintenance works been added possibly mid-way through the existing contract, the incumbent contractor could have been well justified in requesting additional monies, as such works could not have been envisaged at the commencement of their contract. Therefore, it is expected that including the measured work within the new tender document will realise keener rates.

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7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 As highlighted within the report, failure to adequately maintain these watercourses could well result in flooding events, that may seriously affect buildings and other land. As a consequence, there is always a possibility that a compensation claim could be made against the Council.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 - Watercourse Maintenance Schedule

Appendix 2 – Drawing No. P2104/3 - Key Plan showing Site Locations

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Margaret Sherrey	24 February 2022
Lead Director/Head of Service	Guy Revans - Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services	21 February 2022
Financial Services	Peter Carpenter Interim Deputy S151 Finance	22 February 2022
Legal Services	Clare Flanagan Principal Solicitor	22 February 2022
Policy Team	Emily Payne Engagement and Equalities Advisor	16 February 2022
Climate Change Officers	Kath Manning - Climate Change and Energy Support Officer Anna Wardell-Hill Environmental Policy and Awareness Officer	16 February 2022

Bromsgrove District Council Watercourse Maintenance Schedule



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Abbreviations

BDC	Bromsgrove District Council
BDHT	Bromsgrove District Housing Trust
EA	Environment Agency
ES	Environmental Services
LDT	Land Drainage Team
HE	Highways England
MWT	Minor Works Team
NWWM	North Worcestershire Water Management
PT	Place Team
PRT	Parks & Recreation Team
RBC	Redditch Borough Council
SC	Specialist Contractor
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
WCC	Worcestershire County Council

1.0 Introduction

Bromsgrove District Council owns just under 8km of watercourse, primarily through recreational grounds and as part of adopted open spaces within developments.

In addition to this NWWM, on behalf of BDC, routinely maintain several stretches of watercourse which are either un-registered (and no responsible person has been identified through investigations), in order to manage flood risk in those locations. This brings the total length of watercourse maintained by BDC/NWWM to just over 9km (Note: this report does not cover third party locations at present). This total does not include District owned or maintained ponds, wetlands / SuDS features or County owned roadside ditches.

It has recently been noticed that several areas of watercourse have required fairly major maintenance work urgently to address local flood risk issues; the aim of this document is to pro-actively schedule routine inspections and maintenance of each section of watercourse to avoid such major works and to avoid several locations needing work at the same time – therefore saving costs as well as making maintenance work more efficient. It also allows targeted activities, such as Himalayan Balsam removal, to be proactively scheduled to help reduce growth in future years.

The first year of this plan being used should be viewed as a pilot, where there is likely to be more emphasis on inspections to allow the operatives to (re)familiarise themselves with each site and its specific requirements, and allowing for prioritisation of any maintenance work which may be required. Some activities may need to be undertaken more or less frequently, depending upon season for instance, and this can be refined over time.

This maintenance schedule should be viewed as a “live document” and it may be updated as new sites are adopted or when frequency of a certain activity changes. Any questions or comments should be directed to enquiries@nwwm.org.uk.

2.0 Watercourses Managed by Bromsgrove District Council

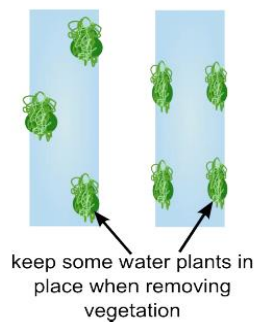
Bromsgrove District Council Owned Land				
Watercourse	Location	Area	Length	Maintained By
Barley Brook	Land at Shelley Close	Catshill	0.16km	PT
Battlefield Brook	Sanders Park	Bromsgrove	0.91km	PRT
Callow Brook	Callowbrook Park	Rubery	0.82km	PT
Callow Brook	St Chads Park	Rubery	0.20km	PT
Gallows Brook	Sweetpool Nature Reserve	Hagley	0.12km	PT
Hollywood Brook	Beaudesert Park	Hollywood	0.14km	PT
Marl Brook	Braces Lane	Marlbrook	0.14km	PT
Marl Brook	Golden Cross Lane car park	Catshill	0.03km	PT
Marl Brook	Lingfield Walk	Catshill	0.39km	PT
Spadesbourne Brook	Brookvale Close	Bromsgrove	0.17km	PT
Spadesbourne Brook	Charford Recreation Ground	Bromsgrove	0.28km	PT
Spadesbourne Brook	Crown Close	Bromsgrove	0.11km	PT
Spadesbourne Brook	Lickey End Recreation Ground	Lickey End	0.23km	PRT
Spadesbourne Brook	Little Heath Lane culvert	Lickey End	0.15km	SC
Spadesbourne Brook	Meadowvale Road	Lickey End	0.21km	PT
Spadesbourne Brook	Roman Way	Bromsgrove	0.18km	PT
Spadesbourne Brook	Spadesbourne Walk	Bromsgrove	0.14km	PRT
Spadesbourne Brook	St John Street (Waitrose)	Bromsgrove	0.17km	PT
Spadesbourne Brook	Watt Close	Bromsgrove	0.29km	PT
Spadesbourne Brook	Yeomans Walk	Bromsgrove	0.14km	PT
Sugar Brook	Buntsford Road	Aston Fields	0.09km	PT
Sugar Brook	Stoke Road	Aston Fields	0.32km	PT
River Rea tributary	Boleyn Road	Rednal	0.67km	PT
Warwick Brook	The Oakhalls	Bromsgrove	0.73km	PT
Willow Brook	Grayshott Close	Bromsgrove	0.10km	PT
TOTAL:			7.69km	
Non-Registered Land				
Watercourse	Location	Area	Length	Maintained By
Callow Brook	Land off New Road	Rubery	0.12km	n/a
Churchill Brook	Beoley Lane	Beoley	0.26km	n/a
Gallows Brook	Market Way	Hagley	0.04km	n/a
Hollywood Brook	Various unregistered land	Hollywood	0.47km	n/a
Marl Brook	Footpath behind Marlbrook Gardens	Catshill	0.15km	n/a
Spadesbourne Brook	Burcot Avenue	Bromsgrove	0.26km	n/a
Upper Arrow tributary	Blackwell Road	Barnt Green	0.11km	n/a
TOTAL:			1.41km	

3.0 Typical Maintenance Requirements

Watercourse maintenance can be split into two categories: frequent and infrequent.

Frequent maintenance (typically required weekly or monthly depending upon the location of the watercourse) includes litter picking and removing any man-made debris from the channel. In an urban environment or near to parks / schools etc this may be required more frequently than in more remote rural areas. Litter and debris tend to accumulate at pinch-points in a channel, typically at trash screens which require cleansing before and after heavy rainfall.

Less frequent maintenance, typically required annually, is vegetation management. It is important to note that vegetation is important for a healthy watercourse, but invasive species (such as Himalayan Balsam) should be removed often during the growing season to limit its growth the following year. In addition, along narrow channels where flood risk is high any vegetation impeding the flow (typically this would be flag iris, fools' watercress or reeds) should be sympathetically maintained. Best practice for vegetation management recommends clearing sections on an annual rotation, therefore never clearing an entire channel of all vegetation at one time. Manual clearance is recommended in place of using machinery or chemicals, however careful use of a water-safe herbicide is sometimes needed for spot-control of plants growing through concrete channels within urban areas, which may over time lead to structural instability. Japanese Knotweed will also require treatment using a water-safe herbicide by a competent person.



Less frequent still, other periodic maintenance requirements include the removal of excess silt (frequency will depend upon the catchment characteristics) and sometimes some pollarding of riparian trees, however this needs to be done with care as tree shade can help to cool water which reduces nutrient problems and can also inhibit aquatic weed growth. Intensive channel maintenance may require prior ecological surveys and in general will be carried out by a specialist contractor.

All maintenance activities should be carried out in a bio-secure manner, following the “Check – Clean – Dry” principles:

STOP THE SPREAD
STOP THE SPREAD
INVASIVE AQUATIC SPECIES
CHECK-CLEAN-DRY

Are you unknowingly spreading invasive species on your water sports equipment and clothing?

Invasive species can affect fish and other wildlife, restrict navigation, clog up propellers and be costly to manage. You can help protect the water sports you love by following three simple steps when you leave the water.

CHECK Check your equipment and clothing for live organisms - particularly in areas that are damp or hard to inspect.

CLEAN Clean and wash all equipment, footwear and clothing thoroughly.
 If you do come across any organisms, leave them at the water body where you found them.

DRY Dry all equipment and clothing - some species can live for many days in moist conditions.
 Make sure you don't transfer water elsewhere.

For more information go to www.river.gov.uk and search for Check Clean Dry

4.0 Watercourse Profiles:

4.1 Watercourses Managed by Bromsgrove District Council

4.1.1 Barley Brook; Shelley Close to Stourbridge Road, Catshill



Length of watercourse: 0.16 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	3 monthly	Jan-Dec	Place
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually (where required)	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Frameworks Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Feb	Framework Contractor

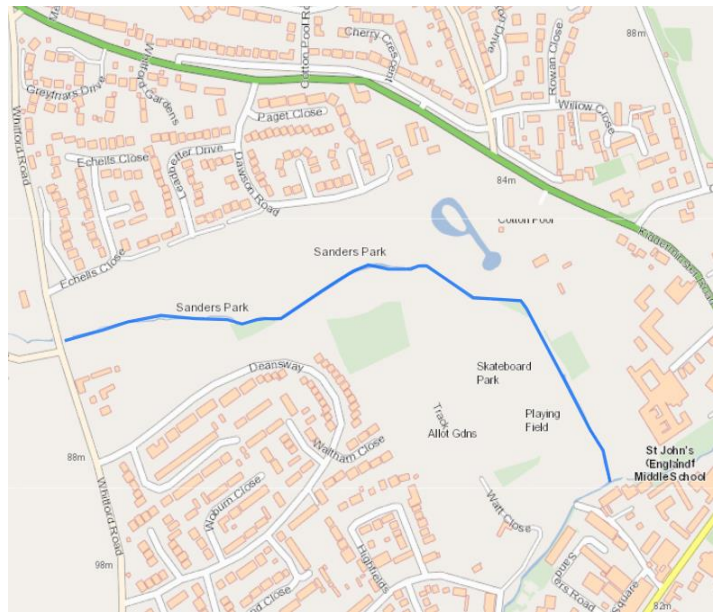
* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.2 Battlefield Brook; Sanders Park, Bromsgrove



Length of watercourse: 0.91 km

Special Features: offline nature pool (connected via culvert with screen), water vole habitat

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Parks
Trash Screen clearance	Quarterly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	Parks & Framework Contractor
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Parks
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Parks
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Parks & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Parks & Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Ponds) ****	Ten yearly – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Specialist Contractor
Culvert Inspection (CCTV)	5-10 yearly	Jan-Dec	Specialist Contractor
Culvert Repair / Maintenance	As required	Jan-Dec	Specialist Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.3 Callow Brook; Brook Road Park, Rubery



Length of watercourse: 0.85 km

Special Features: two flood relief pools, 1 culvert and a trash screen

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Weekly	Jan-Dec	Place
Trash Screen clearance	Monthly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	WCC & Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Ponds) ****	5-10 yearly – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Specialist Contractor
Culvert Inspection (CCTV)	Fifteen yearly	Jan-Dec	Specialist Contractor
Culvert Repair / Maintenance	As required	Jan-Dec	Specialist Contractor

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.4 Callow Brook; St Chadds Park, Rubery



