



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

MONDAY 17TH OCTOBER 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. Tributes to Her Royal Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, including observing a period of silence in her memory**
- 2. To receive apologies for absence**
- 3. 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.

4. **To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 20th July 2022** (Pages 1 - 16)
5. **To receive any announcements from the Chairman and/or Head of Paid Service**
6. **To receive any announcements from the Leader**
7. **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.

8. **Urgent Decisions** (Pages 17 - 20)
9. **To receive and consider a report from the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance** (Pages 21 - 32)

Up to 30 minutes is allowed for this item; no longer than 10 minutes for presentation of the report and then up to 3 minutes for each question to be put and answered.

10. **Outside Bodies**

Council is invited to make nominations to the following Outside Body appointments:

- Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Partnership Assembly
- Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board (Nominations are required for both a lead Member and a named substitute).

11. **Recommendations from the Cabinet** (Pages 33 - 34)

To consider the recommendations from the meetings of the Cabinet held on 27th July and 12th October 2022.

The recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 27th July 2022 have been attached. The recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 12th October 2022 will follow in a supplementary pack.

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

- (i) UK Shared Prosperity Fund (Pages 35 - 76)

(ii) Budget Framework Finance and Performance Quarter 1 Monitoring Report (Pages 77 - 116)

13. **To note the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 27th July and 12th October 2022** (Pages 117 - 120)

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 27th July 2022 have been attached to the main agenda. The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet scheduled to take place on 12th October 2022 will follow in a supplementary pack.

14. **Questions on Notice**

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 30 minutes is allocated for the asking and answering of questions at this meeting. This may be extended at the discretion of the Chairman with the agreement of the majority of those present.

The Questions will be published in a supplementary pack.

15. **Motions on Notice**

A period of up to an hour and a half is allocated to consider the motions on notice at this meeting. This may only be extended with the agreement of the Council.

The Motions will be published in a supplementary pack.

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

6th October 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.

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 a Committee if they have 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.

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 AT THE MEETING

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. 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 a Committee if they have 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 and for any such items.



INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

Access to Information

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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

20TH JULY 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, A. B. L. English, S. G. Hession, C.A. Hotham, R. J. Hunter, 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 and S. A. Webb

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mr P. Carpenter, Ms. C. Flanagan and Mrs. J. Bayley-Hill

31\22 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors J. Till, K. Van Der Plank and P. Whittaker.

32\22 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors K. May and M. Sherrey declared other disclosable interests in Minute Item No. 41/22 – Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 6th July 2022 - in their capacity as the Councillors for Belbroughton and Romsley ward. This declaration was made in relation to Cabinet's consideration of the nomination of Romsley Methodist Church as an asset of community value. They both remained present during consideration of the minutes of the Cabinet meeting.

33\22 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 22ND JUNE 2022**

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 22nd June 2022 were submitted.

During consideration of the minutes of the previous meeting of Council, the suggestion was made that the word “mitigate” should have been used rather than the word “reduce” in relation to decreasing costs by letting out space to external organisations at Parkside.

RESOLVED that, subject to the amendment detailed in the preamble above, the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 22nd June 2022 be approved as a true and correct record.

34\22 **TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND/OR HEAD OF PAID SERVICE**

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

35\22 **TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE LEADER**

There were no announcements from the Leader at the meeting.

36\22 **TO RECEIVE COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no comments, questions or petitions from the public for consideration at this meeting.

37\22 **URGENT DECISIONS**

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

38\22 **CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Members noted nominations of substitute Members from the Bromsgrove Independent and Liberal Democrat Groups to various Committees. Members were advised to note that Councillor C. Hotham was a Member, rather than a substitute Member, of the Licensing Committee.

39\22 **TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER A REPORT FROM THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING AND HEALTH AND WELL BEING**

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health and Well Being presented an annual report which outlined the work that had been undertaken within the remit of her portfolio over the preceding 12 months.

Council was informed that the portfolio covered a range of areas that involved the Council working closely with many partner organisations. For example, the Sports Development team had worked closely with NHS bodies in respect of the provision of new exercise classes and on social prescribing. The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health and Well Being expressed her gratitude to the Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) for their provision of office space free of charge for initiatives, such as St Basil's Bistro, which helped young people develop healthy cooking skills. The Bromsgrove Partnership Manager had an integral role in terms of managing the Council's working relationship and joint activities with partner organisations and she was thanked for her hard work.

A Dementia Meeting service was available in the District for residents with dementia and their family members to attend. Support was made

available to people with dementia and their carers at these meetings. The example of a gentleman with dementia who had attended the service and had always enjoyed the refreshments was highlighted as a positive example of the outcomes of this work.

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

- The work that was undertaken by partner organisations in the District, particularly the contributions from Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations, which helped to address issues experienced by residents in respect of their health and well being.
- The activities that had been delivered for the social prescribing model of health service delivery and the extent to which communities located outside of the Bromsgrove Primary Care Network (PCN) benefited from this work. Members commented that GP practices in locations, such as Alvechurch and Wythall, were not in the Bromsgrove PCN. The Leader advised that this issue had been raised at meetings of the Bromsgrove Partnership Board where it had been noted that 25 per cent of the population in the District were not covered by the Bromsgrove PCN.
- The supported accommodation available to Bromsgrove residents. Council was informed that BDHT provided supported accommodation to residents where needed.
- The new offer of a free Lifeline Service for six weeks and the arrangement in place should customers be unable to pay for this service at the end of that trial period. The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health and Well Being explained that discussions would be held with the customers in an attempt to provide a solution and Members were advised that further information on this subject would be provided after the meeting.
- The extent to which bed and breakfast accommodation was used to house people at risk of homelessness in the District. Council was advised that there was emergency bed and breakfast accommodation available on standby in case it needed to be used. Members were advised that further information would be provided after the meeting about the number of times this had had to be used in the preceding two-year period.
- The number of houses in large developments that needed to be social housing and the extent to which sufficient numbers of social houses were being built in the District.
- The numbers of First Homes that were in the process of being developed and whether they should be included in the figures for the numbers of affordable homes developed in the District.
- The extent to which First Homes could be classified as affordable housing if buyers were offered a 30 per cent discount on the purchase price, particularly if the average house price in the District was in excess of £300,000. Members were advised that further information would be provided about First Homes outside the meeting.

- The number of new energy efficient homes that were in the process of being developed in the District. Members were informed that there would be 61 properties developed at the Burcot Lane site. The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health and Well Being undertook to check whether any further such homes were planned for development.
- The potential for at least one of the properties developed at the Burcot Lane site to be allocated to student housing. The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health and Well Being explained that this would be discussed with representatives of Worcestershire County Council further.
- The financial costs to the Council involved in upgrading the Council's Lifeline system from an analogue to a digital system. Members were informed that further information on this subject would be provided after the meeting.
- The housing and support provided to victims of domestic abuse in the District. Council was advised that the Council had legal duties in relation to victims of domestic abuse. Safe houses were provided both locally and through Worcestershire County Council. The authority also had close working links with Women's Aid.
- The fact that both women and men could be victims of domestic abuse as could their children.
- The need for the availability of support services to victims of domestic abuse to be communicated effectively, including the Ask for Angela service.
- The potential for children and young people to be educated about healthy relationships and domestic abuse.
- The extent to which an audit had been undertaken of the number of locations in the District where victims of domestic abuse could enquire about the Ask for Angela service. Council was informed that further information on this subject would be provided after the meeting.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

40\22

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET

The Chairman advised that a recommendation had been made at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 7th July 2022, which had been highlighted for Council's consideration.

Bromsgrove and Redditch Duty to Co-operate

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services presented a report on the subject of Bromsgrove District Council's duty to co-operate with Redditch Borough Council. Members were advised that this report had been considered at a recent meeting of the Strategic Planning Steering Group (SPSG), to which all Members had been invited.

Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council had both commissioned Housing and Economic Development Needs

Assessments (HEDNAs) to review housing needs moving forward. This had identified that housing needs for Redditch Borough had changed since a previous assessment was undertaken and there was no longer a need for so many houses to be developed in the Borough. For this reason, houses that had been due to be developed in Bromsgrove District to meet housing needs in the Borough were no longer required by Redditch and Redditch Borough Council had agreed to return these housing figures to Bromsgrove. In this context, Bromsgrove District Council could determine how these houses should be allocated.

Bromsgrove District Council did not have a shared Local Plan with Redditch Borough Council and the two authorities' Local Plans were being developed separately. However, there was a need for the two Councils to continue to work closely together to ensure that there was a shared understanding about local housing needs. The two Councils could also work together on a shared approach in response to the housing needs of the wider Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Areas (GBBCHMA). The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) helped to clarify the Councils' shared understanding on these points.

Members subsequently discussed the content of the report in detail and in doing so questioned the number of houses that had originally been due to be developed in Bromsgrove District to meet the previous housing needs in Redditch Borough. Council was advised that this had involved the development of 2,241 houses in Bromsgrove District.

Reference was made to the MOU and the extent to which, by co-operating with Redditch Borough Council, there was a risk that Bromsgrove District Council would be expected to meet requirements for Redditch Borough Council to provide housing for the GBBCHMA. The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services clarified that the MOU simply required the two authorities to co-operate. There was a legal requirement on Councils, in terms of a duty to co-operate and the MOU enabled the Council to meet this legal obligation.

Concerns were raised about the Council's shared service arrangements with Redditch Borough Council and the implications that this might have in respect of meeting the needs of Bromsgrove residents. In addition, concerns were raised about the speed with which the Council was progressing with work on a strategic transport assessment and the extent to which this would inform work on the Local Plan. Members were informed that two separate groups of officers had worked on the Local Plans for Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council respectively. Furthermore, work remained ongoing in respect of the strategic transport assessment and this would inform the content of the next version of the Local Plan.

Members discussed the need for more social and affordable housing to be developed in Bromsgrove District. Concerns were raised about the locations in which many new housing developments were occurring and

the suggestion was made that further consideration needed to be given to the location and mix of housing in larger developments moving forward.

Council was advised that a lot of work continued to take place in respect of preparing the Council's new Local Plan. Members would have an opportunity to contribute to this process, as the various elements of the plan would be discussed at meetings of the SPSG, to which all Members were invited. Members were therefore urged to attend future meetings of the SPSG.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor P. Thomas and seconded by Councillor M. Thompson.

RESOLVED that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council be agreed.

41\22

TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 6TH JULY 2022

The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on Wednesday 6th July 2022 were noted.

(Prior to consideration of this item, Councillors K. May and M. Sherrey declared other disclosable interests in their capacity as the Councillors for Belbroughton and Romsley ward. This declaration was made in relation to Cabinet's consideration of the nomination of Romsley Methodist Church as an asset of community value. They both remained present during consideration of the minutes of the Cabinet meeting.)

42\22

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The Chairman explained that seven Questions on Notice had been received for the meeting and would be considered in the order in which they had been submitted. A maximum of 15 minutes was allocated to consideration of these questions and the answers provided and there were no supplementary questions.

Question submitted by Councillor A. English

"Many millions of pounds have been spent on the new Bromsgrove railway station. However, there has been a significant reduction in service running south since its construction and now recent timetable changes mean delays for those wanting to travel from Worcester to Barnt Green, Alvechurch and Redditch. Does the Leader share my disappointment at the apparent downgrading of Bromsgrove station and what actions has the leader taken to improve services going south and to instigate a return of the timely Barnt Green and Alvechurch connection?"

The Leader responded by commenting that it was disappointing that the services mentioned had suffered reductions in recent timetable changes. This was a matter for the West Midlands Rail Executive and the Train Operating Companies to address.

Council was asked to note that through the County Council, the matter of the timetable changes had been raised with the West Midlands Rail Executive. This included the matter of the connectivity with the services from Worcester through Bromsgrove onto the Redditch branch of the Cross City Line. It had also been raised by the Rail User Groups. Furthermore, the Leader was aware that Worcestershire County Council was actively engaged with promoting improved services in Worcestershire through various channels including the rail industry bodies on which they were represented.

Members could raise concerns regarding services directly with the Train Operating Companies and, where appropriate, the West Midlands Rail Executive.

Question submitted by Councillor H. Rone-Clarke

"Many residents are concerned about the number of cases reported to the RSPCA each year of pets being given as prizes via fairgrounds, social media and other channels in England. This issue, we know, predominantly concerns goldfish. Further, many cases of pets being given as prizes may go unreported each year.

Will the leader commit to banning outright, the giving of live animals as prizes, in any form, on Bromsgrove District Council land and write to the UK Government, urging an outright ban on the giving of live animals as prizes on both public and private land?"

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Cultural Services and Climate Change responded by explaining that he had raised a similar issue in a Motion considered at a Council meeting in 2016. This Motion, which had proposed that pets should be banned as prizes, had been agreed by Council. This approach had subsequently been enshrined in the Council's Animal Welfare Policy. At paragraph 4.0 of this policy, it was stated that the Council prohibited circuses or events who hired Council land or used the authority's premises as a venue, to use animals, birds or fish as prizes.

Question submitted by Councillor P. McDonald

"Will this Council abide by the Equalities Act making sure the less able can gain access to Council Meetings? In light of the fact the entrance to the building have large steps."

The Leader explained that Parkside was a listed building. When it was converted from a school to an office, provisions were added to satisfy

accessibility under Approved Document Part M. The Building Control Officer had assessed the provision at Parkside and confirmed that:

- The main entrance to Parkside was via the library / customer service entrance. Once past the customer service area there was a lift for the change of levels which enabled people to access the offices and meeting rooms on the ground floor. There was also a lift to the first floor.
- There was disabled ramp access to the side of the Parkside Hall and this afforded access to the Council Chamber.
- The caretakers' entrance was not a public entrance. However, those using this entrance for the ceremony room with walking aids would be directed to the main entrance, or the next door along (towards the car park entrance on Stourbridge Road), which had a level approach. Anyone attending the ceremony room could access this from the rear elevation where the ceremony garden and the accessible car park spaces were located.
- The caretakers' entrance was not allowed a permanent ramp access due to the listed building status. Although a moveable ramp could be installed, this was deemed not to be necessary as the main access and the other two doors on the front and rear elevation provided a level access approach. The caretakers' door was for staff and deliveries only.
- The remaining doors with steps on the elevations were fire escapes or doors to offices, which the public could not access.