Length of watercourse: 0.20 km

Special Features: trash screen

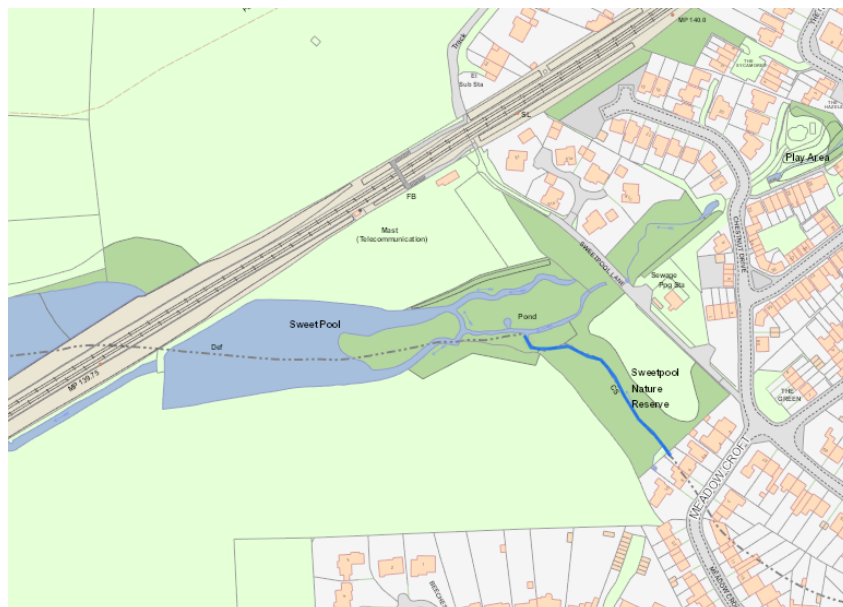
Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Place
Trash Screen clearance	Monthly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	Place & Framework Contractor
Japanese Knotweed Treatment	As required	Aug-Nov	Place
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.5 Gallows Brook, Sweetpool Nature Reserve, Hagley



Length of watercourse: 0.12 km

Special Features: Outlet from culvert coming from Meadowcroft

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Place & Parish Council
Check culvert outlet is unobstructed	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Framework Contractor
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Japanese Knotweed Treatment	As required	Aug-Nov	Place
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Parish Council
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.6 Hollywood Brook; Beadesert Nature Park, Wythall



Length of watercourse: 0.14 km

Special Features: nature pools, trash screen, water level monitor

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Fortnightly	Jan-Dec	Place
Trash Screen clearance	Monthly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	Place & Framework Contractor
Checking & Clearing woody debris dam	Monthly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	Framework Contractor
Japanese Knotweed Treatment	As required	Aug-Nov	Place
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Ponds) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Specialist Contractor

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.7 Marl Brook; Braces Lane Recreation Ground, Catshill



Length of watercourse: 0.14 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Place
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.8 Marl Brook; Golden Cross Lane Car Park, Catshill



Length of watercourse: 0.03 km

Special Features: trash screen

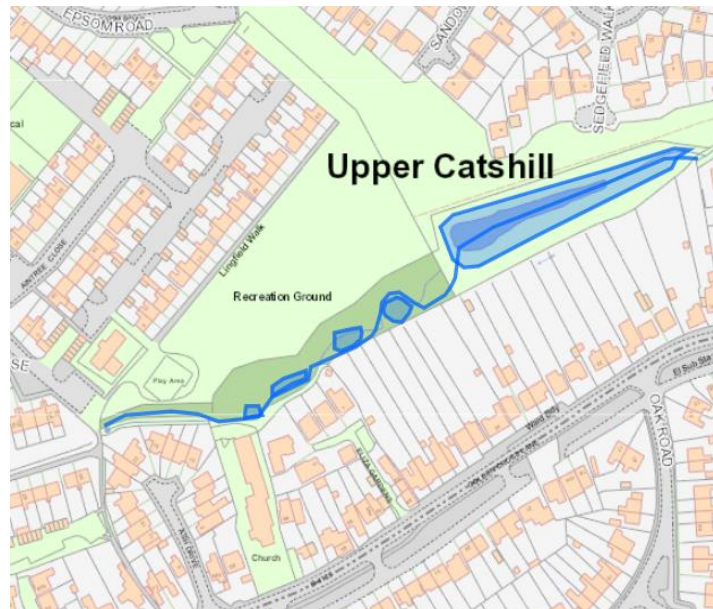
Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Fortnightly	Jan-Dec	Place
Trash Screen clearance	Monthly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	Place & Framework Contractor
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.9 Marl Brook; Lingfield Walk Recreation Ground, Catshill



Length of watercourse: 0.39 km

Special Features: flood storage pool, 5 nature pools, 5 sluices, 1 culvert

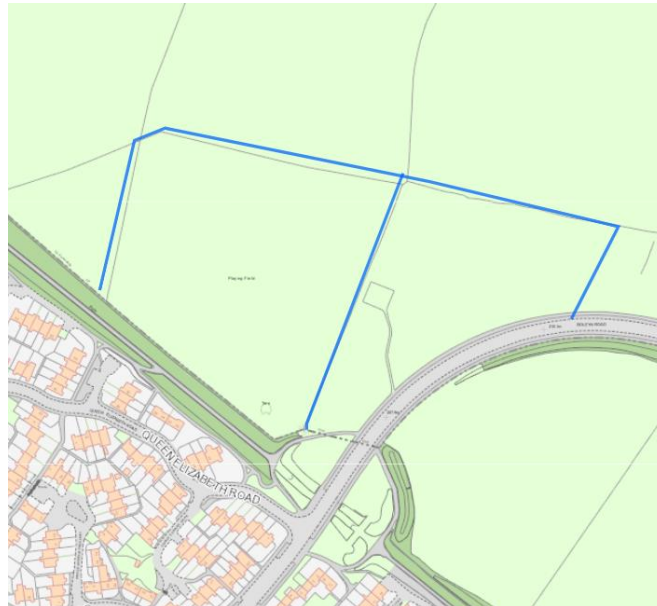
Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Place
Sluice clearance	Monthly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Ponds) ****	5-10 yearly – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Specialist Contractor
Culvert Inspection (CCTV)	Fifteen yearly	Jan-Dec	Specialist Contractor
Culvert & Sluice Repair / Maintenance	As required	Jan-Dec	Specialist Contractor

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.10 River Rea Tributary; Boleyn Road, Rednal



Length of watercourse: 0.67 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	6 monthly	Jan-Dec	Place
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.11 Spadesbourne Brook; Brookvale Close, Bromsgrove



Length of watercourse: 0.17 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Place
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.12 Spadesbourne Brook; Charford Road Recreation Ground, Bromsgrove



Length of watercourse: 0.28 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Fortnightly	Jan-Dec	Place
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.13 Spadesbourne Brook; Crown Close, Bromsgrove



Length of watercourse: 0.11 km

Special Features: trash screen

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Weekly	Jan-Dec	Place
Trash Screen clearance	Monthly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	Place & Framework Contractor
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.14 Spadesbourne Brook; Lickey End Recreation Ground, Lickey End



Length of watercourse: 0.23 km

Special Features: wetland area, 1 culvert, water vole habitat

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Parks
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Parks
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Parks
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Parks & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Ponds) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Specialist Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.15 Spadesbourne Brook; Little Heath Lane, Lickey End



Length of watercourse: 0.15 km

Special Features: cascade and twin culverts

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Trash Screen clearance	Monthly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	Place & Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Culvert Inspection (CCTV)	Ten yearly	Jan-Dec	Specialist Contractor
Culvert Repair / Maintenance	As required	Jan-Dec	Specialist Contractor

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.16 Spadesbourne Brook; Meadowvale Road, Lickey End



Length of watercourse: 0.21 km

Special Features: trash screen and weed screen

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Place
Trash Screen clearance	Monthly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	Place & Framework Contractor
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.17 Spadesbourne Brook; Roman Way, Bromsgrove



Length of watercourse: 0.18 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Place
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.18 Spadesbourne Brook; Spadesbourne Walk, Bromsgrove



Length of watercourse: 0.14 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Fortnightly	Jan-Dec	Parks
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Parks
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Parks
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Parks & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.19 Spadesbourne Brook; St John Street (Waitrose), Bromsgrove



Length of watercourse: 0.08 km

Special Features: 2 culverts

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Place
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Culvert Inspection (CCTV)	Ten yearly	Jan-Dec	Specialist Contractor
Culvert Repair / Maintenance	As required	Jan-Dec	Specialist Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.20 Spadesbourne Brook; Watt Close, Bromsgrove



Length of watercourse: 0.29 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Fortnightly	Jan-Dec	Place
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.21 Spadesbourne Brook; Yeomans, Bromsgrove



Length of watercourse: 0.14 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Fortnightly	Jan-Dec	Place
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.22 Sugar Brook; Buntsford Road, Bromsgrove



Length of watercourse: 0.09 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	3 monthly	Jan-Dec	Place
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.23 Sugar Brook; Stoke Road, Bromsgrove



Length of watercourse: 0.32 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Place
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

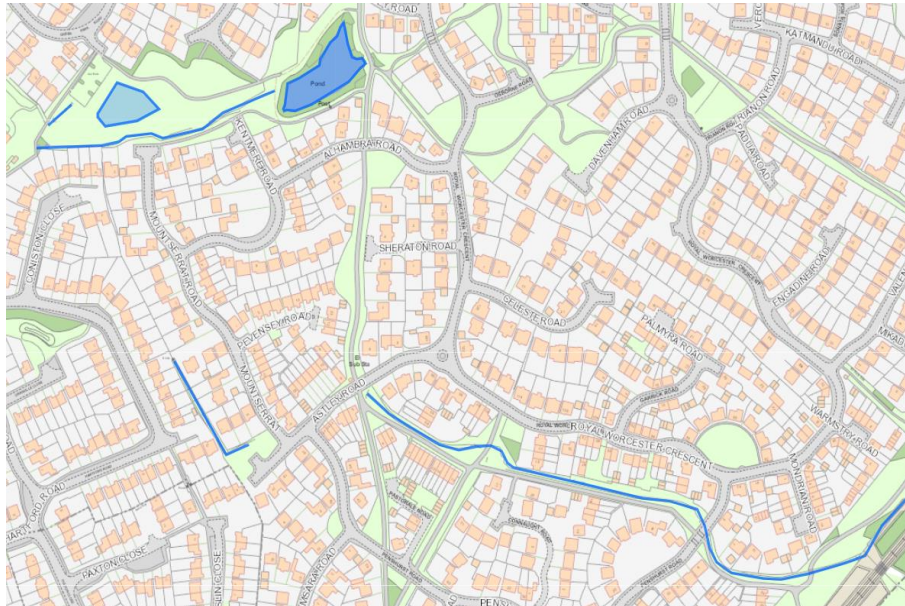
* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.24 Warwick Brook; The Oakhalls Estate, Bromsgrove



Length of watercourse: 0.73 km

Special Features: trash screens, culverts, balancing areas, pond

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Place
Trash Screen clearance	Monthly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	Place & Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Ponds) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Specialist Contractor
Culvert Inspection (CCTV)	ten yearly	Jan-Dec	Specialist Contractor
Culvert Repair / Maintenance	As required	Jan-Dec	Specialist Contractor

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.1.25 Willow Brook; Grayshott Close, Bromsgrove



Length of watercourse: 0.10 km

Special Features: trash screen

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Fortnightly	Jan-Dec	Place
Trash Screen clearance	Monthly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	Place & Framework Contractor
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	As required	Jan-Dec	Place
Bank top vegetation strimming **	Annually	Aug-Oct	Place
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Place & Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.2 Watercourses on Unregistered Land

4.2.1 Callow Brook; Land at New Road, Rubery



Length of watercourse: 0.12 km

Special Features: trash screen

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Framework Contractor
Trash Screen clearance	Monthly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	Place & Framework Contractor
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.2.2 Churchill Brook; Beoley Lane, Beoley



Length of watercourse: 0.26 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	6 monthly	Jan-Dec	Framework Contractor
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.2.3 Gallows Brook; Markey Way, Hagley



Length of watercourse: 0.04 km

Special Features: twin culvert outlets upstream and culvert inlet downstream

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	3 monthly	Jan-Dec	Framework Contractor
Check culvert outlets / inlet clear	Monthly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	Framework Contractor
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Weekly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.2.4 Hollywood Brook; Various Parcels of Land, Wythall



Length of watercourse: 0.47 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Framework Contractor
Trash Screen clearance	Monthly / after heavy rain	Jan-Dec	Framework Contractor
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.2.5 Marl Brook; Footpath behind Marlbrook Gardens, Catshill



Length of watercourse: 0.15 km

Special Features: n/a

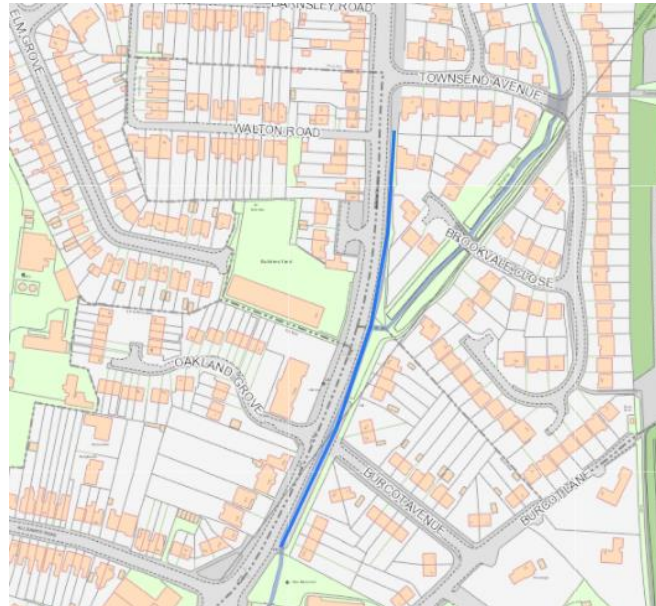
Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	6 monthly	Jan-Dec	Framework Contractor
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.2.6 Spadesbourne Brook; Burcot Avenue, Bromsgrove



Length of watercourse: 0.26 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	Monthly	Jan-Dec	Framework Contractor
Himalayan Balsam pulling where present *	Monthly in growing season	Mar-Jun	Framework Contractor
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

4.2.7 Upper Arrow Tributary; Blackwell Lane, Barnt Green



Length of watercourse: 0.11 km

Special Features: n/a

Activity	Frequency	Timing	Responsibility
Litter picking	6 monthly	Jan-Dec	Framework Contractor
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	Annually – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
In-channel vegetation removal ***	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	If required – no more than 1/3 per year	Sep-Oct	Framework Contractor

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

5.0 Maintenance Responsibilities

The table below indicates which team(s) are responsible for each activities.

It is assumed that a framework contractor would be employed on a 1-2 day per week basis to focus upon proactively inspecting and clearing grids and hotspots, with the possibility of undertaking removal of excess silt and vegetation where required to assist with the place / parks teams during late Autumn and into Winter, and specific focus upon removing Himalayan Balsam plants from Council owned watercourses on a 5 day per week basis during Spring (typically March – June).

Specialist works such as pond / SuDS de-silting and culvert inspections are to be carried out by a specialist contractor, as part of Capital works.

Some sites may require the occasional addition of native wetland plants to ensure there is sufficient habitat and food for species such as water vole; in these instances NWWM will undertake the planning.

Prior to any in-channel works at Sanders Park or Lickey End Park, a water vole survey must be carried out by a competent and qualified surveyor.

Activity / Month	Place	Parks	Framework Contractor	NWWM	Specialist Contractor
Litter picking	✓	✓			
Trash Screen clearance [#]	✓	✓	✓		
Himalayan Balsam pulling *			✓		
Japanese Knotweed Treatment	✓	✓			
Planting wetland species (if required)				✓	
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	✓	✓			
Bank top vegetation strimming **	✓	✓			
Bank face vegetation strimming ***	✓	✓	✓		
In-channel vegetation removal ****			✓		
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****			✓		
Silt removal (Ponds) ****					✓
Culvert Inspection (CCTV)					✓
Culvert Repair / Maintenance					✓

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

Where trash screens protect a Highways culvert, WCC will generally be responsible for maintenance, with checks also carried out by BDC operatives.

6.0 Maintenance Timings

The table below indicates the typical maintenance requirements of a watercourse, and the periods during which each activity can / should be undertaken. Shaded cells indicate work may take place. Note that this is a general rule, and some sites will have specific requirements due to the presence of protected species / invasive species. Some activities, such as litter picking and trash screen clearance will need to be undertaken far more frequently than in-channel vegetation management, for instance.

Activity / Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Litter picking	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trash Screen clearance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Himalayan Balsam pulling *			✓	✓	✓	✓						
Japanese Knotweed Treatment								✓	✓	✓	✓	
Planting wetland species (if required)	✓	✓								✓	✓	✓
Mowing / flailing more than 2m from bank top	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bank top vegetation strimming **								✓	✓	✓		
Bank face vegetation strimming ***									✓	✓		
In-channel vegetation removal ***									✓	✓		
Silt removal (Watercourse) ****	✓	✓							✓	✓	✓	✓
Silt removal (Ponds) ****	✓	✓									✓	✓
Culvert Inspection (CCTV)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Culvert Repair / Maintenance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

* Himalayan Balsam should be pulled before the plant flowers and seed pods develop; the times above are a general indication.

** Bank top vegetation (within 2m of the top of bank) should be cut once per year to a height of no less than 20cm.

*** Bank face and in channel vegetation should be carried out no more than once per year, and only 1/3 of the vegetation cut in any year.

**** Silt may be removed where it is causing an impediment to flow, but again no more than 1/3 of an area in any year.

6.0 Maintenance Frequency At A Glance

Typical maintenance requirements are listed below, and are colour coded according to how frequently each action is required at each location. For instance, sites near schools / transport links (such as bus stations) are more likely to require frequent litter picks than more isolated locations. Similarly, locations with a higher flood risk will require more frequent trash-screen inspections and are more likely to require vegetation management than watercourses in isolated areas where flooding will not impact properties. Some tasks such as vegetation management and silt-management cannot be programmed far in advance, however based on the suggested maintenance frequency for each location, there should be no more than 5 sites to visit per day for the majority of the year, therefore freeing up capacity for more intensive maintenance should not be too difficult. Intensive Himalayan Balsam removal is proposed during the growing months; this plant is mainly prevalent along the Spadesbourne Brook and Battlefield Brook.

Red	1	Weekly
Orange	2	Fortnightly
Brown	3	Monthly
Green	5	3 Monthly
Cyan	6	6 Monthly
Blue	7	Annually If Required
Purple	9	5-15 yearly
Grey	9	As & when required
		n/a

LOCATION		Litter Picking	Balsam Pulling	Knotweed Treatment	Trash / security Screen / outlet	Wetland Planting	Mowing (>2m)	Bank top strimming	Bank Face Strimming	In Channel veg management	Silt removal (w/c)	Silt removal (pond)	Culvert inspection
Barley Brook	Land at Shelley Close	Green	Brown					Blue	Blue	Blue			
Battlefield Brook	Sanders Park	Brown	Brown		Green			Blue	Blue	Blue		Purple	Purple
Callow Brook	Callowbrook Park	Red			Brown			Blue	Blue	Blue		Purple	Purple
Callow Brook	St Chads Park	Brown			Brown			Blue	Blue	Blue			
Gallows Brook	Sweetpool Nature Reserve	Brown	Brown		Brown			Blue	Blue	Blue			
Hollywood Brook	Beaudesert Park	Orange			Brown			Blue	Blue	Blue		Purple	
Marl Brook	Braces Lane	Brown						Blue	Blue	Blue			
Marl Brook	Golden Cross Lane car park	Orange			Brown			Blue	Blue	Blue			

Marl Brook	Lingfield Walk	Dark Brown			Dark Brown	Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey	Light Purple	Light Purple
River Rea tributary	Boleyn Road	Light Green				Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey		
Spadesbourne Brook	Brookvale Close	Dark Brown	Dark Brown			Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey		
Spadesbourne Brook	Charford Recreation Ground	Orange	Dark Brown			Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey		
Spadesbourne Brook	Crown Close	Red	Dark Brown		Dark Brown	Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey		
Spadesbourne Brook	Lickey End Recreation Ground	Dark Brown	Dark Brown			Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey	Light Purple	
Spadesbourne Brook	Little Heath Lane culvert				Dark Brown						Grey		Light Purple
Spadesbourne Brook	Meadowvale Road	Dark Brown	Dark Brown		Dark Brown	Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey		
Spadesbourne Brook	Roman Way	Dark Brown	Dark Brown			Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey		
Spadesbourne Brook	Spadesbourne Walk	Orange	Dark Brown			Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey		
Spadesbourne Brook	St John Street (Waitrose)	Dark Brown	Dark Brown			Grey		Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey		Light Purple
Spadesbourne Brook	Watt Close	Orange	Dark Brown			Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey		
Spadesbourne Brook	Yeomans Walk	Orange	Dark Brown			Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey		
Sugar Brook	Buntsford Road	Light Green	Dark Brown			Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey		
Sugar Brook	Stoke Road	Dark Brown	Dark Brown			Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey		
Warwick Brook	The Oakhalls	Dark Brown			Dark Brown	Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey	Light Purple	Light Purple
Willow Brook	Grayshott Close	Orange			Dark Brown	Grey	Grey	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey		

Callow Brook	Land off New Road												
Churchill Brook	Beoley Lane												
Gallows Brook	Market Way												
Hollywood Brook	Various unregistered land												
Marl Brook	Footpath behind Marlbrook Gardens												
Spadesbourne Brook	Burcot Avenue												
Upper Arrow tributary	Blackwell Road												

7.0 Programme of Major Maintenance Activities For Next 10 Years

The following work is anticipated which will need to be carried out by specialist contractors, with de-silting work carried out as Capital works. CCTV inspections typically cost in the region of £500(inc VAT) per half-day.

2022

Little Heath Lane Culvert Inspection (booked)
Lingfield Walk FAS Pond De-Silting

2023

2024

Oakalls Culverts CCTV Inspection

2025

Callow Brook FAS Pond De-Silting (if required)
St John St Culvert Inspection (only if site is developed) ▲
Oakalls SuDS Pond De-Silting (if required)

2026

Lickey End Recreation Ground Pond De-Silting (if required)
Beaudesert Park FAS Pond De-Silting

2027

2028

Sanders Park SuDS Pond De-Silting
Sanders Park Culvert CCTV Inspection

2029

2030

Linfield Walk FAS Culvert CCTV Inspection
Callow Brook FAS Culvert CCTV Inspection

2031

Railway Walk Culvert Inspection ▲
Beaudesert Park FAS Pond De-Silting

NOTE: Sites outside of BDC's ownership are marked with an ▲.