Question submitted by Councillor R. Hunter

"As the local authority with responsibility for the provision of leisure services, will Bromsgrove District Council do everything in its power to ensure leisure facilities are maintained continuously at the Ryland Centre?"

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Cultural Services and Climate Change advised that this was an important issue that needed to be resolved to the benefit of the local community. However, Members were asked to note that the Council did not have any power in this regard.

Question submitted by Councillor J. King

"Will you consider the feasibility of demanding Passivhaus or zero carbon homes on all major new developments?"

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services advised that the Local Plan Review would include a strategic policy on addressing Climate Change through new developments in the District. This would require residential developments to be built to higher environmental standards than the current Local Plan. This policy would be presented to the SPSG in due course.

The Government's Future Homes Standard would require all new build homes to be future proofed with low carbon heating and increased levels of energy efficiency, including higher standards of insulation. The Government also proposed an interim uplift to Building Regulations to make sure homes emitted less carbon, protected against over-heating and improved ventilation. This came into force in June 2022.

It was important to note that the draft policy requirements would need to be subject to viability assessments to ensure that they were deliverable. The aim of viability assessments was to test all of the plan's policy requirements, such as renewables and energy efficiency; affordable housing; and physical and social infrastructure. This testing ensured that new developments would remain viable and therefore deliver the plan's proposals. Because of the need to balance policy requirements with viability and deliverability considerations as well as the Government's proposals for the mandatory Future Homes Standards, the Council was not looking to test the specific criteria of Passivhaus. However, Officers were testing significantly higher environmental standards than those which were currently required and many of these standards featured in Passivhaus developments.

Question submitted by Councillor S. Robinson

"What steps is this council taking to phase out the use of harmful weedkillers containing Glyphosate?"

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Community Safety explained that in the UK, Glyphosate was fully licenced for use and the Council utilised it in accordance with the relevant recommendations and guidance. The authority also ensured that all operatives were trained in its application and that there were sufficient processes in place to ensure that the Council did not contravene the manufacturer's instructions.

There was a considerable amount of debate and claim/counter claim regarding the chemical properties of glyphosate, notably in the USA, where the legal system and litigation process was different to that which operated in the UK. The current UK licence was due to be reviewed at the end of 2022, and the Council was waiting to see if that licence would be reissued, amended or revoked. The Council would work in accordance with any decision that was made.

As an authority, the Council had to adapt to change as information or new products became available and the authority would always look at what was appropriate in terms of managing the environment. This might lead to a review of future maintenance regimes and to consideration of the use of different chemicals or methodologies for vegetative management should they be appropriate, given the extensive green landscape that the Council maintained each year.

To enable this, officers were in the process of drafting a herbicide policy that would aim to set out what the Council would do, what different methodologies the Council could utilise, and would ensure that the

authority could adapt to any changes in legislation and the need to protect and enhance biodiversity. There was a need to set out what customers could expect as a reasonable and cost-effective vegetative management approach in accordance with the financial and physical resources that the Council had available.

Councillors were informed that Bromsgrove District Council only applied herbicides to land that was in its ownership and had used a very small amount so far in 2022. The application of herbicides along the road/footpath system was carried out by Worcestershire County Council (via their contractor) as the highways authority.

Question submitted by Councillor C. Hotham

“Please could this council be updated on the progress being made on one of the most significant potential green projects; the district wide geothermal heating scheme?”

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Cultural Services and Climate Change responded by commenting that he was delighted that the Council took the initiative to pursue a Heat Network for the District, particularly in light of the ever-increasing fuel costs.

Following approval by the Council to seek funding from the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy's (BEIS) Heat Network Delivery Unit (HNDU), the Council had secured £227,500. This funding was towards the Detailed Project Development (DPD) phase of the project from BEIS HNDU. It was matched with £112,500 from the Council that included contributions from Bromsgrove School and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust.

(During consideration of this item a point of order was raised that Councillor M. Thompson worked for Bromsgrove School. In this context, no further response was provided at the meeting to this question and Councillor Hotham was advised that he would receive a more detailed response after the meeting.)

43\22

MOTIONS ON NOTICE

The Chairman explained that three Motions on Notice had been received for consideration at the meeting. However, prior to the meeting, Councillor H. Rone-Clarke had confirmed that he was withdrawing his Motion. Therefore, only two Motions were due to be debated at the meeting.

Parkside Running Costs

Council considered the following Motion on Notice that was submitted by Councillor P. McDonald:

"Forking out £240,000 running costs for Parkside that rattles plus £138,000 to Redditch Council, to many is seen as financial incompetence and a cavalier approach to spending the hard-earned money of its residents at a time of a cost-of-living crisis.

We therefore call upon the Council to form a cross-party task group to carry out a full investigation into financial arrangements with Redditch Council: which it would seem to have left Bromsgrove Council with running costs of a £240,000; for what is a mainly an unused building while at the same time paying out £138,000 for use of Redditch Council's premises."

The Motion was proposed by Councillor McDonald and seconded by Councillor Rone-Clarke.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor McDonald raised concerns that Parkside cost the Council £240,000 per annum to maintain, particularly at a time when many staff were working from home. Concerns were raised that the Council was providing a financial contribution to Redditch Borough Council to cover the costs of accommodating staff working in shared services and based at Redditch Town Hall when space remained available to accommodate staff at Parkside. Councillor McDonald also raised concerns about the Council meeting these costs at a time of a cost of living crisis, when many residents would benefit from financial assistance and other support. Residents paid Council Tax and fees for many Council services and it was important to ensure that there was transparency in respect of how this funding was spent and that value for money (vfm) was achieved. Councillor McDonald expressed concerns about the implications of shared service arrangements for the potential for staff to meet the needs of Bromsgrove residents and he suggested that there was the possibility that Redditch Borough would benefit from these arrangements at the expense of Bromsgrove District. A cross party working group could investigate this situation further and determine whether best value was being achieved for the Council.

In seconding the Motion, Councillor Rone-Clarke expressed concerns about the use of public funds on the maintenance of Parkside and in shared service arrangements with Redditch Borough Council. Members were advised that there was a need for due diligence and a cross party review would be able to ensure transparency of management of the Council's finances. Councillor Rone-Clarke also suggested that this review would provide the public with reassurance about the work of the Council. Members were asked to note that the Motion was not calling for an end to shared services but, rather, for these arrangements to be reviewed.

In response to the Motion, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance commented that he refuted claims that the Council was financially incompetent and had a cavalier attitude to spending residents' monies. The Council took any spending seriously. In respect of financial

competence, he commented that the shared services costs were included in the Council's net budget position.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance then explained that he could not support the motion as it was considered unnecessary. All organisations, both public and private, had been affected by the global pandemic in ways that could never have been imagined. One of the many consequences was the way in which people worked had changed and the fact that office accommodation, with the requirement for people to be physically in attendance, had changed irrevocably. The Council was transitioning to an agile working policy for the workforce and a review of the authority's accommodation had been ongoing to see to what extent it could be better used for the benefit of residents. In addition, there had been an increase in utility and operational costs of running buildings and there was a requirement for everyone to think very carefully about the pledges made by the Council on the environment.

In this context, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance explained that action was already being taken by the Council. This included leasing arrangement with Seetec at Parkside, which had been a success. They had built links with partner organisations co-located at Parkside, such as the Job Centre Plus and the Council's Housing and Benefit teams, which had resulted in a huge increase in the numbers of residents being supported back into the workplace or into training that would give them the skills they needed to move on. In addition, these arrangements also allowed the Council to drastically reduce the operating costs from the previous financial year, as detailed in the wording of the proposed Motion. Net costs were about £240,000, including £178,000 for Business Rates, £100,000 for utilities, £112,000 for maintenance costs and £138,000 towards Shared Services. Against these costs, there was income of £280,000 at present, but once Seetec income was taken into account, there would be £60,000 additional funds.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance explained that Officers had been collaborating with partners at Redditch to review the space that was being used for Bromsgrove District Council as well as a review of the Town Hall. Redditch Borough Council was working with public and VCS partner organisations to let space that would enable their building to become a public sector hub. Arrangements had progressed and the running costs for the Town Hall would decrease significantly, by up to 50 per cent, in the medium term, with a similar reduction following to shared services costs for Bromsgrove District Council. This represented a further saving of at least £70,000.

In conclusion, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance explained that the net costs to Bromsgrove would therefore reduce in 2022/23 and future years both at Parkside and in the space occupied in Redditch by at least 50 per cent on current figures. Under these circumstances, he expressed the view that he did not believe a working party could achieve more than had been achieved to date. However, the

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Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance offered to bring details of progress to the Finance and Budget Working Group for consideration on a six-month rota.

Members subsequently discussed the Motion in detail and in doing so referred to the need for heritage buildings in the District, including Parkside, to be maintained. It was noted that there were specific requirements for the maintenance of listed buildings and this needed to be taken into account when considering the costs involved in maintaining Parkside.

Reference was made to the potential for the review of the financial costs involved in maintaining Parkside and in relation to shared services to have been referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Board for consideration. Members commented that the Board had a legitimate role to play in reviewing the Council's finances and could refer subjects for the consideration of the Finance and Budget Working Group or to a Task Group. In addition, Members commented that, given the significant sums involved, this subject would potentially be suitable for further scrutiny.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 18.3 a recorded vote was taken on this Motion and the voting was as follows:

Members voting FOR the Motion:

Councillors S. Baxter, S. Colella, S. Douglas, A. English, C. Hotham, R. Hunter, J. King, L. Mallett, P. McDonald, S. Robinson and H. Rone-Clarke (11).

Members voting AGAINST the Motion:

Councillors A. Beaumont, R. Deeming, G. Denaro, S. Hession, H. Jones, A. Kriss, K. May, M. Middleton, M. Sherrey, C. Spencer, P. Thomas, M. Thompson and S. Webb (13).

Members ABSTAINING in the vote on the Motion:

No Councillors (0).

On being put to the vote the Motion was therefore lost.

Grass Verges

Council considered the following Motion on Notice that was submitted by Councillor S. Colella:

“This Council changes its grass verge grass cutting and mowing regime to allow wildflowers to remain in bloom during the height of the season when bees, butterflies and general small wildlife rely on the pollen from wildflowers to flourish.”

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Colella and seconded by Councillor C. Hotham.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Colella explained that it was calling for the Council to agree a grass cutting policy for the District. There were benefits for local wildlife arising from leaving grass and wildflowers to grow on grass verges, as this helped to generate pollen for the bees and grass seed that could be consumed by birds. The Council had a moral responsibility to support the local environment. There were some residents who preferred for grass verges to be mown on a more regular basis and the Council's grass cutting policy would need to make allowances for this. Adoption of the Motion would help to demonstrate that Bromsgrove District Council recognised the importance of local habitats and management of the environment. Some residents might need to be educated about the benefits of not regularly mowing grass verges and the Council would need to issue effective communications on this subject, including through social media.

In seconding the Motion, Councillor Hotham commented that the proposed policy would be a positive development for the Council. The authority could invest in new machinery to cut wildflowers and long grass after a longer period of time than usual had passed. Many residents welcomed the sight of wildflowers on the grass verges and this helped to make places more visually attractive.

During consideration of this Motion, Councillor R. Hunter proposed an amendment. The amended Motion was recorded in the following manner:

"This Council changes its grass verge grass cutting and mowing regime to allow wildflowers to remain in bloom during the height of the season when bees, butterflies and general small wildlife rely on the pollen from wildflowers to flourish. This will not be a one size fits all approach. Council will work with local residents and Councillors to find an approach that works for each community."

Councillor Colella, as the proposer of the original Motion, confirmed that he was happy to adopt the amended wording.

In response to the proposed Motion, the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Community Safety commented that grass verges were the responsibility of Worcestershire County Council and managed in relation to highway safety considerations. However, within speed restricted settlements, Bromsgrove District Council carried this out on behalf of the County Council in order to support a higher aesthetic standard. The Place Team had identified a number of areas of highway verges and public open spaces across the District in the last few years for naturalising so as to support local habitat as well as biodiversity, and this had been carried out without impacting on highway safety. Unfortunately, this could not be done on all grass areas, and where it

had been deemed that this could be done safely, there had been mixed responses from the public who lived by these areas. Many residents were supportive of the idea in principle, but some referenced the rural nature of the District and the proximity of open countryside to most residential areas that could support wildlife, and some wanted a more aesthetic maintenance of grass areas where they lived.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Community Safety explained that the Council aimed to continue identifying areas that could be naturalised to support the growth of common flowers such as buttercups, yarrow, dandelion, flatweed and cow parsley to support local wildlife and give them improved habitat to live and move within as green corridors. However, further discussions were needed with residents to help educate people on the importance of this and balance public expectations against the environmental benefit. The majority of the Council's grass areas did not have any aesthetic wildflower displays currently, and this would require more proactive establishment to develop and maintain colourful wildflower areas. The Council had created a couple of small areas like this but would require additional resources and a change in equipment to facilitate this on a larger scale, which was not currently accounted for in the authority's financial planning. In addition, a number of the Council's parks had had a range of measures implemented in recent years to support biodiversity across the site, with wildflower planting, habitat management and naturalisation work. These initiatives had been supported through specific habitat management plans for Sanders Park and Lickey End Recreation Ground, which were being incorporated into new management plans that would also incorporate St Chad's Park and King George V Play Fields as part of the development of the new Leisure and Culture Strategy.

The Motion was discussed by Members in detail and during the discussions, Members commented on the need for local communities to be engaged in consideration of whether to adopt this approach to the management of particular grass verges and open spaces. Examples were provided of attempts being made in the past to rewild some green spaces in wards where there were few other open spaces that could be used for recreation and in these instances, Members suggested that it would be more appropriate for the grass to be cut regularly.

Concerns were raised that, whilst the proposed approach might benefit the local environment, there could be significant financial implications which needed to be clarified. In this context, the suggestion was made that the subject of the Motion should be referred to the Finance and Budget Working Group for further consideration. A business case would subsequently need to be submitted to the Cabinet for further consideration. Members commented that the financial costs might not be significant, as it was likely that this approach would result in a reduction in the number of hours staff were required to work on maintaining grass verges. However, it was also noted that, because the grass and wildflowers would have grown longer than usual, it could potentially be more difficult to cut and therefore the Council might need

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to invest in new equipment or take longer on the task, resulting in financial costs.