8.0 2021-2025 Programme of Maintenance

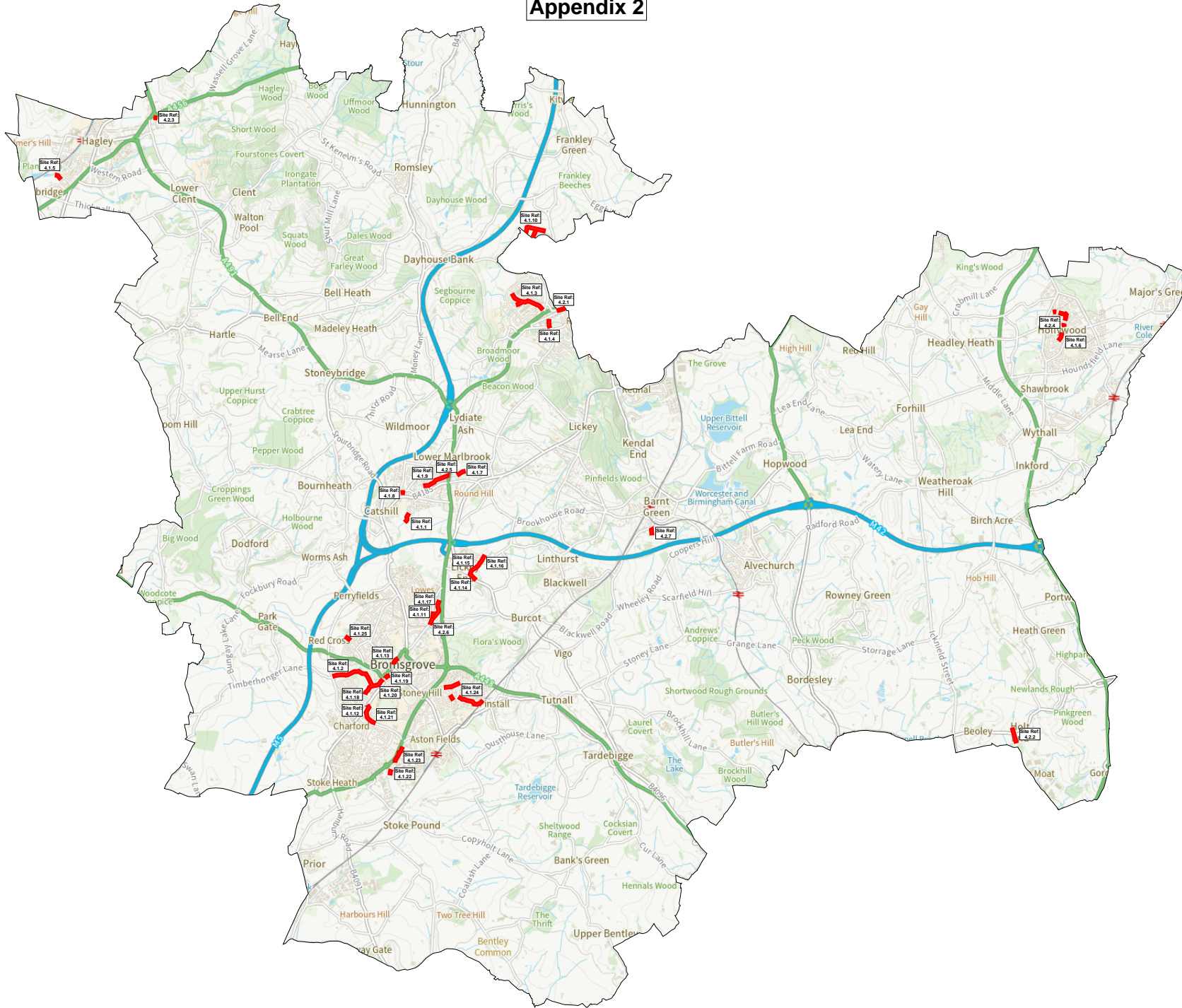
Agenda Item 12a

See excel spreadsheet. Note: Week one refers to the first full week in January, however the plan may commence at any given time.

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Appendix 2



Watercourse References

- 4.1.1 - Barley Brook; Shelley Close to Stourbridge Road, Catshill
- 4.1.2 - Batfield Brook; Sanders Park, Bromsgrove
- 4.1.3 - Callow Brook; Brook Road Park, Rubery
- 4.1.4 - Callow Brook; St Chads Park, Rubery
- 4.1.5 - Gallows Brook; Sweetspool Nature Reserve, Hagley
- 4.1.6 - Hollywood Brook; Beadesden Nature Park, Wythall
- 4.1.7 - Marl Brook; Braces Lane Recreation Ground, Catshill
- 4.1.8 - Marl Brook; Golden Cross Car Park, Catshill
- 4.1.9 - Marl Brook; Lingfield Walk Recreation Ground, Catshill
- 4.1.10 - River Risa Tributary; Boleyns Road, Rednal
- 4.1.11 - Spadbourne Brook; Brookvale Close, Bromsgrove
- 4.1.12 - Spadbourne Brook; Charford Road, Recreation Ground, Bromsgrove
- 4.1.13 - Spadbourne Brook; Crown Close, Bromsgrove
- 4.1.14 - Spadbourne Brook; Lickey End Recreation Ground Lickey End
- 4.1.15 - Spadbourne Brook; Little Heath Lane, Lickey End
- 4.1.16 - Spadbourne Brook; Meadowale Road, Lickey End
- 4.1.17 - Spadbourne Brook; Roman Way, Bromsgrove
- 4.1.18 - Spadbourne Brook; Spadbourne Walk, Bromsgrove
- 4.1.19 - Spadbourne Brook; St Johns Street (Watrose) Bromsgrove
- 4.1.20 - Spadbourne Brook; Watt Close, Bromsgrove
- 4.1.21 - Spadbourne Brook; Yeomans, Bromsgrove
- 4.1.22 - Sugar Brook; Burnstorf Road, Bromsgrove
- 4.1.23 - Sugar Brook; Stoke Road, Bromsgrove
- 4.1.24 - Warwick Brook; The Okalis Estate, Bromsgrove
- 4.1.25 - Willow Brook; Grayhat Close, Bromsgrove
- 4.2.1 - Callow Brook; Land at New Road, Rubery
- 4.2.2 - Churchill Brook; Beasley Lane, Beoley
- 4.2.3 - Gallows Brook; Market Way, Hagley
- 4.2.4 - Hollywood Brook; Various parcels of land, Wythall
- 4.2.5 - Marl Brook; Footpath behind Marlbrook Gardens, Catshill
- 4.2.6 - Spadbourne Brook; Burcot Avenue, Bromsgrove
- 4.2.7 - Upper Arrow Tributary; Blackwell Lane, Bartt Green

Date	Rev	Details

Project:

Maintenance of Bromsgrove District Council Watercourses

Drawing:

Key Plan showing Site Locations

Drawn:	PTL	Scale:	1/35,000
Surveyed:	OS	Date:	Feb

Drawing No: P2104/3

Engineering and Design Services
 Town Hall
 Walter Strang Square
 Redditch
 Worcs B98 8AH



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Equality Strategy 2022-2026

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor G. N. Denaro, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling (including Governance/Policy and Performance/HR)
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Deb Poole, Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development
Report Author	Emily Payne Job Title: Engagement and Equalities Advisor Contact email: emily.payne@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 548284
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	Underpins all Strategic Purposes, due to being General Equality Duty
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is requested to **RECOMMEND** to **COUNCIL** that: -

- 1) that the Equality Strategy 2022-2026 attached at Appendix 1 be endorsed.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Equality Strategy has been updated to support the organisation in the effectively delivery of its equality work over the next 4 years.
- 2.2 A recognition of Covid has also been included in this updated version.
- 2.3 It also includes our Equality Objectives for the next 4 years, a requirement under the Equality Duty.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

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4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Equalities Strategy addresses the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the requirement to publish Equality Objectives.
- 4.3 The strategy will be reviewed every four years or sooner to comply with changes to the law or policy and practice.

5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS**Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 5.1 The report contributes to all Strategic Purposes, predominantly the support element of the 'High Quality Services' priority, under 'An effective & sustainable Council', as identified in the Council Plan.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 The Equalities Strategy sets out our approach to equalities corporately, so we can support all our residents and customers and enable them to be informed, involved, share their opinions and influence decision making. By listening to the different needs of residents and customers, the Council will be better placed to design and deliver appropriate, coordinated, and relevant services to the communities it serves.
- 6.2 The strategy also supports internal equalities work, through training, legally required monitoring, and clarity on our approach to equalities as an organisation.

Operational Implications

- 6.3 There are no operational implications directly arising from this report; the strategy details clearly our organisational responsibilities and provides clarity at an operational level.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There are no risks directly arising from this report.

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8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 Equality Strategy 2022-2026

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor G. N. Denaro, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling (including Governance/Policy and Performance/HR)	03/03/22
Lead Director / Head of Service	Deb Poole Head of Business Transformation and Operational Development	01/03/22
Financial Services		
Legal Services	Clare Flanagan Principal Solicitor	03/03/2022
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Emily Payne Engagement and Equalities Advisor	01/03/22
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)	N/A	

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Bromsgrove District Council

Equality Strategy

2022-2026



Title	Bromsgrove District Council Equality Strategy 2022-2026
Description	This Strategy sets out our commitment for progressing equality over the next four years.
Created by	Engagement and Equalities Advisor
Date created	September 2021
Maintained by	Engagement and Equalities Advisor
Next Review Date	April 2026

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Version number	Modified by	Modifications made	Date modified	Status

1. Introduction

As an employer and deliverer of services, Bromsgrove District Council is committed to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promoting equal opportunities and fostering good relations between people from all communities. This Strategy sets out our commitment for progressing equality over the next four years.

The Strategy and Action Plan outlines our equality objectives, describes how we will fulfil our moral, social and legal obligations and what we will do to make Bromsgrove a place where people get along with each other and treat each other with dignity and respect.

The Strategy covers inequality in terms of age, disability, gender reassignment (transgender/trans), marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and is aimed at those who live, work in and visit the district, as well as elected Councillors and employees of the Council.

2. The Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 came into force in October 2010 and legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. The Act covers nine protected characteristics, and these are the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful. The characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment (1)
- marriage or civil partnership (in employment only)
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

(1) *before, during and after transition. This wording is the terminology used in the Equality Act; transgender (or Trans) is now the accepted terminology. The Council understands there are many different identities which fall under the Trans umbrella, including identities outside of the gender binary.*

Although it is not stated in legislation as a protected characteristic, we also commit to treating everyone equally regardless of their socio-economic status and will work to eliminate discrimination and disadvantage caused by a person's socio-economic status.

Public Sector Equality Duty

As part of the Equality Act 2010, public authorities must comply with the public sector equality duty (the equality duty). The equality duty replaced the previous race, disability and gender equality duties and was developed to extend across all the protected characteristics. It consists of a general equality duty, supported by specific duties and requires public authorities to consider or think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. Private organisations and individuals don't have to comply with the duty.

The general duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

In addition, public authorities also have specific duties and must do the following:

- publish equality information at least once a year to show how they've complied with the equality duty
- prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years

The publication of our Equality Strategy will support us in meeting the general and specific duties placed on us as part of the Equality Act.



3. Why is equality important to the Council?

As a public service provider, it is important we recognise that our residents and customers come from different backgrounds; this will enable the Council to design and deliver services that meet the needs of the communities we serve. By understanding these differences and encouraging others to do the same, we can improve the quality of life for everyone by ensuring people who live, work, or visit our district are treated fairly, with respect and are given the same chances and opportunities by taking into consideration their different needs.

As an employer, we believe that it is in the Council's interests and in the interests of all who work for the Council that we ensure that every possible step should be taken to ensure that individuals are treated equally and fairly and that decisions in recruitment and selection, training, promotion, and career management are based solely on objective and job-related criteria and that reasonable adjustments are made where feasible.

4. The impact of Covid-19

Page 113 Covid-19 has had an unprecedented impact on the lives of the people across the district of Bromsgrove. At the forefront of the council's coronavirus response has been the continued delivery of essential services, supporting vulnerable people and looking at the short, medium, and long-term impacts of COVID. The consequences from this pandemic have already and will continue to reshape the district, impacting those who were already experiencing deprivation across all protected characteristics, and it is important that the council not only focuses on how, as an organisation, we recover and respond to challenges faced because of the pandemic but also the leading role we play in the wider recovery across the whole district.

5. Equality in the delivery of our services

Equality Impacts

Although there is not a specific legal requirement for the Council to undertake an equality impact assessment, we *are* legally required to demonstrate that we have given 'due regard' to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. In practice this means that equality considerations still need to be evidenced in our decision-making processes and policies.

Any potential impact on equality should be considered before any key decisions are made and should be integrated into day-to-day policymaking, business planning and other decision-making arrangements. This is particularly relevant when making difficult financial decisions; if we are proposing to stop, reduce or change a service then we must have relevant equalities evidence to justify this. The effect Covid has had on many people means considering the impact of equality is ever more important and we will ensure our Equality Assessment Guidance is updated.

The Equality Assessment Guidance is available for officers on the Orb and the Policy Team can provide direct support for service areas and projects to help them to gather and interpret equalities evidence.

Equality Monitoring

The Council has a requirement to publish equality information at least once a year to show how we have complied with the equality duty. The Council recognises this also makes good business sense as it can help local people assess the Council's performance on equality, the impact our policies and practices have had, tell us who is and isn't using our services; understand why our services may not meet their needs and help us to improve the delivery of our services by identify any data gaps and address any issues. Any monitoring undertaken must be proportionate and relevant and of a benefit to our communities.

Procurement & Commissioning

The Council provides a wide range of services to residents and businesses in the district. In some cases these are provided directly by the Council, in other by our partners and contractors. When a supplier provides goods, services or works on our behalf, we will ensure the equality obligations are part of the terms of a contract so that we know they will monitor the impact on service users and those they employ. The ultimate legal responsibility for meeting the requirements of the Equality Act remain with the Council for any services delivered on our behalf.