Reference was made to the beneficial impact that this approach to grass cutting could have on local wildlife and habitats. Concerns were raised about the decline in numbers of birds and animals in various species in recent years, particularly in relation to bee varieties and Members commented that this would have a detrimental impact on plant pollination unless action was taken. Climate change was resulting in changing and more extreme weather patterns and pollution was having a negative impact on the natural world. When grass verges were mown regularly this could result in plants being cut before seeds were ready, to the detriment of the local environment. Residents would still have an opportunity to request that their grass verges were cut regularly if this was felt to be necessary.

On being put to the vote the Motion was carried.

RESOLVED that

This Council changes its grass verge grass cutting and mowing regime to allow wildflowers to remain in bloom during the height of the season when bees, butterflies and general small wildlife rely on the pollen from wildflowers to flourish. This will not be a one size fits all approach. Council will work with local residents and Councillors to find an approach that works for each community.

The meeting closed at 7.55 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER URGENCY PROCEDURES

Subject: Appointment of councillors to Hunnington Parish Council

Brief Statement of Subject Matter:

The District Council may by Order made under s91 of the Local Government Act 1972, appoint persons on a temporary basis, to fill all or any vacancy at a Parish Council, under s91 of the Local Government Act 1972, until other councillors are elected or co-opted and take up office.

Decision:

That the Council make the Order, as attached, under s91 of the Local Government Act 1972 appointing those named in the schedule as Parish Councillors for Hunnington Parish Council under the provisions of the Act, with effect from the date of the Order

Date: 10 August 2022

RESOLVED that: The Order as attached appointing councillors to Hunnington Parish Council under s 91 of the Local Government Act 1972, is made.

Grounds for Urgency: As a result of resignations, Hunnington Parish Council is no longer quorate and therefore unable to conduct its business. By an Order made under s91 of the Local Government Act 1972, the District Council may appoint persons to fill all or any of the vacancies on a temporary basis until other councillors are elected or co-opted and take up office. The Parish Clerk has requested that the District Council make such an Order so that the Parish Council can become quorate and be able to conduct its business.

DECISION APPROVED BY:

.....
Chief Executive

.....
Dated

.....
Section 151 Officer

.....
Dated

.....
Monitoring Officer

.....
Dated

.....
Leader

.....
Dated

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.....
Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny Board

.....
Dated

.....
Chairman

.....
Dated

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL (HUNNINGTON PARISH) (APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY PARISH COUNCILLOR) ORDER 2022

WHEREAS:-

- (i) The number of Parish Councillors for the Hunnington Parish Council (hereinafter referred to as “the Parish Council”) is set at 7.
- (ii) The number of Councillors required to constitute a quorum for the Parish Council is 3.
- (iii) Three Councillors resigned for personal reasons leaving the Parish Council inquorate.
- (iv) Section 91 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that where there are so many vacancies in the office of Parish Councillor that a Parish Council is unable to act, the District Council may by Order appoint persons to fill all or any of the vacancies until other Councillors are elected and take up office.

NOW THEREFORE in pursuance of the powers conferred by Section 91 of the Local Government Act 1972, BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL HEREBY MAKE THE FOLLOWING ORDER:-

1. The persons named in the schedule to this Order shall be appointed to fill THREE of the vacancies in the office of Parish Councillor for the Parish Council of Hunnington and shall be empowered to act as if they had been elected as a Parish Councillor until other Councillors are elected (or co-opted) and take up office.
2. This Order may be cited as “The Bromsgrove District Council (Hunnington Parish Council) (Appointment of Temporary Parish Councillor) Order 2022”.
3. The Interpretation Act 1978 shall apply to the interpretation of this Order as it applies to the interpretation of an Act of Parliament.

SCHEDULE

<u>Name of Person Appointed</u>	<u>Address of Person Appointed</u>
Georgina Austin	253, Bromsgrove Road, Hunnington, B62 0JW
Karen Payne	255, Bromsgrove Road, Hunnington, B62 0JW
Ian McGregor	153, Bromsgrove Road, Hunnington, B62 0JU

The COMMON SEAL of BROMSGROVE)
DISTRICT COUNCIL was hereunto)
affixed this day of 2022)
in the presence of)

Authorised Signatory



Portfolio Holder Report – Finance and Enabling

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

This report Covers the following Services Areas

- 1) Finance and Customer Services
- 2) Business Transformation and Organisational Development
- 3) Democratic Services and Elections
- 4) Legal Services



Portfolio Holder Report – Finance and Enabling

Finance and Customer Services

Business Transformation and Organisational Development

1. Update on Strategic Purposes

Relevant Strategic Purpose:

Finance and Customer Services covers Finance, Revenues and Benefits, and Customer Services. Although most aspects of finance and some aspects of both Revenues and Benefits and Customer Services are enabling in nature, many aspects are also Direct in nature as well. For the enabling services the key priority is to support all services areas in the delivery of high-quality services whilst ensuring the organisation remains financially stable. The council plan is clear on the role of enabling services, outlining that this support is achieved by focusing on the three key themes of people, partnerships and performance.

Key activities since last report:

The service area covers a range of activities and it must be remembered that in 2021/22 significant support was still being delivered for C-19 especially linked to the support of businesses and our individual clients

Finance

The Council implemented a new financial system in February 2021. The existing financial system was at the end of its useful life and would not deliver process improvements required to move the Council forward. This implementation has not been smooth and has led to a deterioration of the Council's financial position. This has included:

- Non completion of the 2020/21 Accounts.
- Non delivery of monitoring information during the 2021/22 financial year.
- Non delivery of Government financial returns.
- Incomplete take-up of the new system by both Finance and Service Users.
- Loss of key financial staff.

The Council has lost significant financial expertise with the exiting of staff leaving the department below a critical mass. External resource has been needed to rectify the solution in the short term. Part of this process has been to set out a rectification process which sets out the key issues to be resolved and a critical path for that resolution. A report on this rectification process is on the agenda for Cabinet on the 14th September.

As with any plan, there is a critical path to delivery. With this plan, the critical path centres on the rectification of issues being encountered with the cash receipting system. With this resolved the Council will be able to close the 2020/21 accounts and cease the manual work rounds that are presently required. Items on the plan only turn to green when they have been rectified and there is proof that they are working.



Portfolio Holder Report – Finance and Enabling

Since the start of the recovery programme in March 22 the following has been delivered:

- Resources
 - The Council has run 2 sets of Recruitments in November 2021 and April 2022. Most establishment roles are now filled (Agency where relevant – this is now down to 4 roles).
- The following Strategies have been delivered
 - 21/22 Closure timetable
 - Treasury Management Strategy, including Capital, MRP and Investment Strategies were presented to Cabinet in May 2022.
 - Risk Reports have been presented to both Cabinet and Audit Committee in July 2022.
 - The 2022/23 Medium Term Financial Strategy was approved by Council in February 2022.
- Monitoring Reports
 - Period 11 Monitoring 2021/22 Reports were presented to Cabinet in May 2022.
 - A Period 1 Monitoring Report for 2022/23 was reported to cabinet in June 2022. Although there were no financial updates in this report it set out the process to be followed this year for monitoring (on system), the process being taken to rectify the Council's budgetary position, and a number of financial indicators including collection rates for both Council Tax and Business Rates.
 - A combined Quarter 1 2022/23 Finance and Monitoring report has been reported to Cabinet on the 14th September 2022.
- Returns - The Council are required to report on a number of financial measures to the Government via a series of Returns. Due to the systems-based issues the completion of the RO/CO Returns is still not possible. However, the following returns have been made:
 - Revenue Estimates 2021/22 and 2022/23 (RA).
 - PWLB Certainty Rate 2022/23 – sets out borrowing requirements.
 - HRA Pooled Capital Receipts 2021/22.
 - Council Tax Requirement (CTR1) 2022-23.
 - Quarterly return of Council Tax and NNDR (Q4 2021/22 and Q1 2022/23).
 - C-19 Grant Assurance Returns for 2021/22.
 - Housing Benefit Subsidy Return 2021/22.
 - DHP Government Contribution Final Claim for 2021-22.
 - Test and Trace Payments 2021/22.
 - NNDR3 Return for Business Rates.

Revenues

On top of the usual collection of Council Tax and Business Rates, significant payments have been distributed to businesses and individuals both during year 2 of C-19 and also the “cost of living” crises.

- Council Tax Collection Rate 2021/22 - 97.96%
- NDR Collection Rate 2021/22 - 95.08%
- Council Tax Chargeable Dwellings 31st March 2022 - 42,600
- NDR rateable hereditaments 31st March 2022 - 3,512



Portfolio Holder Report – Finance and Enabling

- Number of CTR Claimants
 - 2178 Working Age
 - 1827 Pension Age
- Restart Grants
 - 492 Grant Recipients
 - £3,686,706 Total Expenditure for Restart Scheme
- Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant
 - 125 Grant Recipients
 - £449,356 Total Expenditure for Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Scheme
- Additional Restrictions Grant
 - 704 Grants Paid
 - £2,825,238.47 Value of Grants
- Covid Additional Relief Fund Awarded 22/23
 - 574 Accounts Awarded Relief
 - £1,916,475.62 Relief Awarded
- Council Tax Energy Rebate: Mandatory Rebate:
 - 25,397 Direct Payments to Households
 - 2,063 Council Tax Account Credits
 - Total 27,460 households received payment
- Council Tax Energy Rebate: Discretionary Scheme
 - 317 Discretionary Payments of £150 Allocated
 - 172 Direct Payments have been made to households
 - 145 payments available for customer to claim payment
 - 3,759 Top-up payments of £30 to lowest income households
 - 1,181 Direct Payments have been made to households
 - 2,578 payments available for customer to claim

Customer Services

- Payments 'in-person' have fallen by 86% since the pandemic, as well as the implementation of allpay. Prior to the pandemic, there were on average 1400 transactions per month (70 per day). As of 12/09/22, this has now fallen to below 200 per month (9 per day)
- General 'in-person' enquiries have fallen by 44% since the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, there were on average 800 enquiries per month (40 per day). As of 12/09/22, this has now fallen to below 450 per month (22 per day) which has increased from 2021 due to enquiries regarding the energy rebate scheme.
- Since the pandemic, Customer Services staff have taken on all front facing calls for revenues (council tax, business rates, grants and energy rebate) whilst still maintaining a presence in the Customer Service Centre across Bromsgrove and Redditch.
- During 21-22, there was a total of 1870 'walk-in' general enquiries at Parkside Customer Services (average 8 enquiries per day), of which 25% related to location of Job Centre, Library and Registration Services (all contained within the building complex)



Portfolio Holder Report – Finance and Enabling

Payments & General Enquiries

	FY 19-20	FY 20-21*	FY 21-22
Number of Payments	14,400	1,506	1,845
General Enquiries	9,692	644	1,870
% General enquiries related to building	22	14	25

* closed for 6 months in total due to pandemic

Telephone Calls

	Total	Average wait time (mm:ss)	Average Queue Size	Average call length (mm:ss)	Average wrap-up time (mm:ss)	Total time per customer (mm:ss)	Average number of staff (shared service)
Switchboard BDC	8,683	00:51	0.02	00:45	00:00	00:45	1.96
Revenues (shared service)	24,147	06:38	1.27	07:51	02:54	10:45	4.77

Anticipated Activities/Key Milestones For Next Period

Finance

It is clear from the limited rollout of new financial systems processes in both the finance team and the wider Council that a significant retraining process will need to be undertaken. This had been timetabled initially for April/May but this has now been revised to September October as we need resolution of the financial systems issues to properly take this forward. As part of this process there will be:

- Updated/simplified financial regulations
- Updated/simplified Step by Step guides

In addition to this, the following items will be delivered:

- Completion of the Cash Receipting fixes in Tech1
- Quarter 2,3 and 4 Combined Finance and Performance reports
- Statement of Accounts 2020/21
- Statement of Accounts 2021/22
- Revised 2020/21 Outturn Report
- 2021/22 Outturn Report
- Half Yearly Treasury Management Update Report
- Treasury Outturn Report 2021/22
- Completion of 2020/21 and 2021/22 RO/CO Returns
- Whole Government Accounts (WGA) for 2020/21 and 2021/22.
- 2023/24 Medium Term Financial Strategy

Revenues



Portfolio Holder Report – Finance and Enabling

- The Council will continue to collect Council Tax and Business Rates. The collection rates for the first 3 months of 2022/23 are:
 - Council Tax – 0.75% below Target
 - Business Rates – On Target
- Respond to the Government on Validation data for
 - Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant
 - Covid Additional Relief Fund Awarded 22/23
 - Additional Restrictions Grant
 - Council Tax Energy Payments
- Estimate of the 2023/24 Council Tax and Business Rates bases
- Delivery of Quarterly Government Returns
- Possible delivery of other grants from the Government to businesses and individuals
- Reduction of debt backlogs

Customer Services

- Moving forwards, we would like to increase the size of the team and increase the range of telephone enquiries using an 80/20 model of customer service across most council services as the majority of customers access council services via telephone and online, whilst still maintaining a small in-person presence for general enquiries on site. Further detail is contained within the “Service Business Plan 2023-2026 – Customer Services” (TBC)

Partnership working:

Finance

- The service is a shared service with Redditch.
- Getting staff up to appropriate skills (Finance and system to discharge their roles)

2. **Good News Stories and Awards (if applicable)**

- Successful staffing up to almost establishment.
- Movement forward of the Finance Recovery Programme
- Delivery of Grants from the Government to Businesses and Individuals

3. **Other (including risks, opportunities, issues not raised elsewhere).**

The biggest risk to finance (and all services) is the level of Government Funding as part of the 2023/24 Local Government Settlement and the ongoing level of inflation.

Business Transformation and Organisational Development

4. Update on Strategic Purposes



Portfolio Holder Report – Finance and Enabling

Relevant Strategic Purpose:

The enabling services key priority is to support all services areas in the delivery of high quality services whilst ensuring the organisation remains financially stable. The council plan is clear on the role of enabling services, outlining that this support is achieved by focusing on the three key themes of people, partnerships and performance.

Key activities since last report:

ICT

- Supported the technical elements of the implementation of Tech-1 ERP system to replace the E-Fin Finance system, cash receipting and stores applications.
- Used robotics to extract 350,000 invoices and purchase orders from the old finance system
- Used Robotics to correct 40,000 records in the Uniform system.
- Gained national exemplar status for the HM Land Registry Land Charges project to migrate all local land charges data to the national HMLR Digital Register.
- Replaced virtual PC environment with physical laptops.

HR

- Started a programme of Institute of Learning and Management courses for senior and middle managers.
- Delivered a new end to end self-serve technical system for recruitment.
- Joined the Coaching and Mentoring pool with West Midlands Employers.
- Continue to build and maintain good employee relations through collaborative working with the Trade Unions at both a local and regional level.
- Coordinating and supporting the implementation of workforce planning across the organisation.
- Developed a draft Agile Working policy.
- Supporting implementation of Agile Working.
- Conducted a full staff survey.
- Implemented a corporate training programme including delivery of training in HR and health and safety.
- Reviewed a number of employment policies with further reviews scheduled.
- Developed a new Social Media policy
- Developed a new Training and Development policy

Policy, Equalities and Engagement

- Developed a new Equality Strategy 2022-2026 to set the direction of equality work for the next four years. Ensuring the Council meets its duty under the Equality Act of preparing and publishing equality objectives every four years.
- Supported twelve local organisations through the Bromsgrove Equality Small Grants scheme to support community activities. The scheme continues to attract new organisations with seven of the twelve being new applicants.



Portfolio Holder Report – Finance and Enabling

- The Catshill and Rubery Community Builders supporting the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) work is making a positive impact in communities. The Engagement team are providing support to a group that includes Councillors, the voluntary sector and Worcestershire County Council ABCD Team. The group share experiences, provide support, advice and links that help in the delivery of their work.
- Supported the successful delivery of the Holocaust Memorial day activities earlier this year.
- Successfully designed and delivered the Community Survey in late 2021. Analysed and shared the results with CMT, Cabinet and officers and made them publicly available on the website.
- Conducted fifteen community engagement surveys with the public covering a range of topics including:
 - Community safety
 - Feelings and views on Covid-19
 - Climate change
 - Street Theatre events
 - Leisure and events
 - Cashless carparking
 - Shopmobility
 - Local bus shelter replacement
 - Annual Community Survey

The results of these surveys have been used to support decisions, policy development, service changes and/or provide feedback.

- Delivered the annual Worcestershire Regulatory Service (WRS) staff survey and shared the results with the service managers.
- Continued data support for the Regional Coordination Group (RCG) who are a joined up working group analysing data during and post Covid19.
- Increased participation in the Bromsgrove Community Panel, a list of Bromsgrove residents who have agreed to participate in council engagement and consultations. Last year an additional 159 people joined the panel and it currently stands at 366 people.
- Implementing MS Power BI dashboard to provide an interactive data visualisation platform with a primary focus on business intelligence. This will complement the current measures dashboard and ultimately replace it.

Business Improvement

- Delivered an updated Project Management Framework and provided training for 100 managers and team leaders in project planning.
- Established a project monitoring process for CMT to provide oversight of corporate projects.
- Supporting CMT/SMT to embed the business planning cycle to align service delivery against budget pressures and council priorities.
- Supporting the Culture Group with data and insight to develop cross working activities to align culture with council priorities.
- Facilitated workshops and away days to focus on culture mapping, workstream flows and action planning.
- Providing project assurance on a number of improvement initiatives including corporate complaints and out of hours services.



Portfolio Holder Report – Finance and Enabling

Anticipated Activities/Key Milestones For Next Period

ICT

- Develop a Cyber Security Strategy.
- Assess ways to reduce the carbon footprint of the server room in line with the Carbon Reduction Strategy actions.
- Introduce a customer portal on our website to support self-service of council functions such as environmental services requests.
- Implement a test schedule for disaster recovery with all departments.
- Test Windows 11 on our infrastructure.
- Automate the Freedom of Information (FOI) requests process where possible. Use machine learning to understand, interpret and pass the request to the correct services for a response.

HR

- Develop a People Strategy.
- Further develop the self-serve recruitment module to automate the process as much as possible.
- Further develop workforce planning across the organisation and draft a Workforce Plan.
- Continue to review and update employment policies.

Policy, Equalities and Engagement

- Plan and conduct the next Community Survey.
- Refresh the Performance Strategy.
- Further develop the performance dashboard.
- Further develop the quarterly performance reports for the organisation.

Business Improvement

- Support service managers to deliver key improvement actions within their service business plans. Deliver facilitation sessions to ensure action plans, SMART measures and project plans are in place.
- Support the delivery of change initiatives resulting from the business planning cycle.

Partnership working:

- Partnership working to deliver the covid vaccination continues with partners and organisation being able to join outreach events.
- The Redditch and Bromsgrove Learning Network and ABCD Guides Community of Practice Group has been set up to progress and share the ABCD work within Bromsgrove and across the county.

5. Good News Stories and Awards (if applicable)

- Exemplar status for the HMLR Land Charges project as detailed above. Every month we are externally assessed by our national Hub run by Geoplace (LGA /Ordnance Survey). In April we were awarded Gold standard for the year.
- Public Sector Network security audit certificate awarded for the year.



Portfolio Holder Report – Finance and Enabling

6. Other (including risks, opportunities, issues not raised elsewhere).

None

Democratic Services and Elections

1. Update on Strategic Purposes

Key activities since last report:

Democratic Services – Key Activities

The Democratic Services team is an enabling service with an integral role in Council governance. The work of the team, facilitating Committee meetings and managing the decision-making process, enables decisions to be taken that support all of the authority's strategic purposes and priorities. The work of Democratic Services is also crucial to the Council's internal priority of service sustainability because, if the decision-making process was to be disrupted, this could also delay delivery of important Council plans and activities.

Over the last 18 months, the Democratic Services team has facilitated the Council's decision-making process throughout a period of significant change and disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. During the 2020/21 municipal year, meetings could be held remotely under the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. However, since 7th May 2021, Councils have been required to hold formal Committee meetings in person, with elected Members required to physically attend meetings in order to participate in the debate and vote on items. This return to meetings in person occurred initially in a context in which legal restrictions remained in place on gatherings indoors. The arrangements for the return to meetings in person were thoroughly risk assessed and determined by the Corporate Management Team (CMT), with social distancing and mask wearing required alongside other measures designed to mitigate against the risks of Covid transmission. Mitigating actions have changed over time, in line with Government guidance and advice from the Council's Senior Health and Safety Advisor, and meetings continue to be risk assessed.

Whilst there is a legal requirement for elected Members to attend formal Committee meetings in person, this requirement does not extend to officers (with some exceptions). To help limit the number of people in the meeting rooms at any one time, thereby helping to reduce the risks of Covid transmission, the Democratic Services team worked closely with the Facilities and ICT teams to introduce hybrid meeting arrangements, whereby Officers could attend meetings remotely, via Microsoft Teams, to present reports. Technical solutions have been identified to enable hybrid meetings to proceed.



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Whilst officers are now free to choose whether to attend meetings in person or remotely, remote attendance by officers at meetings has also helped to reduce the numbers of people travelling to attend Committee meetings, resulting in a reduction in carbon emissions, which supports the Council's work on tackling climate change and the green thread.

The legal requirement to hold meetings in person does not extend to informal meetings. Therefore, the Democratic Services team have arranged for informal and private meetings, such as Chairmen's Briefings, Member training and Task Group meetings, to take place remotely on Microsoft Teams. This has ensured that Council business continues to be considered efficiently and in a timely manner, making use of available technological options whilst providing Members and Officers with the flexibility to participate in meetings from various locations. This approach to holding informal meetings also supports the Council's work on the green thread, by reducing carbon emissions associated with travel to and from informal meetings by attendees.

Elections – Key Activities

- Electoral Services Officer, Claire Beaumont achieved her Certificate in Electoral Administration furthering depth of knowledge in the Elections Team
- The team are currently carrying out the canvass in Bromsgrove:
 - Initial canvass communications sent out in July
 - Reminders sent out w/c 22 August
 - Personal canvass will run from 21 September to 4 November

Legal Services – Key Activities

The Principal Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer retired from the Council on 9th September 2022. Officers are in the process of reviewing the role and support provided by the service to ensure that the Council can continue to deliver key projects and the authority's strategic purposes.

Anticipated Activities/Key Milestones For Next Period

Democratic Services

Over the next 12 months the Democratic Services team will be preparing the induction process for Members due to be elected in May 2023. This will involve consulting with and acting on directions provided by Members at meetings of the Member Development Steering Group in respect of induction arrangements. The effective delivery of training, particularly to new Members, will be important to ensure the sustainability of the democratic process and good governance moving forward.

The Democratic Services team are also in the process of reviewing the technical support required to facilitate hybrid meetings. As part of this process, meeting 'owls', which provide video images and audio from a meeting room, are in the process of being tested at meetings of Cabinet and the



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Overview and Scrutiny Board. The outcomes of these tests will be discussed by the Constitution Review Working Group. There will be a further test in due course at a meeting of Council to ensure that the equipment can support the needs of larger meetings. This equipment should help to ensure that hybrid meeting arrangements can be organised as efficiently as possible at the Council. Subject to the successful implementation of these tests, this equipment could also be used for future meetings that may be live streamed at the Council, as requested by Members at recent meetings.

Elections

Will soon be starting preparation work for all out District and Parish Elections in Bromsgrove.

Legal Services

In the interim period, a temporary officer has been appointed as Principal Lawyer and Deputy Monitoring Officer to ensure continuity in the provision of important legal support across Council services.

Partnership working:

The Council works with a range of partner organisations to meet the needs of residents and businesses in the District.

Democratic Services – Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Board

Bromsgrove District Council, as the host for WRS, also hosts meetings of the WRS Board which makes decisions in relation to the shared service. These meetings are attended by representatives of all of the district Councils in Worcestershire. The Democratic Services team has continued to facilitate meetings of the Board throughout the pandemic, ensuring compliance with the requirements detailed in the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between partner organisations, including on the timing of the annual meeting of the Board and in relation to the budget setting meeting. Whilst elected Members have to attend meetings of the Board in person, many officers can attend remotely and hybrid meeting arrangements, enabling officers from partner authorities to attend meetings remotely on Microsoft Teams, have been facilitated by the Democratic Services team.

2. Good News Stories and Awards (if applicable)

None

3. Other (including risks, opportunities, issues not raised elsewhere).

None

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNCIL

Cabinet meeting 27th July 2022

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

RECOMMENDED that The Medium Term Financial Strategy is amended to include the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Allocation when next reviewed.

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**Cabinet
2022**

27 July

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Karen May, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Regeneration and Strategic Partnerships
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Head of Service		Ostap Paparega Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development & Regeneration
Report Author	Job Title: Georgina Harris Contact email: Georgina.harris@nwedr.org.uk Contact Tel: 01562 732174	
Wards Affected		No specific ward relevance
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)		Run and Grow a Successful Business Work and Financial Independence Communities which are Safe, Well Maintained and Green
Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that

- 1) The Investment Plan (Appendix 1) is approved for submission to the UK Government**
- 2) Authority to finalise the Investment plan be delegated to the Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development & Regeneration following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Regeneration and Strategic Partnerships and in light of advice from the Bromsgrove Partnership**
- 3) Authority to develop projects to deliver the outcomes contained in the investment plan be delegated to the Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development & Regeneration following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Regeneration and Strategic Partnerships and in light of advice from the Bromsgrove Partnership**

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The Cabinet is asked to RECOMMEND that

4) The Medium Term Financial Strategy is amended to include the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Allocation when next reviewed.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In April 2022, the Government published the prospectus for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The fund is a central pillar in the Government's Levelling Up agenda and replaces EU Structural Funds.
- 2.2 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund has the overarching objective of building pride in place and increasing life chances. It focusses on the 3 investment priorities of Community and Place, Supporting Local Business, and People and Skills.
- 2.3 Each area has been given a conditional allocation from the fund. To access their allocation, lead local authorities are required to produce an investment plan setting out how they intend to use the funding and expected outcomes of the investments.
- 2.4 The investment plan should detail the high level ambitions for the area and identify the outcomes to be targeted based on local challenges and opportunities. It is not required to be an exhaustive document containing detailed project or intervention planning.
- 2.5 The Government has provided a list of 41 potential interventions. These are broad areas of investment such as "funding for improvements to town centres and high streets" and "strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems and supporting businesses at all stages of their development". Places are required to prioritise those interventions that will deliver the outcomes they wish to target. Appendix 2 is a list of the 41 potential interventions, including details of those that have been selected.
- 2.6 Interventions in Year 1 (2022/23) are limited to the investment priorities of Community and Place; and Supporting Local Business. Interventions in Year 2 (2023/24) may include the People and Skills priority but only where continuing a programme that is currently funded by the European Social Fund and delivered by the Voluntary and Community Sector. Interventions in Year 3 (2024/25) can cover all three investment priorities.
- 2.7 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund can fund both capital and revenue projects. However, the Lead Local Authority is required to identify a

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minimum percentage of capital projects each year. In Year 1 this is a minimum of 10% of the funding, 13% in Year 2 and 20% in Year 3.

- 2.8 To support the process of selecting the most appropriate interventions, stakeholders have been consulted and were invited to submit projects that could deliver at least one of the 41 interventions. Their proposals were required to provide evidence of a local challenge or opportunity that the project would address.
- 2.9 The proposed investment plan (Appendix 1) includes those interventions that will produce measurable outcomes that reflect the needs and opportunities of the area.
- 2.10 The Government requires the investment plan to be endorsed by a Local Partnership Group. This group should include stakeholders such as representatives of the local authority, businesses, LEPs, and the voluntary sector.
- 2.11 The role of the Local Partnership Group is to provide local insight and expertise in identifying challenges and opportunities and the right solutions for inclusion in the Investment Plan. Once the plan is approved, the group should advise the Lead Local Authority on strategic fit and deliverability. The Bromsgrove Partnership has agreed to extend its terms of reference to include the Local Partnership Group role.
- 2.12 Endorsement of the proposed investment plan will be sought from the local MP and Local Partnership Group prior to submission to the UK Government.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The allocation for the district of Bromsgrove is £2,805,712 for the 3 years 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25.