Specifically, we will:

- Communicate this strategy to all potential contractors and service providers;
- Ensure contractors and service providers have policies, procedures and practices that do not discriminate and deliver goods, facilities and services that are appropriate and accessible.
- Provide opportunities for all to be able to bid and be awarded council contracts from an equal basis; and
- Monitor the contracts and service arrangements to ensure they are meeting their equality commitments.



6. Equality in employment

The Council is continuing to work towards achieving a diverse workforce and offering equality of opportunity in employment, recruitment selection, training, and development. We aim to ensure that the workplace is free from discrimination, victimisation, or harassment of any kind where staff are treated with respect.

Employment policies

The Council has a wide range of policies in place for our staff and prospective employees. These policies support our staff and provide clear guidance to all employees about what is expected of them and what they can expect from us as an employer. We will continue review the range of policies and be pro-active in promoting and supporting equality in the workforce. This includes eliminating bullying and harassment, addressing discrimination, ensuring equality in pay and creating a flexible work-life balance. The Equal Opportunities Policy pulls together the Council's commitment to equality within the workplace.

As part of supporting the delivery of this strategy there are additional guidance documents, focusing on specific elements of equality. These can be added to, as required, through the life of this strategy.

Equality Training

Equality training is provided for staff to ensure they are made aware of their rights and responsibilities. In particular all managers will be trained on a regular basis in equalities matters concerning employment. Similarly, there is an expectation that all Members will attend Equality training. Equality issues are an integral part of our training and development programmes, regardless of whether the council uses internal or external trainers. In addition to the generic equality training, tailored equality training to reflect the needs of specific services will be encouraged, particularly for services engaging with external customers and / or where there is a significant engagement with protected group(s).

The council makes a strong commitment to training and development for all staff. All staff will have equal access to training and development, and we will take positive action where appropriate for those who are underrepresented in our workforce.

7. Consultation & engagement

The Council wants to ensure that anyone who accesses council services either as a resident, visitor, customer, or employee feels well informed about local issues; can get involved, influence local decision making and gets the opportunity to tell the Council what they think about its policies, procedures, service delivery and work with partner organisations.

To ensure consistency, the council has a separate Community Engagement Strategy 2022-2026. The following objectives set out how we are going to make certain that our engagement activity is flexible, focused, and appropriate for the diverse needs of the communities. Together the council will:

Plan and co-ordinate activities, the use of resources and, where possible, work collaboratively.

Actively encourage involvement from all communities, including those from traditionally under-represented groups/areas.

Be open and creative to the most appropriate methods to consult and engage making the experience interesting, relevant, and worthwhile for participants.

Be transparent and build trust by communicating results and ensure that the outcomes are used to inform the Council's policies and decision-making processes.

Use the information from our engagement activities, alongside other evidence, to inform the design and delivery of effective and efficient services, within our current financial constraints.

Build relationships with communities so sustained engagement can be established.

If you would like to get involved taking part is easy and you can do as little or as much as you like e.g., from completing surveys on local issues to being part of a focus group. Your views can make a difference.



8. Our success & achievements 2017 to 2021

The Council has achieved some key successes since the adoption of our previous Equality Strategy 2017-2021. Over the last four years some of these include:

- The Equality Small Grants Scheme, which awarded grants to local voluntary and community groups so a variety of projects could be delivered.
- Supporting the quarterly Bromsgrove Engagement & Equalities Forum
- Carrying out over 30 surveys covering a range of topics with the results helping to inform key decisions
- Adopting a corporate Engagement Strategy that promotes successful engagement across all service areas
- Delivering equality training to all employees
- Continuing to build strong relationships with other public and voluntary and community organisations across the district
- Supporting the delivery of interpreting, translation, and alternative format requests.
- Providing assisted bin collections for people who struggle to get their bins to the roadside for collection, such as older residents and people with disabilities
- Continue working with partners on the North Worcestershire Hate Incident Partnership to tackle all forms of hate crime and targeted harassment across North Worcestershire

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9. Measuring our progress

We will continue to inform the public and our staff about our progress through:

- An annual equality report
- Our information and advice services
- Council website
- Media (including social media) for advertising and press releases
- Through our community networks

10. How to contact us

To give us your views, get involved or for further information please contact the Equalities Team at equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk or 01527 548284

To find out about the council's engagement activities please contact us or just go to www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/consultations

If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs. Email: equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk or Phone: 01527 548284



Bromsgrove District Council Equality Objectives 2022-2026

We are required to adopt and publish equality objectives every four years. These are our revised equality objectives covering the period 2022-2026.

Objective 1: Ensure we deliver inclusive and responsive services

The Council will continue to work to understand and remove the barriers people face when accessing its services.

Actions we will take to deliver this objective:

- Improve the quality of information we collect and how we use it to monitor who is and isn't using our services and facilities and to understand their satisfaction.
- Work with partners to identify and share issues facing specific groups of people in the district to inform future service delivery.
- Use the information from our engagement activities, alongside other evidence, to inform the design and delivery of effective and efficient services, within our current financial constraints
- Continue reviewing our policies, activities, and decisions to monitor the impact on different groups

Objective 2: Engage and communicate with the community in appropriate and accessible ways

Community engagement is about giving people the confidence, skills, and power so they can get involved. The Council wants to ensure that people feel well informed about local issues; have the opportunity to get involved, influence local decision making and get the opportunity to tell the Council what they think about its policies, procedures, service delivery and work with partner organisations.

Actions we will take to deliver this objective:

- Provide advice and information in a way that is accessible
- Ensure engagement and consultation are accessible to enable people to participate in the decision-making process.
- Engage with residents using appropriate methods making the experience interesting, relevant, and worthwhile for participants.
- Promote membership to the 'Bromsgrove Community Panel'
- Review the information provided to the public so that it meets the Public Sector Accessibility Regulations 2018

Objective 3: Understand our communities and celebrate and respect diversity

As a Council, we want to lead the district in celebrating and promoting our diversity and the benefits and opportunities it brings. We will continue to promote inclusion, fairness, and accessibility and celebrate the district of Bromsgrove as a great place to live, work and visit.

Actions we will take to deliver this objective:

- The Council in its role as a local leader will continue to mark and promote awareness of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Events e.g., Holocaust Memorial Day, LGBT History Month, Black History Month.
- Mark Suicide Prevention Awareness Day each September and using this as an opportunity to promote the work of local groups that support suicide prevention.
- Continue to support district and countywide work to raise awareness of hate crime and how it can be reported. We will ensure these are monitored and analysed regularly, and appropriate action is taken to address the issues that have been identified.
- Continue to work with stakeholders to promote social cohesion
- Continue to support, through advice, working together and where appropriate financially, local voluntary and community groups to be sustainable and to meet the needs of the community they support
- Support to local voluntary sector organisations around improving promotion of their organisations.

Objective 4: Develop and support a diverse workforce

We will continue to promote inclusion, fairness, and accessibility in our workplace. A representative workforce will help us deliver services that are accessible, appropriate and that help reduce inequalities.

Actions we will take to deliver this objective:

- Regularly monitor, analyse, and publish employment data in accordance with our statutory duties.
- Promote an environment where everyone is treated fairly and with dignity and we recognise and value the differences skills, abilities and experience people bring to the workplace
- Encourage employees to declare their protected characteristics.
- When appropriate, work with teams to ensure equalities information is available for managers and Elected Members to use in decision making

- Using a range of methods make relevant resources available and provide equalities advice to employees and Elected Members to enable us to achieve our equality objectives
- Continue to publicise messages around positive mental health, including suicide prevention, to staff and promote opportunities to participate in training and events
- Following the impact of Covid, continue to support employees with their current and future working arrangements
- Develop signposting information on the Orb, to the relevant support services about mental health and wellbeing, including suicide prevention, to support employees to signpost customers and/or colleagues
- Recognising that not all staff may have undertaken the Mental Health First Aid training and arrange for some alternative web-based training resources to be provided for staff and additional resources for those working in front line positions

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Cabinet

30/03/2022

Equality Annual Report 2021

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor G. N. Denaro, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling (including Governance/Policy and Performance/HR)
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Deb Poole, Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development
Report Author	Emily Payne Job Title: Engagement and Equalities Advisor Contact email: emily.payne@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 548284
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	Underpins all Strategic Purposes, due to being General Equality Duty
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is requested to RECOMMEND to COUNCIL that: -

- 1) that the Equality Annual Report 2021 attached at Appendix 1 be endorsed.**

2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Annual Report informs the progress on the Council's equality objectives and bridges the period covered by the previous Equality Strategy 2017 to 2020 and the upcoming new strategy for 2022 to 2026.
- 2.2 COVID-19 impacted greatly on almost all the work being undertaken to fulfil these objectives, delaying some work but also generating new activity to reduce the impact of the pandemic on disadvantaged groups and promote equality during this unprecedented period.
- 2.3 It should be noted that the examples included in this report are not a complete list of everything the Council has done or will do to achieve our equality objectives.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Equality Act 2010 consists of a General Equality Duty, supported by specific duties, requires public authorities, like Bromsgrove District Council, to consider or think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.

- 4.2 The specific duties require the Council to: -

- Publish equality information at least once a year to show how they've complied with the equality duty
- Prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years

- 4.3 This Annual Report informs the progress on the equality agenda covering the period January 2021 to December 2021.

5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS**Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 5.1 The report contributes to all Strategic Purposes, predominantly the support element of the 'High Quality Services' priority, under 'An effective & sustainable Council', as identified in the Council Plan.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 Our approach to equalities corporately, so we can support all our residents and customers, is set out in the Council's Equalities Strategy.
- 6.2 This report supports our legal requirement to report the progress made during 2021.

Operational Implications

6.2 There are no operational implications directly arising from this report; the report details clearly our organisational responsibilities and provides clarity at an operational level.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 There are no risks directly arising from this report.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 Equality Strategy Annual Report 2021

Cabinet

30/03/2022

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor G. N. Denaro, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling (including Governance/Policy and Performance/HR)	03/03/22
Lead Director / Head of Service	Deb Poole Head of Business Transformation and Operational Development	01/03/22
Financial Services		
Legal Services	Claire Flanagan Principal Solicitor	03/03/2022
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Emily Payne Engagement and Equalities Advisor	01/03/22
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)	N/A	

Bromsgrove District Council Equality Strategy Annual Report 2021

1 Introduction

1.1 This annual report informs the progress on the equality agenda covering the period January 2021 to December 2021. The Council is currently in the process of adopting its new Equality Strategy 2022 to 2026.

1.2 The report bridges the period covered by the previous equality strategy, for 2017 to 2020 and the upcoming new strategy for 2022 to 2026. There is, however, considerable overlap between these set of objectives and a lot of activity will continue or evolve from one period to the next. It should be noted that the examples included in this report are not a complete list of everything the Council has done or will do to achieve our equality objectives.

1.3 COVID-19 impacted greatly on almost all the work being undertaken to fulfil these objectives, delaying some work but also generating new activity to reduce the impact of the pandemic on disadvantaged groups and promote equality during this unprecedented period.

2 The Council's Vision, Purposes and Priorities

2.1 Bromsgrove District Council's vision is to enrich the lives and aspirations of all our residents, businesses, and visitors through the provision of high-quality services, ensuring that all in need receive appropriate help and support. People are at the heart of everything we do; whether they live in our district, work here, or choose to visit. Everyone deserves to receive the best possible service and support and we aim to put those in need at the forefront.

2.2 The Council is committed to providing residents with effective & efficient services that not only meet their needs but understand them too. Through considering what really matters to our residents the Council's Strategic Plan 2019-2023, sets out eight key priorities, underpinned by five strategic purposes.

Eight Key Priorities for 2019-2023

- Economic development and regeneration
- Skills for the future
- Improving health and well being
- A balanced housing market
- Reducing crime and disorder
- Financial stability
- High quality services
- Sustainability

Five Strategic Purposes, with our communities at the heart:

- Run and Grow a Successful Business
- Work and Financial Independence
- Living Independent, Active and Healthy Lives
- Affordable and Sustainable Homes
- Communities which are Safe, Well Maintained and Green

Appendix 1

3 Meeting our Equality Duties

3.1 The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. The Act covers nine protected characteristics, and these are the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful. The characteristics are

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Although it is not stated in legislation as a protected characteristic, we also commit to treating everyone equally regardless of their socio-economic status. Our 2022-2026 Equality Strategy will include it and will work to eliminate discrimination and disadvantage caused by a person's socio-economic status.