3.2 The funding is broken down as follows:

2022/23	£340,499
2023/24	£680,998
2024/25	£1,784,215

3.3 The indicative allocations over the 3 Investment Priorities are:

Investment Priority	Expenditure
---------------------	-------------

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Communities & Place	£1,080,000
Supporting Local Business	£808,000
People & Skills	£808,000
Total	£2,696,000

- 3.4 The proposed split between capital expenditure and revenue expenditure, over the 3 years of the fund, is:

Year	Capital	Revenue	Total
2022/23	£40,000	£285,500	£325,500
2023/24	£236,000	£417,000	£653,000
2024/25	£372,000	£1,345,500	£1,717,500
Total	£648,000	£2,048,000	£2,696,000

- 3.5 The Lead Local Authority is expected to establish effective programme management methods and achieve spend to profile. If there is an underspend at the end of the year, it can be carried over into the following year. However, the Government will require a credible plan setting out how the underspend will be utilised the following year. Payment of the next year's allocation may be withheld until this plan is agreed.
- 3.6 The delivery of the Investment Plan should be cost neutral to the Council. A maximum of 4% of the allocation can be used by the Council to administer the fund. This equates to £112,228.48. Setting up the Fund may need a larger administration budget in the first year than in later years. This is acceptable so long as the percentage is not exceeded overall.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Once the investment plan has been approved by Government, the Council will be required to enter into an agreement with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to deliver the interventions included in the plan. Appropriate legal advice will be sought prior to entering any legal agreement.
- 4.2 Delivery of the investment plan may require the Council to enter into contracts or other agreements with external organisations. The awarding of contracts or other agreements will be subject to the Council's procurement rules and subject to appropriate due diligence.
- 4.3 Failure to submit the Investment Plan to Government by the deadline of 1 August 2022 will delay approval of the plan and receipt of the funding.

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

- 5.1 The Investment Plan proposes a range of business support programmes which will help entrepreneurs to start-up and grow existing businesses. Support will be available to help businesses to innovate and implement low carbon strategies. The interventions will contribute to the Council's strategic purpose "Run and Grow a Successful Business".
- 5.2 The Investment Plan proposes programmes of support to assist those furthest from employment and to help individuals to upskill. The interventions will contribute to the Council's strategic purpose "Work and Financial Independence".
- 5.3 The Investment Plan proposes investment in improvements to public spaces and reduce crime. The interventions will contribute to the Council's strategic purpose "Communities which are Safe, Well Maintained and Green"

Climate Change Implications

- 5.4 The investment plan includes interventions that will improve green spaces, reduce energy use by both residents and businesses and support businesses to develop carbon reducing technologies.

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

- 6.1 Equality and diversity implications will be considered throughout the delivery of the plan.

Operational Implications

- 6.2 One FTE role is required to support the administration and delivery of the investment plan. This post will be funded from the 4% of the Council's UK Share Prosperity Fund allocation that can be set aside for administration of the fund.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

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- 7.1 Failure to submit an Investment Plan by the deadline will delay approval of the investment plan and the receipt of the funding. Any delay in receipt of the funding in may impact deliverability in this financial year which, in turn, may impact receipt of funding the following year.
- 7.2 The Council will need to implement appropriate programme and project management arrangements for the UKSPF allocation for Bromsgrove, in order to manage risks relating to the funding programme and to any projects for which it is directly responsible.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan

Appendix 2 List of Interventions detailing those selected

UK Shared Prosperity Fund Prospectus

[UK Shared Prosperity Fund: prospectus - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/94444/UK_Shared_Prosperty_Fund_prospectus)

UK Shared Prosperity Fund Interventions, Objectives, Outcomes and Outputs

[UK Shared Prosperity Fund: interventions, outputs and indicators - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/94444/UK_Shared_Prosperty_Fund_interventions_outputs_and_indicators)

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder		
Lead Director / Head of Service		
Financial Services		
Legal Services		
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)		
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)		

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UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Investment Plan Questions

Offline version – for information only

Version 1
April 2022

Please note – the questions below are form information only. All investment plans must be submitted by lead local authorities via the online platform

Your location

Bromsgrove District

Your details

Name: Ostap Paparega

Email: ostap.paparega@nwedr.org.uk

Phone number: 01562 732192

Organisation name: Bromsgrove District Council

Local challenges and opportunities

In this section, we will ask you:

- If you've identified any challenges or opportunities, you intend to support
- Which of the UKSPF investment priorities these fall under

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL CHALLENGES YOU FACE WHICH FALL UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

(If yes) Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

Key Metrics:

Employment Rate

Bromsgrove has relatively high levels of economic activity in the working age population (16 to 64 year olds); higher than both the West Midlands and England.

Area	% Economically Active
Bromsgrove	86.1%
West Midlands	77.6%
England	78.4%

(NOMIS Jan21 – Dec21)

Claimant Count

The claimant count rate in the district is lower than that in the West Midlands and Great Britain. However, the district rate for youth unemployment is much closer to the rate for the West Midlands and Great Britain as unemployment impacts a much higher proportion of 18 to 24 year olds than the general population.

	Bromsgrove	West Midlands	Great Britain
Claimant Count	2.7%	5%	3.9%
Claimant Count (18-24 year olds)	3.9%	5.8%	4.5%

NOMIS May 2022

Earnings and Income

The Gross Disposable Household Income per head in Bromsgrove is £23,909; higher than the figure for both the West Midlands (£18,350) and England (£21,978).

	Bromsgrove	West Midlands	Great Britain
Earnings by Residence	£668	£581.80	£613.10
Earnings by Place of Work	£553.10	£585.00	£612.80

NOMIS Gross Weekly Pay FTE 2021

Research by the Office for National Statistics indicates that residents in Bromsgrove report a greater life satisfaction than the national average. The Average Life Satisfaction Rating for Bromsgrove residents is 7.5 (scored out of 10) compared to 7.38 for England.

In 2021, the Bromsgrove District Community Survey was undertaken. In the survey, 81.2% of respondents said that they were very satisfied or satisfied with their neighbourhood; 76.1% were very satisfied or satisfied with their ward; and 65.7% were very satisfied or satisfied with the district.

86.6% of people feel safe outside in daylight but only 43.6% feel safe after dark. Both of these are lower than in the survey in 2020 where 93.2% felt safe in the daylight and 55.6%, after dark. 56% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that having CCTV helped them to feel safe whilst out in public.

The top 3 things residents say are the most important areas to focus on to protect the environment are:

- Having homes that are energy efficient and affordable to run
- Reducing the amount of waste they create
- Increasing the use of renewable energy

The top 5 priorities identified by respondents are:

- Waste and recycling
- Community safety
- Transport, travel and congestion
- Healthy lifestyles and well-being, including mental health
- Maintenance of the landscape and environment

The following have been identified as challenges faced under the communities and place investment priority:

- Pockets of Deprivation
- Sections of the community are vulnerable to isolation, social exclusion, and physical and mental health issues.
- The district is dominated by Bromsgrove Town which is the focus for employment, retail and services.

Deprivation

Bromsgrove is a relatively affluent area with high levels of gross disposable income and earnings by residence when compared to the regional and national averages. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) identifies that 48% of district in the 20% least deprived areas of the country with 18 areas in 10th decile and 28 areas in 9th decile). However, this relative affluence hides pockets of deprivation. Nearly 14% of the working age population are economically inactive and 4 areas are in top 30% most deprived areas of the country. The district spends £700,000 each year tackling homelessness.

In 2020, Bromsgrove's Cultural Compact Partnership commissioned the "Tell Me What You Want" Survey. Whilst the focus of the survey was access to culture, heritage and the arts, it did identify 4 key groups in need of support:

- The isolated elderly
- Marginalised 15 to 20 year olds, particularly those with mental health issues
- Families with older children
- People with lower socio-economic backgrounds

In the 2021 Bromsgrove District Community Survey, 73% of the respondents felt concerned about loneliness as a result of the pandemic and 52% felt concern about mental health for their family.

Town & District Centres

The district is dominated by Bromsgrove Town which is the focus for employment, retail and services.

In 2019, Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP completed a Town Eco System Report for Bromsgrove. The report found a number of challenges including:

- High levels of congestion at peak periods
- Lack of car parking spaces in the town centre
- Lack of green spaces in the town centre
- Falling footfall figures

The successful Levelling-Up Fund bid also high-lighted the lack of cultural and creative space in the town.

Business identified the need for a number of investments to improve the town centre including:

- public realm improvements, including safety and security
- Improved customer facilities
- Enhanced cleaning
- Better access to shops

There are a number of vacant units occupying prominent locations alongside units that have been empty for a number of years.

Work is already underway to improved public realm within the high street which will only be enhanced by nearby regeneration sites receiving levelling up fund monies. Improvements to existing frontages, alongside work being carried out by the district council, will provide an uplift for the high street making it more aesthetically appealing to prospective retailers and visitors alike.

Whilst there is a need to invest in Bromsgrove Town Centre, this should not be done at the expense of the local centres. Public realm improvements in the local centres such as decorative lighting, additional bins and benches, provides an opportunity to uplift the areas. Feedback from smaller community groups has shown these small changes can have a large impact on residents and visitors frequenting these areas particularly enhancements designed to improve safety and security.

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY THAT YOU INTEND TO SUPPORT?

(If yes) Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

The following opportunities have been identified under the communities and place investment priority:

- Optimise the use of under-utilised and redundant space, including green space and vacant retail space to encourage residents to be active and creative.
- Exploit the biodiversity net gain and carbon capture potential of green spaces

Optimise Under-utilised Space

A recent survey of over 1,000 residents and organisations in Bromsgrove identified the need to increase opportunities to be active and creative through the use of vacant local retail space, under utilised and low profile green space, and left behind local centres. The creative use of spaces, particular the local centres and high streets, could help to drive up footfall, increase local centre vitality, and improve sense of community.

Engagement with local community groups has identified a strong desire to invest in a wide range of local facilities – community, cultural and sporting – to enable wider use and increased sustainability.

Exploit the biodiversity net gain and carbon capture potential of green spaces

The Green Infrastructure Strategy for Worcestershire and its accompanying evidence base has identified the environmental character areas for Bromsgrove District and the potential opportunities for enhancements of the blue and green infrastructure. Green Infrastructure (GI) is defined as “a network of multifunctional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities”.

Tackling fragmentation and restoring the ecological network is aligned with the aims of the Bromsgrove Local Plan and will help to deliver Worcestershire’s Green Infrastructure Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan.

Opportunities exist to support landowners to influence & change the way that green infrastructure across the area is managed to benefit the environment & deliver multifunctional benefits:

- support for pollinators & beneficial insects
- flood resilience
- water quality improvements
- enhanced recreation & amenity opportunities, which brings both physical & mental health benefit to local residents & economic benefit through the visitor economy.

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL CHALLENGES YOU FACE WHICH FALL UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

(If yes) Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

Key Metrics:

GVA per hour worked in Bromsgrove £33.10 (Source: ONS 2019)

Earnings by Residence: £668

Earnings by Place of Work: £553.10

(Source: NOMIS FTE Gross Weekly Pay 2021)

Job density 94% (NOMIS)

Largest sectors (by employment) in the district

	Bromsgrove	West Midlands	Great Britain
--	------------	---------------	---------------

Administrative & Support Services	28%	9.8%	8.8%
Manufacturing	6%	10.9%	7.9%
Wholesale & Retail	10%	16.1%	14.9%

Business demography data is unreliable due to a large number of registrations at a single address in the district.

The following challenges have been identified under the Supporting Local Business priority:

- Lower levels of productivity compared to the national average
- Low workplace earnings
- Lower levels of innovation compared to the national average

Productivity

Bromsgrove has lower levels of productivity (GVA per hour worked) than the national average although it is higher than for the West Midlands.

Area	GVA per hour worked
Bromsgrove	£33.10
West Midlands	£31.30
England	£35.70

Source: ONS 2019

Low Workplace Earnings

Bromsgrove has relatively high earnings based on place of residency, higher than both the West Midlands and national average. However, earnings by place of work are significantly lower and do not compare favourably with either the West Midlands or national average.

Earnings	Bromsgrove	West Midlands	Great Britain
Earnings by Residence	£668	£581.80	£613.10
Earnings by Place of Work	£553.10	£585.00	£612.80

NOMIS Gross Weekly Pay FTE 2021

Lower Levels of Innovation

Worcestershire has comparatively low levels of research and development (R&D) expenditure. The county spends approximately 1% of its GVA on R&D which is well below the national target of 2.4%. The county has strengths in process innovation and new business practices but less so in product innovation and R&D.

Relative to comparator areas, Worcestershire has a high number of claims made for R&D tax credits, but a low amount of qualifying expenditure meaning that the average amount of R&D claimed is relatively low.

In the past 5 years, Innovate UK has awarded £95 million of grant funding to support innovation. Worcestershire received 0.4% of Innovate UK's funding despite being 1.1% of the business base. By comparison, the West Midlands as a whole received 14.2% of this funding relative to its 8.1% share of the business base. Businesses in Bromsgrove received 10 grants worth £1,517,736.

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

(If yes) Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

The following opportunity has been identified under this priority:

- High demand for business support from ambitious local businesses

Demand for Business Support

Building on the success of ERDF funded programmes and the work of the Worcestershire Growth Hub, there is a strong demand for support from businesses. Recent surveys with Worcestershire businesses have revealed that:

- 40% of respondents (322 businesses) defined their business' current situation as "growing"; this positive view of the future was a significant change from 13% in March 2021 survey.
- Of the above businesses, 73% said that they had plans for investment and growth over the next 12 months. The largest proportion of these businesses were in the 2-50 employee size band.
- Over half of all survey respondents (56%) said that they have plans for investment and growth over the next 12 months.