3.2 The Equality Act 2010 consists of a General Equality Duty, supported by specific duties, and requires public authorities, like Bromsgrove District Council, to consider or think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. The General Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

In addition, public authorities also have specific duties and must do the following:

- Publish equality information at least once a year to show how they've complied with the equality duty
- Prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years

4 Population Overview

4.1 At the time of the last census (2011) there were 93,637 people living in Bromsgrove District, made up of 49.45% male and 50.55% female. The age breakdown was 5.15% aged 0-4 years, 15.15% aged 5-17 years, 59.25% aged 18-64 years and 20.43% aged 65 years and over.

4.2 The largest ethnic group was White (English/Welsh/Scottish, Northern Irish/British) at 93.60% with the next largest ethnic groups being 1.15% Asian/Asian British: Indian and 1.15% White: Other White.

4.3 Christianity is the highest recorded religion at 68.89% followed by 22.05% stating no religion and 6.93% as religion not stated.

4.4 In terms of disability, a total of 17.57% said their day-to-day activities were limited either a lot or a little. A total of 95.17% reported their health as very good, good, or fair and 4.82% reported bad or very bad health.

4.5 There were 42,053 people who were married or in a registered same-sex civil partnership.

Appendix 1

4.6 More detailed information about the profile of the district of Bromsgrove is set out in appendix A. The census was carried out in 2021 and once information is available it will help inform the council of changes in its population.

5 Our Equality Objectives

5.1 This report bridges the period covered by the previous Equality Strategy 2017 to 2020 and the upcoming new strategy for 2022 to 2026, which is due to be adopted in spring/summer 2022. It provides a progress on key areas of equality work, during 2021, that underpin the objectives set out in the 2017 to 2020 strategy.

Objective 1: To understand the needs of the community so they can access our services, facilities, and information

Objective 2: To engage and communicate with the community in the most appropriate and accessible ways

Objective 3: To support Council's employees and Elected Members to deliver accessible, non-discriminatory services

6 Key Achievements and Progress in 2021

6.1 Covid-19

6.1.1 Covid has continued to dominate the direction of the council's work and working alongside partners including Worcestershire County Council, the NHS, and the voluntary and community sector to provide guidance, information, advice and support to the public. The Redditch and Bromsgrove District Incident Management Team (DIMT) has continued to meet regularly, chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive, and supported by Public Health, bringing together a range of local partner agencies. These meetings with key officers have informed the direction of covid recovery work and helped pull resources together, enabling essential funds to be accessed. Teams have worked together to support pop up vaccination centres, enabling businesses to gain financial support and signposting, and enabling voluntary and community sector organisations to gain financial support which in turn helped ensure they were able to continue providing much needed support to our communities, particular vulnerable people.

6.1.2 Through the Household Support Fund, all District Councils worked together with Worcestershire County Council to try and ensure funding was allocated in such a way that it reached those most in need, including working with Act on Energy to provide support around energy bills, which was oversubscribed. At a District level, again working with partners such as Citizens Advice Bromsgrove and Redditch, local foodbanks, schools/local college and BDHT, other support has been provided including food parcels / vouchers, essential white goods and more. Working with other local organisations and groups has helped us to identify eligible households (both families and individuals) who are in need and eligible to benefit from this support.

6.1.3 The Holiday Activities and Food Fund (HAF) targets young people who are entitled to free school meals or who's families are just about managing (JAM). During 2021, free activities and food have been made available for young people to access across the main school holidays of Easter, Summer, and Christmas. Again, by working with schools and local organisations we were able to target the young people in need to make this accessible for them. Activities were delivered by various providers under our umbrella who also provided a lunch box, hamper, or hot meal to those children at the activity. Due to covid restrictions this face-to-face delivery wasn't always possible, so activity packs and resources were provided along with food hampers as an alternative.

Appendix 1

6.2 Partnerships

6.2.1 Partnership working has continued, helping to ensure different agencies address local need collectively rather than separately. This has been shown through DIMT (as mentioned in 6.1 above) as well as the existing Partnership structures such as Bromsgrove Partnership.

6.2.2 It was through the Bromsgrove Partnership Board and the Steering Group that it set up, that ensured the District was in the best position to progress Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) when the Council was successful in bidding for funding for community builders. Due to the Partnership, the funding was used to recruit not just one, as originally expected, but two community builders, both of which were recruited from or close to the local communities they will work within. (ABCD covered under 6.4 below).

6.2.3 The Bromsgrove Partnership Theme Groups continued to meet virtually, strengthening the links between agencies, and continuously striving towards more joined up local provision. For instance, the new Social Prescribing Service in Bromsgrove, headed up by the District Council, commenced during 2021 and could hit the ground running due to building connections with service providers using Bromsgrove Partnership's Community Wellbeing Theme Group in particular. Social Prescribing Service offers support to patients from 9 GP surgeries with a personalised support plan about what matters to them and linking them with groups and activities to support their well-being. Key issues have been isolation, anxiety, and financial/housing support.

6.2.4 The Council and the wider Bromsgrove Partnership have been working with the Bromsgrove Primary Care Network (PCN) to support the newly formed Bromsgrove Collaborative. Although early days, it is anticipated that the Bromsgrove Partnership will wrap around and strengthen the work of the Bromsgrove Collaborative.

6.3 Starting Well Partnership

6.3.1 Being a parent is so rewarding but can also be challenging at times, no more so than during COVID-19, whether its support with routines or encouraging your children to listen. Our free service supports parents of children and young people 0 to 19 years and facilitates a variety of evidence-based groups for parents. The groups give the opportunity to learn new strategies build their confidence and strengthen their family relationships.

6.3.2 The evidence-based parenting groups, delivered via a digital platform and face to face, have had some very positive outcomes impacting a high number of children. Community events have been delivered in partnership with libraries, sports development, health, and the voluntary sector with a focus on holiday hunger providing food and activities. We have recruited volunteers to support our parenting groups and community events and the Family Hubs have developed since lockdown and are now a hive of activity again.

6.4 Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)

6.4.1 Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approaches show that connecting people and creating more resident-to-resident relationships builds interdependence and reliance on each other. Connecting people to their shared interests, and enabling them to exchange skills and resources, helps communities identify and act on the issues that are most important to them. This provides a brief update on the progress of ABCD work across Bromsgrove district and the county during 2021.

6.4.2 During April and May an officer and elected member from all 6 districts across Worcestershire completed Introduction to ABCD training with Nurture Development. Following the training the cohort went on to establish an initial Worcestershire Community of Practise with meetings between June and November.

Appendix 1

6.4.3 From September to December representatives from across Worcestershire completed ABCD Guides training facilitated by Nurture Development. A joint Redditch and Bromsgrove district Community of Practise / Learning Network is now in the development stage.

6.4.3 Two Community Builders were appointed in December, based in Catshill and Rubery and hosted by the social enterprise Newstarts.

6.4.4 Catshill Test and Learn Project Steering Group was joined by the ABCD team from Worcestershire County Council in early 2021 with the aim to facilitate ABCD practice within local organisations and support local activity. It became apparent that community builders were the missing piece needed to progress and embed an ABCD approach, so Bromsgrove District Council (together with Redditch Borough Council) put a funding proposal forward to Worcestershire County Council. This was not only accepted but the County Council encouraged other Districts to do the same. As funding became available, the Catshill Can steering group were ideally placed to help facilitate and move things along at pace as dictated by the strict funding deadlines given. This led to Social Enterprise, Newstarts, being awarded the funding to host two community builders in Bromsgrove. In early 2021, with support from the steering group partners, the ABCD team hosted a Virtual Open Space event (due to COVID restrictions) to understand what residents like about their community and form connections. This worked as a catalyst in connecting people and brought the idea of restarting the Car Boot sale for residents, which is now back underway. The ABCD team attended several summer events in Catshill partnering with Starting Well to build local partnerships and meet more residents to understand what they liked about their community and discuss their ambitions for Catshill. This was followed up with an Asset Mapping event in December. With residents the team had met they are planning the next community chat event and mobilising the community to help promote it. Ideas for community activities included a resident led fayre and swap shop. The Community Builder is looking to support residents to develop these (and other) ideas further and build connections with other members of the community to help make this happen.

6.5 Community Engagement

6.5.1 During 2021 the council carried out a range of community engagement and consultations. The information gathered has supported service delivery and corporate decisions. All surveys were promoted on the council's website and on social media with paper copies available. The council continues to work hard to increase participation with responses encouraged from our diverse population to ensure a cross representation of responses.

6.5.2 The Bromsgrove Community Panel, a list of Bromsgrove District residents who have signed up to be kept informed about engagement and consultations carried out by the council, continues to grow. As of the end of 2021, there were 359 members with new members signing up regularly.

6.5.3 During the year over fifteen surveys have gone out to the public covering a range of topics including

- Community safety
- Feelings and views on Covid-19
- Climate Change
- Feedback about Street Theatre events
- Surveys to support the development of the Leisure and Events Strategy
- Cashless Carpark payments options
- Shopmobility
- Local bus shelter replacement
- Annual Community Survey

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6.6 Community Events

6.6.1 Throughout the year, we have provided opportunities to celebrate the diversity, culture, and heritage in our community and with our workforce. Due to social-distancing restrictions during the pandemic, most of our events during 2021 were scaled back. However, we were still able to mark important dates including Remembrance Sunday, Armed Forces Day, Holocaust Memorial Day, Polish Independence Day, World Mental Health Day, LGBT+, International Women's Day and White Ribbon Day.

6.6.2 We welcomed back, following the lockdown of 2020, to Bromsgrove High Street the Court Leet event in June and the Christmas Market in November, as a part of the Christmas lights Switch On. Bromsgrove community fully supported the events, with family and friend's coming together to celebrate the local arts and cultural offer the town has to offer and reducing isolation and loneliness a lot of residents have felt during the pandemic. Bromsgrove District Council works in partnership with the Court Leet and the Friends of St John's, who run the Christmas Markets.

6.6.3 In 2021, Bromsgrove hosted its first Pride Event. The Bromsgrove Pride Committee organised and planned the event with grant support from BDC Arts and Culture Team and the Equality Small Grants Scheme. The Bromsgrove Pride Event was integrated into market day on Saturday 2nd October with fifteen stalls available for organisations and community groups including space for a fire engine and fire and community police stand. There was a small platform for low key entertainment. The main principle of the event was for it to be a small low key first pride event in Bromsgrove, that was a safe space for those taking part and attending. It was also for the organisers to grow in confidence moving forward with future events. The event was hailed a success by the Bromsgrove Pride Committee, with an estimated attendance of over a 1000 people throughout the event. They are now in the process of trying to recruit more people to the committee and making plans for a 2022 event.

6.6.4 Some other events and activities that supported people in our community included –

- Bromsgrove Boccia Boars - Boccia is a game created for people with cerebral palsy, but the club welcomes all abilities.
- Disability Climbing - For children of all ages to climb at the "Clip N Climb" Indoor Climbing Wall
- Junior Inclusive Athletics - Our fun-based junior inclusive athletics club at the Ryland Centre welcomes all abilities to come and learn various athletic skills and techniques.
- Keep On Moving Multi Sports Club - Multi sports club for adults with disabilities
- Trike Bikes in Sanders Park – Suitable for ages 5 and upwards with a disability and want to cycle around Sanders Park.
- Active Seniors across the district - Active Seniors exercise classes help to improve strength, balance, and co-ordination.
- Street Theatre - Providing a diverse programme of varied acts and well managed activities to the local people which contributes to the promotion of a multi-cultural community.

6.7 Equality and Community Grants

6.7.1 Bromsgrove District Council Equality Small Grants Scheme is in its seventh year of providing grants and it has been a challenge since March 2020. To reflect this, the grants scheme has been amended to meet the changing landscape. Firstly, a decision was made to extend the delivery deadline for the 2020-21 grants from April 2021 to March 2022, allowing more time to deliver some projects safely and without certain restrictions. Secondly, the 2021-22 launch was delayed till May 2021 to ensure projects could be delivered as Covid restrictions started to be lifted. There was £10,000 available under this scheme. For the first time the BDC Equality Small Grants Scheme was underspent with six organisations/groups successfully receiving a grant. Feedback on those who were successful is available on our [website](#).

6.7.2 For this year, in addition to the Equality Small Grant Scheme, there was another opportunity to apply for a larger grant. The Community Grants Scheme 2021/22 was aimed at larger voluntary, charitable or

Appendix 1

community organisation/group or if the project needed a bigger grant with up to £5,000 available per project. The Community Grants Scheme replaced the New Home Bonus Community Grants Scheme but followed the principles of the original scheme. There was £80,000 available under this scheme.

6.8 Community Safety

6.8.1 The North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership brings together Safer Bromsgrove, Safer Redditch, and Safer Wyre Forest. The Partnership delivers a range of community safety initiatives and works with agencies and communities to achieve the Partnership's vision of keeping "North Worcestershire a safer place to live, work and visit".

6.8.2 During 2020-2021, we continued to work together to reduce crime, the fear of crime, and disorder and anti-social behaviour that affect our local communities to help them to feel safe where they live, by delivering the following programmes-

- The Respect Programme - Community safety awareness sessions as part of school PHSE session on subjects such as recognising and reporting hate crime, understanding healthy relationships/domestic abuse, the dangers of substance misuse and promoting respect and community responsibility.
- The Empowering Young People Programme - Provides an eleven-week programme of arts and crafts, issue-based activities and interactive workshops addressing issues such as life skills, confidence building and self-esteem work.
- Youth Outreach and Detached Youth Work - provides a team of trained, outreach/detached youth workers who engage with and support young people involved in or at-risk of becoming involved in on-street ASB.
- Nominated Neighbour Scheme – The scheme aims to protect vulnerable residents from doorstep crime and rogue trader offences, continues to be a successful local initiative.
- Black Lives Matter awareness campaign - The Black Lives Matter awareness campaign ran through the whole of February 2021 coinciding with America's Black History Month. The aim of the campaign was to dedicate online space for local voices to be heard and to raise awareness about systemic racism.

6.9 Shopmobility

6.9.1 Bromsgrove Shopmobility remains open on reduced hours as current demand is low. A survey was launched in 2021 to understand the demand and the need for the service. Work is being carried out to analyse these outcomes.

6.10 Community Transport

6.10.1 In 2021, Bromsgrove District Council selected local charity BARN (Bromsgrove and Redditch Network) to run the 'BURT' community transport service. BURT, which stands for Bromsgrove Urban and Rural Transport, has been Bromsgrove District's local community transport minibus service since 2009. BARN has run BURT since 2017 and can now continue to run it for five more years, after winning the latest tender from the district council.

6.10.2 The service helps residents of the district who are unable to make essential journeys by conventional transport, either because of personal mobility or disability difficulties, or because suitable public transport is not available. The BURT minibus is adapted for wheelchair users and helps people get to fitness classes, life-after-stroke sessions, dementia clubs, social activities and friendship groups, and more, or sometimes just to the shops. A new BURT bus was brought into service in 2018 with help from community fundraisers.

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6.11 Interpreting and Translation

6.11.1 Throughout 2021 the Council has continued to provide interpreting and translation services. In nearly all cases interpreting has taken place via telephone or video call rather than face to face. This has ensured the service can continue safely and has enabled a small cost saving for the council. The service is promoted internally to all services and managed within the Policy Team.

6.12 Employee Support

6.12.1 This year has been another challenging year for our employees with the pressures Covid has brought and we have continued to provide support and advice to our employees.

6.12.2 We provide an employee assistance programme which is available to all staff and their immediate family members. This covers everything from health and wellbeing, finances, caring for the elderly, concerns at work, bereavement support etc. Staff can use this to access advice and support on just about anything including counselling sessions. There is also more tailored support available on an individual basis through HR and Occupational Health and Phone a Friend.

6.12.3 Mental Health Awareness has continued to be an important message that the council promotes. Support is provided via the employee assistance programme, and we are undertaking a wide programme of Mental Health Awareness training for all staff and managers and are developing in-house Mental Health First Aiders. We actively take part in 'Time to Talk' and found new ways to engage rather than face to face including Tea and Talk on Teams, links to information and staff room Teams meet ups.

6.12.4 With more of a focus on suicide prevention, actions have focused on internal communications, support and training to managers and all staff, promoting World Mental Health Day.

6.12.5 The Health and Wellbeing Group started in April 2020 in response to issues around health and wellbeing, including mental health support, particularly in relation to circumstances around the Covid pandemic. The group includes representatives from Human Resources, Health & Safety, Trade Union, and Communications. The group, in collaboration with the Culture Work Group, Health & Safety Committee, Corporate Management Team and 4th Tier Managers, discussed and undertaken a range of areas of work including:

- Mental Health First Aid Training
- Regular communications and articles to staff
- Flu vaccination programme
- Well-being Week events (w/c 4th October 2021)
- Staff Space set up
- Managing Anxiety sessions (July 2021) to support those returning to the office
- Refresh/relaunch Phone A Friend Scheme
- Reminders for staff to complete DSE Assessment to ensure they can work comfortably at home
- 'Who Are We' – videos of staff sharing what job they do

6.12.6 The pandemic, the sudden move to remote working for many of our staff, and the challenge of working out in the community during the pandemic has affected us all. In addition to this, we are all constantly dealing with issues in the workplace and trying to deliver the services that our customers want and need during a period of ongoing uncertainty. This has created a range of pressures and the council wanted to understand these concerns by hearing from all staff. To enable employees to have their say to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) a Staff Survey was promoted to all staff from 22nd November to 12th December. Results are currently being considered by management.

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6.12.7 Chief Executive Q and A sessions have continued to be delivered via Teams, every month, providing an opportunity to hear the latest news from the Chief Executive and ask questions. The sessions are also recorded to enable those to catch up. This continues to have a good attendance from staff across the council and a way of sharing information and keeping in contact.

7 Next Steps

7.1 The Council will shortly be adopting its new Equality Strategy 2022 to 2026. It will set out the direction of equality work for the next four years and ensure the Council is meeting the Specific Duty under the Equality Act of preparing and publishing equality objectives at least every four years. Once adopted it will be made available on our website.

Appendix A - Office for National Statistics 2011 Census figures for Bromsgrove District

Age	Figures	%
All categories: Age	93,637	
Age 0 to 4	4,822	5.15%
Age 5 to 7	3,008	3.21%
Age 8 to 9	1,912	2.04%
Age 10 to 14	5,529	5.90%
Age 15	1,259	1.34%
Age 16 to 17	2,489	2.66%
Age 18 to 19	2,004	2.14%
Age 20 to 24	4,677	4.99%
Age 25 to 29	4,250	4.54%
Age 30 to 44	17,643	18.84%
Age 45 to 59	20,452	21.84%
Age 60 to 64	6,457	6.90%
Age 65 to 74	9,835	10.50%

Disability	Figures	%
Total population	93,637	
Claiming DLA	3510	3.75%
Day-to-day activities limited a lot	7,585	8.10%
Day-to-day activities limited a little	8,863	9.47%
Day-to-day activities not limited	77,189	82.43%
Day-to-day activities limited a lot: Age 16 to 64	2,500	2.67%
Day-to-day activities limited a little: Age 16 to 64	3,690	3.94%

Sex	Figures	%
All categories: Sex	93,637	
Males	46,300	49.45%
Females	47,337	50.55%

Religion/Belief	Figures	%
All categories: Religion	93,637	
Christian	64,508	68.89%
Buddhist	191	0.20%
Hindu	323	0.34%
Jewish	91	0.10%
Muslim	502	0.54%
Sikh	609	0.65%
Other religion	282	0.30%
No religion	20,645	22.05%
Religion not stated	6,486	6.93%

Reported Health	Figures	%
Total population	93,637	
Very good health	45,932	49.05%
Good health	31,306	33.43%
Fair health	11,885	12.69%
Bad health	3,484	3.72%
Very bad health	1,030	1.10%

Ethnicity	Figures	%
All categories: Ethnic group	93,637	
White: English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British	87,640	93.60%
White: Irish	904	0.97%
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveler	75	0.08%
White: Other White	1,077	1.15%
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black Caribbean	631	0.67%
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black African	82	0.09%
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Asian	446	0.48%
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed	237	0.25%
Asian/Asian British: Indian	1,078	1.15%
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	221	0.24%
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	39	0.04%
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	309	0.33%
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	278	0.30%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	110	0.12%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	267	0.29%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black	67	0.07%
Other ethnic group: Arab	53	0.06%

Country of birth	Figures	%
All categories: Country of birth	84,214	
England	75,499	89.65%
Northern Ireland	274	0.33%
Scotland	752	0.89%
Wales	990	1.18%
United Kingdom not otherwise specified	1	0.00%
Ireland	525	0.62%
Other EU: Member countries in March 2001	530	0.63%
Other EU: Accession countries April 2001 to March 2011	2,581	3.06%
Other countries	3,062	3.64%

Country of origin	Figures	%
All categories: Country of birth	93,637	
England	87,509	93.46%
Northern Ireland	277	0.30%
Scotland	827	0.88%
Wales	1,285	1.37%
United Kingdom not otherwise specified	2	0.00%
Ireland	628	0.67%
Other EU: Member countries in March 2001	534	0.57%
Other EU: Accession countries April 01 to March 11	333	0.36%
Other countries	2,242	2.39%

Dependents in household	Figures	%
All households	38,290	
Dependent children in household: All ages	169	0.44%
Dependent children in household: Age 0 to 4	265	0.69%
One person in household with a long-term health problem or disability: With dependent children	232	0.61%
One person in household with a long-term health problem or disability: No dependent children	204	0.53%

Caring responsibilities	Figures	%
Total population	93,637	
Provides no unpaid care	82,436	88.04%
Provides 1 to 19 hours unpaid care a week	7,723	8.25%
Provides 20 to 49 hours unpaid care a week	1,304	1.39%
Provides 50 or more hours unpaid care a week	2,174	2.32%

Employment	Figures	%
All households	93,637	
No. adults in employment in household: With dependent children	310	0.81%
No. adults in employment in household: No dependent children	181	0.47%

Main Language – over 80 reported	Figures	%
All Usual Residents Aged 3 and over	90,861	
English (English or Welsh if in Wales)	89,668	98.69%
Other European Language (EU)	335	0.37%
South Asian Language	269	0.30%
East Asian Language	262	0.29%
East Asian Language; All Other Chinese	135	0.15%
South Asian Language; Panjabi	125	0.14%
Other European Language (EU); Polish	113	0.12%
Other European Language (EU); German	75	0.08%
Russian	66	0.07%

Household Language	Figures	%
All categories: English as a household language	38,290	
All people aged 16 and over in household have English as a main language	37,727	98.53%
At least one but not all people aged 16 and over in household have English as a main language	360	0.94%
No people aged 16 and over in household but at least one person aged 3 to 15 has English as a main language	37	0.10%
No people in household have English as a main language	166	0.43%

Marital status	Figures	%
All categories: Marital and civil partnership status	77,107	
Single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership)	20,703	26.85%
Married	41,952	54.41%
In a registered same-sex civil partnership	101	0.13%
Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a same-sex civil partnership)	1,661	2.15%
Divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	6,598	8.56%
Widowed or surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership	6,092	7.90%

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

23RD FEBRUARY 2022, AT 3.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors K.J. May (Leader), G. N. Denaro (Deputy Leader),
M. A. Sherrey, P.L. Thomas and M. Thompson

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, J Howse, Carpenter, Mrs. C. Felton,
Ms. D. Poole, Mrs. J. Bayley-Hill and J Gresham

57/21 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Shirley Webb.

58/21 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

59/21 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 16TH FEBRUARY 2022 (TO FOLLOW)**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 16th February 2022 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 16th February 2022 be approved as a true and correct record.

60/21 **CONSIDERATION OF ANY RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 15TH FEBRUARY 2022 (TO FOLLOW)**

Cabinet was informed that no recommendations had been made at the latest meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 15th February 2022.