The top areas of support that businesses said they would like to see offered over the next 12 months were consistent with previous surveys in 2020 and 2021 and were:

- o Digital Marketing
- o Business Planning for Raising Finance
- o Sales & Business Development
- o Bespoke one to one business advice/consultancy
- o Advice and support on the introduction of new technology to the business

The current challenges that businesses are facing include:

- o Rising energy costs
- o Customer demand/competitiveness
- o Supply chain problems
- o New technology - upfront costs are a barrier for many SMEs
- o Impartial advice - best options in relation to net zero

(Source: Worcestershire Business Survey (801 businesses) - November 2021 to January 2022)

The Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce Economic Report (Q4 2021) highlights a strong desire by companies to reduce environmental impact. The top 3 areas of assistance identified by businesses to help them take further action to reduce environmental impact or cut carbon emissions were funding; impartial, technical advice; and networking with like-minded businesses.

The Chamber of Commerce's quarterly survey asked specific questions about what interventions businesses would want to see delivered through the UK SPF. The most popular response from businesses in Bromsgrove was:

- Funding for growth
- Support for innovation

In 2021/22 the local Growth Hub engaged and delivered to over 2000 businesses. The top areas of advice and support sought during that engagement were:

- Finance/loans/grants
- Business growth advice and support
- General advice
- Skills and training
- Innovation and R&D processes
- Energy and resource efficiency
- International trade and exporting

There is clearly a demand amongst local business to access support to enable them to grow, particularly in areas that are key drivers for economic growth such as innovation and digitisation. Current business engagement through Worcestershire's EU funded programmes managed by the

County Council and part funded by district councils will end shortly yet continues to experience a high demand across all areas - Growth, Innovation, Technology, Net Zero. Over the past 4 years over 180 businesses have received direct bespoke support, 181 businesses have received grants totaling over £1.8m, creating over 75 jobs (with more to come) and saving almost 600 tonnes of carbon.

Supporting businesses to innovate and grow will help to address Bromsgrove's relatively low wage economy and drive up productivity.

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL CHALLENGES YOU FACE WHICH FALL UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY? (In Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland this should also include challenges relating to Multiply)

(If yes) Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

The following challenges have been identified under the people and skills priority:

- Levels of Youth Unemployment
- Mismatched Skills
- Loss of ESF Funded Programmes

Levels of Youth Unemployment

Since March 2020, the levels of Youth claimants have been increasing, although efforts to support this cohort have been successful there is more to do.

In Bromsgrove as of May 2022, 63 young people are NEET and unknown within years 12 and 13, representing 2.4 % of school year population in county; equivalent to two school classes. Nationally, the issues that affect young people who become NEET cost over £65,000 each in direct lifetime costs to public finances and £120,000 in wider lifetime costs to the economy and wider community. Current NEET figures would estimate this to cost £7.56M for the current year 12/13 population.

Alongside this, in Bromsgrove, 3.9% of young people are claiming benefits as of May 2022, this equates to 235 young people. The district sees particular challenges in the wards of Charford and Aston Fields.

Mismatched Skills

The Worcestershire LEP Local Skills Report 2022 has identified the following issues:

- Businesses have identified a shortage of skilled staff as a barrier to innovation and growth and is one of the major worries for local employers. Recent analysis of the online vacancies shows a 92% increase in demand for new recruits since December 2020.
- Ongoing Surveys show a growing number of employers reporting challenges in recruiting, with the last quarter of 2021, showing that 74% of employers experienced difficulty recruiting
- The most frequently cited skills deficits are at higher levels in IT, job-specific, and technical skills.
- We have a higher proportion than England of hard-to-fill vacancies: these are highest amongst middle-skill roles, particularly Skilled Trades.
- Worcestershire's employers report a need for understanding of their sectors in education and embedding a greater level of careers support to move successfully into industry post school, further or higher education. Many Employers understand the need to have a role in supporting the long term supply of talent into Worcestershire's employers.
- The impact of automation will be significant, with 10% of low-skilled jobs likely to be affected. This is unlikely to have a significant impact in Bromsgrove due to the relatively low number of roles in process plant, machine operative and elementary occupations. However, it should also be noted that some higher skilled roles (such as those within Finance and Business Services) are also susceptible to automation.

Bromsgrove has a relatively highly skilled population. The proportion of residents with qualifications is higher than both the West Midlands and national average at all levels.

Qualification	Bromsgrove	West Midlands	Great Britain
NVQ Level 4 and above	48.3%	38.8%	43.5%
NVQ Level 3 and above	69.3%	57.2%	61.5%
NVQ Level 2 and above	89.0%	75.2%	78.2%
NVQ Level 1 and above	94.4%	84.9%	87.6%

(Source: NOMIS Jan 2021 – Dec 2021)

Despite the high levels of qualifications, businesses in the district report issues recruiting in certain areas. Compounding this problem is the number of residents that commute out of the district. There is a net outflow of 7,216 people for work with 26,108 commuting out and 18,892 commuting in. Of those leaving the district, nearly 40% travel to Birmingham. (Source: NOMIS Census 2011)

Loss of ESF Funded Support Programmes

There are currently a number of ESF funded programmes delivering skills and employment support to residents of Bromsgrove. These include:

- Skills Support for the Unemployed – supported 33 Bromsgrove residents from July 2019 to date.
- Skills Support for the Workforce – supported 114 employees since April 2019.
- Community Grants – 45 grants awarded to community organisations to help Bromsgrove residents furthest from the labour market.
- NEET support – supported 48 young people not in employment, education or training or at risk of become so.
- Building Better Opportunities – supported 206 residents furthest away from the labour market to improve their employability

Collectively, these programmes have supported over 400 people in Bromsgrove.

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY THAT YOU INTEND TO SUPPORT? (In Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland this should also include challenges relating to Multiply)

(If yes) Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

The following opportunities have been identified for support under this priority:

- Tailored support for the economically inactive and those furthest away from the labour market including enrichment activities and volunteering
- Increasing the basic skills levels of residents and upskilling the workforce including interventions to increase levels of digital skills

Programmes of support will be developed to address youth unemployment at a district level. Experience of previous and current programmes show that interventions can:

- Increase the levels of social mobility of young people
- Increase the basic skills levels of residents
- Upskills residents in training and education

Specialist interventions will be developed to move young people through a co-ordinated journey, covering the key stages designed to inspire them, explore opportunities, prepare for the move into education or employment, support to apply for apprenticeship or FE/HE courses and follow ups to ensure that momentum is sustained. Programmes will be designed to meet individual needs and provide bespoke journeys that ensure improved outcomes for the individual.

Programmes of support for the economically inactive and those furthest from the labour market provide tailored support to help people into employment, particularly those who are not supported by mainstream provision. Enrichment activities and volunteering also helps to reduce the barrier to economic activity. Addressing issue of digital exclusion will support individuals into employment.

The Worcestershire LEP Skills Report 2022 identifies the local sector strengths as construction, healthcare, and business administration. It anticipates that the greatest employment growth will be within advance manufacturing, cyber security, IT & defence, and agri-tech.

The current acceleration of demand around sustainable business practice and the drive to net zero will be a significant driver for growth. The sector is predicted to grow at a rapid rate, increasing staff levels by around 200%.

Worcestershire has a lower level of employment in the digital sector than the England average; however digital skills remain in the highest demand from employers. This applies equally to those new to the job market, replacement labour or when reskilling existing staff. Digital marketing and cloud-based computing have the greatest current and predicted use locally and salaries within digital skilled roles have increase by 35% over the last year.

Worcestershire has a high proportion of vacancies where management and leadership skills have been identified as essential. Manufacturing continues to have the highest number of vacancies in the county.

With significant growth predicted in areas where there is already a skills deficit, access to high quality, relevant training is essential if residents are to benefit from the growth in business. Focusing on those sectors where high growth is predicted and where more skilled, higher paid roles will be created, will ensure that local residents will be able to access the best opportunities. Support to upskill the existing workforce and new employees will ensure that businesses are able to realise their growth ambitions and local residents will benefit from increased opportunities.

Interventions

In this section, we will ask you about:

- Interventions you've chosen for each year of funding
- Outcomes you want to deliver
- Any interventions that are not listed here
- How these interventions fall under the UKSPF investment priorities, and your rationale for them
- Interventions not included in our list will be assessed before being approved, where you will need to show a clear rationale, how the intervention is value for money, what outcomes it will deliver and how you will monitor and evaluate the intervention. This may include a theory of change or logic chain.

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES YOU WANT TO DELIVER UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

Outcome	Tick if applicable
Jobs created	
Jobs safeguarded	
Increased footfall	✓
Increased visitor numbers	✓
Reduced vacancy rates	✓
Greenhouse gas reductions	

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Improved perceived/experienced accessibility	✓
Improved perception of facilities/amenities	✓
Increased number of properties better protected from flooding and coastal erosion	
Increased users of facilities / amenities	✓
Improved perception of facility/infrastructure project	✓
Increased use of cycleways or paths	✓
Increase in Biodiversity	
Increased affordability of events/entry	
Improved perception of safety	✓
Reduction in neighbourhood crime	✓
Improved engagement numbers	✓
Improved perception of events	✓
Increased number of web searches for a place	
Volunteering numbers as a result of support	
Number of community-led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes as a result of support	
Increased take up of energy efficiency measures	✓
Increased number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies	
Number of premises with improved digital connectivity	
None of the above	

SELECT THE INTERVENTIONS YOU INTEND TO USE WHICH MEET THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY. YOU CAN SELECT AS MANY AS YOU LIKE.

Intervention E16: Open markets & town centre retail & service sector

A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.

E1: Improvements to town centres & high streets

E2: Community & neighbourhood infrastructure projects

E3: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces

E5: Built & landscaped environment to 'design out crime'

E6: Local arts, cultural, heritage & creative activities

E7: Support for active travel enhancements in the local area

E9: Impactful volunteering and/or social action projects

E11: Capacity building & infrastructure support local groups

E13: Community measures to reduce the cost of living

DO YOU PLAN TO USE ANY INTERVENTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE LIST?

State the name of each of these additional interventions and a brief description of each of these

NO

Explain how each intervention meets the Communities and Place investment priority. Give evidence where possible, including why it is value money and the outcomes you want to deliver.

N/A

Do you consider that any of these interventions may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the intervention's planned activity? All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

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Yes	No
Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the intervention is a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.	
N/A	

HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS WHICH FALL UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Describe these projects, including how they fall under the Communities and Place investment priority and the location of the proposed project.

We have received a number of submissions for potential projects. These will be assessed for strategic fit by the Local Partnership Group before decisions are made as to whether the projects will be delivered through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?

All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

Yes	No
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Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

All projects will be assessed to ensure that they comply with subsidy control legislation.

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES YOU WANT TO DELIVER UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

Outcome	Tick if applicable
Jobs created	✓
Jobs safeguarded	✓
Increased footfall	
Increased visitor numbers	
Reduced vacancy rates	
Greenhouse gas reductions	✓
Number of new businesses created	✓
Improved perception of markets	
Increased business sustainability	✓
Increased number of businesses supported	✓
Increased amount of investment	✓
Improved perception of attractions	
Number of businesses introducing new products to the firm	✓
Number of organisations engaged in new knowledge transfer activity	
Number of premises with improved digital connectivity	
Number of businesses adopting new to the firm technologies or processes	✓
Number of new to market products	✓
Number of R&D active businesses	
Increased number of innovation active SMEs	
Number of businesses adopting new or improved products or services	

Increased number of innovation plans developed	
Number of early stage firms which increase their revenue following support	
Number of businesses engaged in new markets	
Number of businesses engaged in new markets	
Number of businesses increasing their export capability	
Increased amount of low or zero carbon energy infrastructure installed	
Number of businesses with improved productivity	✓
Increased number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies	✓
Increased number of properties better protected from flooding and coastal erosion	
None of the above	

SELECT THE INTERVENTIONS YOU INTEND TO USE WHICH MEET THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY. YOU CAN SELECT AS MANY AS YOU LIKE

Intervention <i>A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.</i>
E16: Open markets & town centre retail & service sector
E17: Development & promotion of visitor economy
E20: R&D grants supporting innovative product & service development
E21: Development of innovation infrastructure at the local level
E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems
E24: Training hubs, business support offers, incubators
E29: Supporting decarbonisation whilst growing the local economy
E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth

DO YOU PLAN TO USE ANY INTERVENTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS LIST?

State the name of each of these additional interventions and a brief description of each of these

NO

Explain how each intervention meets the Supporting Local Business investment priority. Give evidence where possible, including why it is value money and the outcomes you want to deliver.

N/A

Do you consider that any of these interventions may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the intervention's planned activity? All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

Yes No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the intervention is a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

N/A

HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS WHICH FALL UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Describe these projects, including how they fall under the Supporting Local Business investment priority and the location of the proposed project

We have received a number of submissions for potential projects. These will be assessed for strategic fit by the Local Partnership Group before decisions are made as to whether the projects will be delivered through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?

All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

Yes No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

All projects will be assessed to ensure that they comply with Subsidy Control legislation.

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES YOU WANT TO DELIVER UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

Outcome	Tick if applicable
Number of economically inactive individuals in receipt of benefits they are entitled to following support	
Increased active or sustained participants of UKSPF beneficiaries in community groups [and/or] increased employability through development of interpersonal skills	✓
Increased proportion of participants with basic skills (English, maths, digital and ESOL)	
Number of people in supported employment [and] number of people engaging with mainstream healthcare services	
Number of people sustaining engagement with keyworker support and additional services	✓
Number of people engaged in job-searching following support	✓
Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support	✓
Number of people sustaining employment for 6 months	✓
Increased employment, skills and/or UKSPF objectives incorporated into local area corporate governance	
Number of people in education/training	✓
Increased number of people with basic skills (English, maths, digital and ESOL)	
Fewer people facing structural barriers into employment and into skills provision	
Increased number of people familiarised with employers' expectations, including, standards of behaviour in the workplace	✓
Fewer people facing structural barriers into employment and into skills provision	
Number of people gaining a qualification or completing a course following support	✓
Number of people gaining qualifications, licences, and skills	
Number of economically active individuals engaged in mainstream skills education, and training.	
Number of people engaged in life skills support following interventions	
Number of people with proficiency in pre-employment and interpersonal skills (relationship, organisational and anger-management, interviewing, CV and job application writing)	

Multiply only - Increased number of adults achieving maths qualifications up to, and including, Level 2.	
Multiply only - Increased number of adults participating in maths qualifications and courses up to, and including, Level 2.	
None of the above	

SELECT THE INTERVENTIONS YOU INTEND TO USE WHICH MEET THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY. YOU CAN SELECT AS MANY AS YOU LIKE.