61/21 **PAY POLICY 2022 - 2023**

The Head of Business Transformation, Organisational Development and Digital Strategy presented the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23. Cabinet was informed that the Council was required to agree a Pay Policy Statement by 31st March every year. The Pay Policy Statement detailed the remuneration for the lowest paid staff, the remuneration for the highest paid staff and the differences between the two. Information was also provided in the report about how the Council calculated the salaries that should be paid to staff employed at different levels in the organisation.

During consideration of this item, questions were raised about the content of the report and whether there had been any changes to pay levels over the preceding 12-month period. Officers confirmed that no changes had been made.

RECOMMENDED that the Pay Policy be approved.

62/21

2022/23 BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (INCLUDING CAPITAL PROGRAMME)

The Executive Director of Resources presented the 2022/23 Budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2022/23 to 2024/25 for Cabinet's consideration. The report detailed the proposed content for the Council's budget in the 2022/23 financial year together with the authority's plans for the full three-year period of the MTFP. The format of the report had been updated to improve clarity. The Finance and Budget Working Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Board had both pre-scrutinised the draft budget proposals but had not made any recommendations on the content of the budget or MTFP.

The 2022/23 budget was robust and balanced. However, the balance had only been achieved using funding from the Council's balances. Officers were anticipating that, without action, the Council's balances would fall below the minimum level considered acceptable by the Council's Section 151 Officer by 2024/25. Therefore, action would need to be taken to ensure that the Council's budget remained sustainable moving forward.

The 2022/23 budget and the MTFP 2022/23 to 2024/25 had been developed in a challenging financial context for local government. There was also unprecedented uncertainty about the future funding arrangements for Councils.

There were various factors impacting on the budget position. This included:

- Inflation, which was higher than in previous years.
- Pay inflation, which was anticipated to be approximately 2 per cent per annum over the period of the plan.
- Budget bids, which placed pressure on the budget.
- Pressures arising from an anticipated reduction in income from car parking fees due to a decline in footfall during the Covid-19 pandemic. The decision not to increase fees for car parking charges would also impact on income from this source.
- The transfer of £382,000 from earmarked reserves to help balance the budget.
- A proposed increase of £5 in Council Tax per year.

Following the presentation of the report, Members thanked Officers for their hard work in preparing the budget. It was acknowledged that this

had occurred at a time when there were significant challenges faced by the Financial Services team.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve

1) the overall net general fund revenue budgets of:

2022/23:	£12.069m
2023/24:	£11.947m
2024/25:	£12.076m

2) the unavoidable costs:

2022/23:	£0.250m
2023/24:	£0.016m
2024/25:	£0.016m

3) the Revenue Bids:

2022/23:	£0.148m
2023/24:	£0.107m
2024/25:	£0.086m

4) the Identified Savings:

2022/23:	£0.176m
2023/24:	£0.176m
2024/25:	£0.176m

5) an increase of the Council Tax per Band D equivalent of £5 for 2022/23;

6) the transfer from General Fund Balances of £0.411m for 2022/23;

7) the planned reallocation of £0.382m from Earmarked reserves to General Fund Balances;

8) the General Fund capital programme:

2022/23:	£2.410m
2023/24:	£1.390m
2024/25:	£1.946m

and that Council **NOTE**:

1) the 2020/21 Capital Outturn; and

2) the Chief Financial Officer's (CFO) Opinion on Estimates and Reserve Levels.

63/21

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTIONS 2022/23 (REPORT TO FOLLOW)

The Executive Director of Resources presented the Council Tax Resolutions 2022/23 for Members' consideration. The content of the report was fairly technical. Officers had incorporated information that had been received from precepting organisations, alongside the contribution required for Bromsgrove District Council, when calculating the overall figures.

During consideration of this item, Officers explained that initially the Council Tax Resolutions report 2021/22 had been released in error for consideration at the meeting. This error had been noticed at an early stage and the correct Council Tax Resolutions for 2022/23 had subsequently been issued.

RESOLVED to note that at a Cabinet meeting held on 19th January 2022 Members approved the calculated Council Tax Base 2022/23 as:

- (a) for the whole Council area as 37,511.05 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and
- (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates the amounts as shown in Column 4 of the attached **Schedule 1**.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve

- 1) the calculation for the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2022/23 (excluding Parish precepts) as **£8,937,309.38**;
- 2) the following amounts be calculated for the year 2022/23 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - (a) £43,846,702 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act (taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils) (*i.e.*, *Gross expenditure*);
 - (b) £33,847,101 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act. (*i.e.*, *Gross income*);
 - (c) £9,999,601 being the amount by which the aggregate of 1.2.2(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 1.2.2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act);

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- (d) £266.58 being the amount at 1.2.2 (c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1.1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts);
- (e) £1,071,812 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act (as per the attached **Schedule 3**);
- (f) £238.00 being the amount at 1.2.2 (d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 1.2.2 (e) above by Item T (1.1 (a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates;
- (g) The amounts shown in Column 3 of **Schedule 1**. These are the basic amounts of the council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of the Council's area shown in Column 1 of the schedule respectively to which special items relate, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act. (District and Parish combined at Band D);
- (h) The amounts shown in Column 5 of **Schedule 1** being the amount given by multiplying the amounts at 2.2.2(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands;
- 3) It be noted that for the year 2022/23, Worcestershire County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia and Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwelling in the Council's area as indicated below:

	Valuation Bands							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Worcestershire County Council	931.19	1,086.38	1,241.58	1,396.78	1,707.18	2,017.57	2,327.97	2,793.56
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	166.44	194.18	221.92	249.66	305.14	360.62	416.10	499.32
Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority	59.60	69.53	79.47	89.40	109.27	129.13	149.00	178.80

- 4) having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 1.2.2(h) and 1.2.3 above, that Bromsgrove District Council in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby sets the amounts shown in **Schedule 2** as the amounts of Council Tax for 2022/23. for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings:

- 5) the Executive Director Finance & Resources be authorised to make payments under Section 90(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the Collection Fund by ten equal instalments between April 2022 to March 2023 as detailed below:

	Precept	Deficit on Collection Fund	Total to pay
	£	£	£
Worcestershire County Council	52,394,684.00	991,717.00	53,386,401.00
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	9,365,008.74	177,384.00	9,542,392.74
Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority	3,353,491.52	65,913.06	3,419,404.58

- 6) the Executive Director Finance & Resources be authorised to make transfers under Section 97 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the Collection Fund to the General Fund the sum of £10,171,181 being the Council's own demand on the Collection Fund (£8,927,789.21) and Parish Precepts (£1,071,812) and the distribution of the Deficit on the Collection Fund (£171,580);

- 7) the Executive Director Finance & Resources be authorised to make payments from the General Fund to Parish Councils the sums listed on **Schedule 3** by two equal instalment on 1 April 2022 and 1 October 2022 in respect of the precept levied on the Council;

- 8) the above resolutions to be signed by the Chief Executive for use in legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court for the recovery of unpaid Council Taxes;

- 9) notices of the making of the said Council Taxes signed by the Chief Executive are given by advertisement in the local press under Section 38(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992;

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- 10) authority be delegated to the Head of Finance and Customer Services (Interim S151) following consultation with the finance portfolio holder to amend the resolution should the Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority Service not approve the estimated figure that is being used in this report. This is due to the Hereford and Worcester Authority Service having their approval meeting after this resolution report has been brought to Council.

The meeting closed at 3.12 p.m.

Chairman

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

30TH MARCH 2022, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors K.J. May (Leader), G. N. Denaro (Deputy Leader), M. A. Sherrey, P.L. Thomas, M. Thompson and S. A. Webb

Officers in attendance: Mrs. S. Hanley and Mrs P. Ross

Mr. K. Dicks, Mr J. Howse, Mrs. C. Felton, Ms. D. Poole, Mr. G. Revans, Mr. K. Hirons and Mrs J. Gresham (via Microsoft Teams)

Observers: Ms. E. Payne (via Microsoft Teams)

64/21 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

65/21 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

66/21 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 23RD FEBRUARY 2022**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 23rd February 2022 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 23rd February 2022 be approved as a true and correct record.

67/21 **MINUTES FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD MEETING HELD ON 15TH FEBRUARY 2022**

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, Councillor C. Hotham, presented the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 15th February 2022, and in doing so the Cabinet was informed that since the meeting of the Board things had moved forward and that items had been

discussed and agreed. It was noted that there were no recommendations from the Board in the minutes.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held 15th February 2022, be noted.

68/21

LAND DRAINAGE WATERCOURSE MAINTENANCE OPERATION

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Community Safety presented a report on Land Drainage Maintenance Operations. The report set out to present a proactive schedule of works for the future which would be undertaken by an external contractor. The first year of this maintenance schedule was viewed as a pilot scheme, where there was likely to be more emphasis on inspections, allowing also for prioritisation of any maintenance work which may be required, this could be refined over time. Members were advised that this report was welcomed in order to help mitigate future flooding events in the district.

During consideration of this item, Councillor C. Hotham, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, explained that the report had been pre-scrutinised at a recent meeting of the Board. Some concerns had been raised at this meeting regarding the use of an external contractor. However overall, it was felt by the Board this report provided a positive step forward in the maintenance of watercourses within the district.

Members questioned the issue of Himalayan Balsam, which was an invasive non-native plant and could be found in some of the watercourses, and whether removal would still take place this year, during the recommended period between March and June. Cabinet was informed that a tender process was currently being undertaken to procure an external contractor and it might be possible to begin the removal process of Himalayan Balsam if the contract was in place prior to the end of the Himalayan Balsam removal season in June.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **an additional budget of £45k for Land Drainage – Watercourse Maintenance Operations be included in the general fund for the 2022/2023 financial year; and**
- 2) **a budget of £45k for Land Drainage – Watercourse Maintenance Operations be included in the Medium Term Financial Plan for future years.**

69/21

EQUALITY STRATEGY 2022-2026

The Head of Business Transformation, Organisational Development and Digital Strategy presented the Equality Strategy 2022-2026. Members were advised that the Equality Strategy had been updated to support the organisation over the next 4 years and included information on equality monitoring, procurement and commissioning and employment policies.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance welcomed this report and thanked officers for their hard work in such a complex area.

RECOMMENDED that the Equality Strategy 2022-2026 as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be endorsed by Council.

70/21

EQUALITY ANNUAL REPORT 2021

The Head of Business Transformation, Organisational Development and Digital Strategy presented the Equality Annual report 2021 for Cabinet's consideration. It was reported to Members that this was the first report of its kind to be considered. The report was carried out a result of the Equalities Task Group investigation which had been conducted during 2020-2021.

It was stated that the report set out to inform Members of the progress on the equality agenda covering the period January 2021 to December 2021. The report outlined the key achievements and progress in 2021, undertaken by the Council, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Cabinet was informed that Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) and partnership working had been successful during this time and that a number of community events had taken place within the district. The report also highlighted the initiatives that had taken place within Council operations to provide employee support, which had included; Mental Health Awareness training, Time to Talk and the establishment of a Health and Wellbeing Group.

During consideration of this item, Councillor C. Hotham, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, explained that the report had been pre-scrutinised at a recent meeting of the Board and the report had been well-received by all Board Members.

In proposing the recommendation, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance welcomed this report and stated that it was hugely

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encouraging to see so much work had been and was being undertaken by officers in this area.

RECOMMENDED that the Equality Annual Report 2021 be endorsed.

The meeting closed at 6.20 p.m.

Chairman

Bromsgrove District Council – 20th April 2022 Member Questions

**1. From Councillor S. Robinson
Question for the Leader**

“Do you agree with me that the levelling up funds awarded to Bromsgrove should stay in Bromsgrove and will you lobby Worcestershire County Council to invest the proceeds from the sale of the former Bromsgrove Library and fire station site into regenerating Bromsgrove High Street?”

**2. From Councillor R. Hunter
Question for the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and
Community Safety**

“Can you confirm what your plans are for the Stourbridge Road car park now that it is being decommissioned as a covid testing centre and what the timescales will be for returning the site to a car park?”

**3. From Councillor J. King
Question for the Leader**

“What are your plans for regenerating the vacant plot of land on School Drive formerly occupied by the Sports Hall? Will you commit to putting it back in to use as a public space for the benefit of the local community and explore whether it could also make a contribution to enhancing the natural environment?”

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