Intervention
<i>A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.</i>
E33: Employment support for economically inactive people
E34: Courses including basic, life & career skills
E35: Enrichment & volunteering activities
E36: Intervention to increase levels of digital inclusion
E39: Green Skills courses

DO YOU PLAN TO USE ANY INTERVENTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS LIST?

State the name of each of these additional interventions and a brief description of each of these	
NO	
Explain how each intervention meets the People and Skills investment priority. Give evidence where possible, including why it is value money and the outcomes you want to deliver.	
N/A	
Do you consider that any of these interventions may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the intervention's planned activity? All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as set out in the guidance.	
Yes	No
Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the intervention is a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.	
N/A	

ENGLAND ONLY: People and Skills interventions can only be used in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 if you have identified a local voluntary and community provision, previously supported by the European Social Fund, at risk of closure. If you have not identified a suitable provision, you will not be able to select interventions for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 and your investment plan will not be approved.	
HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS for 2024-2025 WHICH FALL UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?	
No	
Describe the projects for 2024-25, including how they fall under the People and Skills investment priority and the location of the proposed project.	
We have received a number of submissions for potential projects. These will be assessed for strategic fit by the Local Partnership Group before decisions are made as to whether the projects will be delivered through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.	
Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity? All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as set out in the guidance.	
Yes	
Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.	

All projects will be assessed to ensure that they comply with subsidy control legislation		
HAVE YOU IDENTIFIED A LOCAL VOLUNTARY PROVISION AT RISK AS PART OF YOUR PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITIES?		
Yes		No
(If Yes) Describe the local voluntary provision at risk and your rationale for supporting it.		
N/A		
Provide the European Social Fund Project Names and Project References for this voluntary and community provision at risk.		
What year do you intend to fund these projects? Select all that apply.		
2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Describe the projects for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, including how they fall under the People and Skills investment priority and the location of the proposed project.		
N/A		
Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity? All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as set out in the guidance.		
Yes		No
Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.		
N/A		

SCOTLAND, WALES & NORTHERN IRELAND ONLY		
HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS WHICH FALL UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?		
Yes		No
Describe the projects, including how they fall under the People and Skills investment priority and the location of the proposed project.		

<p>Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity? All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as set out in the guidance.</p>	
Yes	No
<p>Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.</p>	

Approach to delivery and governance

In this section, we will ask you about:

- Structures you have in place to support delivery
- Support you have from stakeholders and the local community
- How you've engaged with MPs as part of your investment plan
- Opportunities you have identified to work with other places

Places need to show how MPs that cover the lead local authority have been engaged on the investment plan and whether they support it. More detail on the role of MPs can be found here.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT		
<p>Have you engaged with any of the following as part of your investment plan? Select all that apply.</p>		
Public sector organisations ✓	Private sector organisations ✓	Civil society organisations ✓
<p>Describe how you have engaged with any of these organisations. Give examples where possible.</p>		
<p>Details of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund was shared with established partnerships that include public sector organisations, business, business organisations, parish councils, housing associations and the voluntary & community sector. Partners and stakeholders were invited to submit proposals for projects that could be delivered under one of the 3 investment priorities. Questions regarding priorities for the UK SPF were included in the local Chamber of Commerce's quarterly survey.</p>		
<p>Summarise the governance structures you have in place, including how any advisory panels or associated partnership groups are made up</p>		
<p>The UK Shared Prosperity Fund will be overseen by the Local Partnership group that is made up of representatives from the Council, Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, Housing Associations, Public Health bodies, parish councils, education providers, VCS, DWP</p>		
<p>Confirm all MPs covering your lead local authority have been invited to join the local partnership group.</p>		
Yes	No	
<p>Are there MPs who are not supportive of your investment plan?</p>		
Yes	No	
<p>(If Yes) Who are the MPs that are not supportive and outline their reasons why.</p>		

PROJECT SELECTION	
Are you intending to select projects in any way other than by competition for funding?	
Yes	No
(If Yes) Describe your approach to selecting projects, and why you intend to do it this way.	

DO YOU INTEND TO WORK WITH OTHER PLACES ON ANY OF THE INTERVENTIONS WHICH FALL UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY?	
Which interventions do you intend to collaborate on? Select all that apply.	
Intervention	Tick if applicable
<i>A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Describe any interventions not included in this list?	
Who are the places you intend to collaborate with?	

DO YOU INTEND TO WORK WITH OTHER PLACES ON ANY OF THE INTERVENTIONS WHICH FALL UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?	
Which interventions do you intend to collaborate on? Select all that apply.	
Intervention	Tick if applicable
<i>A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.</i>	
E17: Funding for the development and promotion of the visitor economy	✓
E20: R& D Grants	✓
E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems	✓
E29: Supporting decarbonisation whilst growth the local economy	✓
E30: Business support measure to drive employment growth	✓
Describe any interventions not included in this list?	
N/A	
Who are the places you intend to collaborate with?	
Malvern Hills District, Redditch Borough, Worcester City, Wychavon District, Wyre Forest District Birmingham City, Solihull Metropolitan Borough, West Midlands Combined Authority area	

DO YOU INTEND TO WORK WITH OTHER PLACES ON ANY OF THE INTERVENTIONS WHICH FALL UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?	
Which interventions do you intend to collaborate on? Select all that apply.	
Intervention	Tick if applicable
<i>A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.</i>	
E33: Employment support for economically inactive people	
E34: Courses including basic, life and career skills	
E35: Enrichment & volunteering activities	
E36: Interventions to increase levels of digital inclusion	
E39: Green skills courses	

Describe any interventions not included in this list?
N/A
Who are the places you intend to collaborate with?
Malvern Hills District, Redditch Borough, Worcester City, Wychavon District, Wyre Forest District

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY
How have you considered your public sector equality duty in the design of your investment plan?
Equality and diversity officers have been consulted on this plan.
How will you consider your public sector equality duty when implementing your investment plan, including in the selection of projects?
An equalities impact assessment will be completed prior to the awarding of any contracts funded by the UK SPF and will be monitored throughout delivery.

RISKS		
Have you identified any key risks that could affect delivery, for example lack of staff or expertise?		
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; color: red;">Yes</td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; color: red;">No</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No
Yes	No	
(If Yes) Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them.		
Delays in approval of the Investment Plan may impact delivery of projects – the Council will look to fund these, at risk.		
Have you identified any key fraud risks that could affect UKSPF delivery?		
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; color: red;">Yes</td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; color: red;">No</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No
Yes	No	
(If Yes) Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them.		

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Capacity and capability

In this section, we will ask you about:

- The capacity and capability of your team to manage funding
- The resources you have in place for work related to UKSPF

Your answers here will help us know how to support you with delivery. They will not affect the amount of funding you will get.

Answer as honestly as possible.

TEAM RESOURCE
How many people (FTE) will be put in place to work with UKSPF funding?
<p>Core team (programme management): Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWedR) – 0.2FTE NWedR Business Growth Manager – 0.5FTE NWedR Communications and Engagement Officer – 0.2FTE UKSPF Project Officer – 1FTE</p> <p>Project teams (delivery): Worcestershire Growth Hub Worcestershire County Council</p>
Describe what role these people will have, including any seniority and experience.
Head of NWedR – Senior Responsible Owner NWedR Business Growth Manager – Project Manager NWedR Communications and Engagement Officer – comms, promotion and stakeholder engagement, UKSPF Project Officer – day to day programme administration

- Strong capability: Has extensive experience and/or a proven track record of delivery in this area.
- Strong capacity: High degree of confidence that there is enough staffing/resource to manage funding in this area.
- Some capability: Has previous experience of delivery in this area.
- Some capacity: Confident that there is enough staffing/resource to manage funding in this area.
- Limited capability: Does not have previous experience and/or no track record of delivery in this area.
- Limited capacity: Limited confidence that there is enough staffing/resource to manage funding in this area. Additional resource may be needed to support delivery.

CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY		
How would you describe your team's current experience of delivering funding and managing growth funds?		
Very experienced	Some experience	No previous experience
How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for procurement?		
Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for procurement?		

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Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
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How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for procurement?		
Strong capacity	Some capacity	Limited capacity
How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for subsidies?		
Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for subsidies?		
Strong capacity	Some capacity	Limited capacity

COMMUNITIES AND PLACE CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY

Does your local authority have any previous experience of delivering the Communities and Place interventions you have select?

Yes No

How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for Communities and Place interventions?

Strong capability Some capability Limited capability

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.

N/A

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

N/A

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for Communities and Place interventions?

Strong capability Some capability Limited capability

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.

N/A

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

N/A

SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY

Does your local authority have any previous experience of delivering the Supporting Local Business interventions you have select?

Yes	No	
How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for Supporting Local Business interventions?		
Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.		
<p>Although the Council has limited capability for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions it has a well-established relationship with the Worcestershire Growth Hub and Worcestershire County Council for the delivery of business support programmes.</p> <p>The interventions selected in this Plan will be delivered through the established business support teams at Worcestershire Growth Hub and Worcestershire County Council. Both organisations have an existing team of project managers and project support officers. There will be a dedicated point of contact for the project. Project managers have many years experience of managing large scale externally funded programmes, and a detailed knowledge of procurement, contract management, subsidy control and reporting requirements and publicity rules.</p>		
Describe what further support would help address these challenges.		
How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for Supporting Local Business interventions?		
Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.		
<p>Although the Council has limited capacity for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions it has a well-established relationship with the Worcestershire Growth Hub and Worcestershire County Council for the delivery of business support programmes.</p> <p>The interventions selected in this Plan will be delivered through the established business support teams at Worcestershire Growth Hub and Worcestershire County Council. Both organisations have an existing team of project managers and project support officers. There will be a dedicated point of contact for the project. Project managers have many years experience of managing large scale externally funded programmes, and a detailed knowledge of procurement, contract management, subsidy control and reporting requirements and publicity rules.</p>		
Describe what further support would help address these challenges.		

PEOPLE AND SKILLS CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY

Does your local authority have any previous experience of delivering the People and Skills interventions you have select?

Yes	No	
How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for People and Skills interventions?		
Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.

Although the Council has limited capability in direct delivery of People and Skills type of interventions, it has a strong track record of collaboration with key deliverers of such interventions, including Worcestershire County Council.

The interventions selected in this Plan will be delivered by a consortium led by the Skills4Partnerships, a well established multi-disciplinary team led by the Worcestershire County Council (WCC). WCC has an existing team of project managers and project support officers. There will be a dedicated point of contact for the project. Project managers have many years experience of managing large scale externally funded programmes, and a detailed knowledge of procurement, contract management, subsidy control and reporting requirements and publicity rules.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.			
How would you describe your team’s current capacity to manage funding for People and Skills interventions?			
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Strong capability</td> <td style="width: 33%; border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Some capability</td> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 2px;">Limited capability</td> </tr> </table>	Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability	
Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.			
<p>Although the Council has limited capacity to deliver People and Skills interventions, it has a strong track record of collaboration with key deliverers of such interventions.</p> <p>The interventions selected in this Plan will be delivered by a consortium led by the Skills4Partnerships, a well-established multi-disciplinary team led by the Worcestershire County Council (WCC). WCC has an existing team of project managers and project support officers. There will be a dedicated point of contact for the project. Project managers have many years’ experience of managing large scale externally funded programmes, and a detailed knowledge of procurement, contract management, subsidy control and reporting requirements and publicity rules.</p>			
Describe what further support would help address these challenges.			

SUPPORT TO DELIVERY UKSPF		
<p>All lead authorities can use up to 4% of their UKSPF allocation to support the delivery of their chosen interventions but by exception, lead authorities will be able to use more than 4%. Are you planning to use more than 4%?</p>		
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Yes</td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;"><i>No</i></td> </tr> </table>	Yes	<i>No</i>
Yes	<i>No</i>	
(If Yes) Explain why you wish to use more than 4%.		

Approvals

Before submitting your investment plan, you should have approval from your:

- Chief Executive Officer

- Section 151 Officer

- Leader of your lead authority

Do you have approval from your Chief Executive Officer for this investment plan?

- Yes
- No

Do you have approval from your Section 151 Officer for this investment plan?

- Yes
- No

Do you have approval from the leader of your lead authority for this investment plan?

- Yes
- No

If you do not have approval from any of these people, please explain why this is:

Additional documents

You will have received an email giving you access to a folder where you will need to upload supporting evidence to your investment plan. All applicants must complete and upload the following spreadsheet to the folder prior to submitting their investment plan:

- UKSPF Expenditure Profile spreadsheet
- UKSPF Indicative Deliverables spreadsheet

Your investment plan submission will be considered incomplete without the required documents.

Have you completed and uploaded the two spreadsheets to the SharePoint folder as requested?

- Yes
- No

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APPENDIX 2: UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND INTERVENTIONS INCLUDING THOSE SELECTED FOR THE INVESTMENT PLAN

Investment Priority	Intervention	Selected
Communities & Place	E1: Funding for improvements to town centre and high streets, including better accessibility for disabled people	✓
	E2: Funding for new, or improvements to existing, communities' and neighbourhood infrastructure projects including those that increase communities' resilience to natural hazards such as flooding	✓
	E3: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces, community gardens, watercourses and embankments, along with incorporation natural features into wider public spaces	✓
	E4: Enhanced support for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer	
	E5: Design and management of the built and landscaped environment to "design out crime"	✓
	E6: Support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities	✓
	E7: Support for active travel enhancements in the local area	✓
	E8: Funding for the development and promotion of wider campaigns which encourage people to visit and explore the local area	
	E9: Funding for impactful volunteering and/or social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places	✓
	E10: Funding for local sports facilities, tournaments, teams and leagues; to bring people together	
	E11: Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups	✓
	E12: Investment in community engagement schemes to support community involvement in decision making in local regeneration	
	E13: Community measures to reduce the cost of living including through measures to improve energy efficiency and combat fuel poverty and climate change	✓
	E14: Funding to support relevant feasibility studies	
	E15: Investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities	
Supporting Local Business	E16: Investment in open markets and improvements to town centre retail and service sector infrastructure, with wrap around support for small businesses	✓
	E17: Funding for the development and promotion of the visitor economy such as local attractions, trails, tours and tourism products more generally	✓
	E18: Supporting Made Smarter Adoption: Providing tailored expert advice, matched grant and leadership training to enable manufacturing SMEs to adopt industrial digital technology solutions including AI, robotics and autonomous systems; additive manufacturing; industrial internet of things; virtual reality; data analytics.	

Investment Priority	Intervention	Selected
Supporting Local Business	E19: Increasing investment in research and development at the local level. Investment to support the diffusion of innovation knowledge and activities. Support the commercialisation of ideas, encouraging collaboration and accelerating the path to market	
	E20: Research and development grants supporting the development of innovative products and services	✓
	E21: Funding for the development and support of appropriate innovation infrastructure at the local level	✓
	E22: Investing in enterprise infrastructure and employment/innovation projects. This can help to unlock site development projects which will support growth in places	
	E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems and supporting businesses at all stages of their development to start, sustain, grow and innovate, including through local networks	✓
	E24: Funding for new and improvements to existing training hubs, business support offers, “incubators” and “accelerators” for local enterprise (including social enterprise) which can support entrepreneurs and start-ups through the early stages of development and growth	✓
	E25 Grants to help places bid for and host international business events and conferences that support wider local growth sectors	
	E26: Support for growth the local social economy including community businesses, cooperatives and social enterprises	
	E27: Funding to develop angel investor networks nationwide	
	E28: Export grants to support businesses to grow their overseas trading, supporting local employment	
	E29: Supporting decarbonisation and improving the natural environment whilst growing the local economy. Taking a whole systems approach to invest in infrastructure to deliver effective decarbonisation across energy, buildings and transport and beyond in line with our legally binding climate target. Maximising existing or emerging local strengths in low carbon technologies, goods and services to take advantage of the growing global opportunity	✓
	E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth particularly in areas of higher employment	✓
	E31: Funding to support relevant feasibility studies	
	E32: Investment in resilience infrastructure and nature based solutions to protect local businesses and community areas from natural hazards including flooding	
	People & Skills	E33: Employment support for economically inactive people; intensive wrap-around one to one support to move people closer towards mainstream provision and employment, supplemented by additional and/or specialist life and basic skills support where there are local provision gaps
E34: Courses including basic skills (digital, English and ESOL) and life skills and career skills provision for people who are unable to access training through the adult education budget or wrap around support		✓
E35: Activities such as enrichment and volunteering to improve opportunities and promote wellbeing		✓

Investment Priority	Intervention	Selected
People & Skills	E36: Intervention to increase levels of digital including with a focus on essential digital skills, communicating the benefits of getting (safely) online and in-community support to provide users with the confidence and trust to stay online	✓
	E37: Tailored support to help people in employment, who are not supported by mainstream provision to address barriers to accessing education and training courses	
	E38: Support for local areas to fund local skills needs. This includes technical and vocational qualifications and courses up to level 2 and training for vocational licences relevant to local area needs and high-value qualifications where there is a need for additional skills capacity that cannot be met through mainstream funding	
	E39: Green skills courses targeted around ensuring we have the skilled workforce to achieve the government’s net zero and wider environmental ambitions	✓
	E40: Retraining support for those in high carbon sectors	
	E41: Funding to support local digital skills	

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Quarter 1 2022-23 – Financial and Performance Report

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Denaro – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Head of Service		Michelle Howell Deborah Poole
Report Authors	Head of Finance and Customer Services michelle.howell@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Head of Business Transformation, Organisational Development and Digital Strategy d.poole@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk	
Wards Affected		All Wards
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		No
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)		All
Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that:

- 1) The current financial position in relation to Revenue and Capital Budgets for the period April to June 2022 be noted;
And
- 2) The Q1 Performance data for the Period April to June 2022 be noted.

The Cabinet is asked to RECOMMEND that:

- 3) The Operational Bank Account limit is raised to £2m; and
- 4) The Asset Disposal Strategy is approved for implementation.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This report presents at Quarter 1 (April – June) 2022/23
 - the Council's forecast outturn revenue monitoring position for 2022/23 based on data to Quarter 1
 - An update on progress on the 2023/24 budget process – which was first reported to committee as part of the Period 1 Monitoring Report.

- The organisations performance against the strategic priorities outlined in the Council Plan Addendum, including operational measures to demonstrate how the council is delivering its services to customers.

3. DETAILED PERFORMANCE

Financial Performance

- 3.1 As part of the monitoring process a detailed review has been undertaken to ensure that issues are considered, and significant savings and cost pressures are addressed. This report sets out, based on the position at period 3/quarter 1, the projected revenue outturn position for the 2022/23 financial year and explains key variances against budget
- 3.2 The £12.1m original revenue budget included in the table below is the budget that was approved by Council in March 2022. The projected outturn figure at Q1 is a £54k overspend. This includes “absorption” of the £477k of non-allocated savings and efficiency targets.

Department	2022/23 Full Year Budget	2022/23 Q1 Actuals	2022/23 Adjusted Forecast Outturn	Adjusted Forecast Outturn Variance (Under) / Over spend
Regulatory Client	228,063	47,650	228,063	0
Business Transformation & Organisational Development	1,857,867	122,569	1,700,896	(156,971)
Chief Executive	1,797,361	160,086	1,794,068	(3,293)
Community & Housing GF Services	1,093,315	(238,605)	1,013,142	(80,173)
Environmental Services	3,438,085	(2,182,290)	3,395,910	(42,175)
Financial & Customer Services	1,406,322	96,809	1,319,284	(87,038)
Legal, Democratic & Property Services	1,146,850	11,538	1,142,616	(4,235)
Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	1,578,027	339,446	1,527,845	(50,182)
Cross cutting savings and efficiency targets	(477,890)	0	0	477,890
Net Expenditure before Corporate Financing	12,068,000	(1,642,797)	12,121,824	53,824

3.3 *Budget Variances*

The following paragraphs explain the forecast variances for each area against the 2022/23 revenue budgets (a more detailed analysis of which can be found at Appendix A). It is important to note that, at this stage in the financial year there are a number of instances where

annual expenditure or accruals may distort the profiling as reflected in the Q1 actual; this has been reflected in the forecast outturn for each service area.

Business Transformation & Organisational Development – £157k underspend

Within Business Transformation & Organisational Development there are underspends within two areas:

- Human Resources (£43k underspend) - the forecast underspend is predominantly due to vacancies. Following the installation of a new HR software package, recruitment is underway to recruit to vacant posts within the service.
- ICT (£114k underspend) - the forecast underspend is due to anticipated efficiencies across ICT expenditure budgets.

Chief Executive - £3k underspend

There is a small underspend forecast within the Chief Executive area.

Community and Housing General Fund Services - £80k underspend

Within Community and Housing General Fund Services there are two services in particular that have a significant forecast outturn variance against budget:

- Housing Strategy & Enabling (£45k underspend) – This is mainly as a result of vacancies within the team.
- Community Safety/CCTV (£35k underspend) – This is mainly as a result of vacancies within the team.

Environmental Services - £42k underspend

Within Environmental Services there are two service areas with forecast underspends against budget:

- Engineering & Design (£32k underspend) – the forecast underspend is mainly as a result of vacancies within the team.
- Place Teams (£10k underspend) – the forecast underspend is due to small budget efficiencies within the team.

Finance & Customer Services - £87k underspend

Within Finance & Customer Services the forecast underspend is as a result of vacancies across the service. This will continue to be reviewed in light of pressures within the service, with further updates provided during 2022/23.

Legal, Democratic and Property Services - £4k underspend

Within Legal, Democratic and Property Services the overall forecast underspend has arisen largely due to two service areas with forecast outturn variances against budget:

- Democratic Services & Member Support (£23k underspend) - the forecast underspend is mainly as a result of vacancies within the team at the start of the financial year, which have now been recruited to.
- Elections (£20k overspend) - the forecast cost of elections is slightly in excess of budget but is offset by the anticipated underspend as detailed above.

Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services - £50k underspend

There is a forecast underspend totalling £50k within this service which comprises of:

- An underspend totalling £36k within Development Services as a result of anticipated budget efficiencies. This will be kept under review throughout the financial year.
- An underspend totalling £14k within Parks, Open Spaces and Events mainly as a result of a vacancy, however this will be reviewed throughout the financial year.

Cross cutting savings and efficiency targets - £478k to be delivered

There is a forecast overspend due to organisational efficiency targets that have not been allocated to service areas and cross council savings and efficiency initiatives. It is important to note however that forecast underspends within other service areas, as detailed in this report, will help to achieve this target, however there is still an element to be delivered. This will be kept under review as we progress through the financial year.

Regulatory Client

A breakeven position on the Regulatory Client is currently forecast for the year.

- 3.4 Overall, the Council is currently forecasting a revenue overspend in the region of £54k for the 2022/23 financial year. This position will continue to be reviewed particularly given the impact of the increasing costs linked to inflation and further updates will be provided to Members throughout 2022/23.

Cash Management

- 3.5 The Council's 2022/23 Treasury Investment Strategy and associated MRP policy, was presented and approved by Cabinet on the 3rd May 2022.
- 3.6 Part of those policies approved included the following limit on Operational Bank Accounts.
- 3.7 Operational bank accounts: The Authority may incur operational exposures, for example through current accounts, collection accounts and merchant acquiring services, to any UK bank with credit ratings no lower than BBB- and with assets greater than £25 billion. These are not classed as investments but are still subject to the risk of a bank bail-in, and balances will therefore be kept below £500,000 per bank. The Bank of England has stated that in the event of failure, banks with assets greater than £25 billion are more likely to be bailed-in than made insolvent, increasing the chance of the Authority maintaining operational continuity.
- 3.8 Although the Treasury Investment Strategy was reviewed earlier this year and some limits changed, it has become apparent that this limit has been continually exceeded since the inception of C-19. This is due to a number of factors including significant receipt of grant funding support for C-19 and the passing of this through to the Business Community.
- 3.9 The Council will continue to keep this limit under review, but in the short term it is prudent to increase the limit to £2m for the remainder of this financial year, to be reviewed as part of the 2023/24 Treasury Investment Strategy.
- 3.10 As this is a Treasury Indicator, exceeding it, and associated change, must be reported through to full Council for approval.

Capital Monitoring

- 3.11 A capital programme of £2.4m was approved in the Budget for 2022/23 in March 2022.
- 3.12 However, in addition to this funding the Council also have the following Grant Funded Schemes which are being delivered in 2022/23:

-
- Levelling Up – Cabinet in June noted progress made to date on £1.8m of Levelling Up schemes for 2022/23 and delegated authority to proceed to spend the Levelling Up Fund allocation totalling £1.8m on the required demolition and remediation works at the Windsor Street site and to engage a design and build contractor on the Market Hall site.
 - UK Shared Prosperity Fund - £340k of grant spent (although a significant amount will be revenue based).
- 3.13 The spend at quarter 1 is £624k against the overall 2022/23 capital budget totalling £2.4m as detailed in Appendix B. In addition to this, there is spend at quarter 1 totalling £1.7m for Burcot Housing. This budget will be need to be reallocated from 2021/22 into 2022/23. This will be addressed in the 2021/22 Outturn reports to Cabinet.
- 3.14 Capital monitoring for 2021/22 was undertaken towards the end of the financial year (at period 11), and spending was only £2.7m which is substantially below the £15.6m programme. The main reason for this variance was the Burcot Housing project, where at the time of reporting only £1.1m of a £9.3m budget had been spent. As stated in the paragraph above, the Burcot Housing budget will need to be assessed for reallocation into 2022/23. This will be addressed in the outturn reports to Cabinet.
- 3.15 Both Existing Capital Programmes (21/22 and 22/23) are set out in the Appendix B.

Earmarked Reserves

- 3.16 The position as reported to Council in February 2022 as per the 2022/23 – 2024/25 Medium Term Financial Plan is shown in Appendix C.

Asset Disposal Strategy

- 3.17 The Council holds substantial Property and Equipment. The 2019/20 Statement of Accounts value these assets at £43m. The attached policy (Appendix D) sets out that for all assets there is a requirement that they remain compliant for use against present legislation. In addition, there is a requirement that Council buildings are raised to the top three Energy Efficient levels by 2026.
- 3.18 Overall, these requirements have cost implications. Over the next 2 years a series of Condition Surveys will need to be undertaken on all assets which will lead to:
- A revised Overall Property Holding Strategy.

And for Individual Properties and Land their:

- Operational necessity.
- Cost of ensuring the buildings remain compliant to legislation.
- Cost of ensuring buildings move to the top 3 Energy Effective ratings by 2026.
- Rent levels (and net costs for each building).
- Alternative service delivery options.

This will lead to a list of buildings/Land that are

- Surplus to requirements
- Not cost effective to be run (requiring alternative delivery options)

Groups of assets will be bought to Cabinet on a Quarterly basis for approval for disposal.

4. Update on Progress with the 2023/24 Budget

4.1 We reported the process that Officers are following to balance the 2022/23 (note the unallocated savings figure in the previous section) and future budgets. The main steps were:

- o Reviewing base budgets, historic places where over/underspend occur, and views of potential savings options.
- o Linkage to the 2021/22 Outturn position.
- o Engaging with our Treasury Consultants Arlingclose to review our Minimum Revenue Provision, use of debt and investment policies.
- o Assessing with Heads of Service present levels of service and associated requirements in the new post C-19 environment to identify where different delivery models will lead to further savings

4.2 We have met with Arlingclose who have requested data to complete their review of MRP, debt and investment policies.

4.3 We initially met with Heads of Service in July and have jointly compiled a long list of possible savings and efficiency to close the budget deficit position. Two more meetings have taken place during August with Heads of Service to further refine these options.

4.4 In parallel to this, work is also taking place on possible pressures, of which inflation, pay and contracts, will be a key input.

- 4.5 More officer led work will take place in September leading to a set of budget proposals coming to Cabinet in October.
- 4.6 Officers have engaged with the Budget Working Group and a series of meetings have been set up to scrutinise the budget.
- 5. Performance Report**
- 5.1 The performance report sets out to provide data and information that links all activity back to the Council's strategic priorities as set out in the Council Plan and Council Plan Addendum. Whilst the report focuses primarily on corporate, strategic measures there is a section that provides some operational measures data to provide a general overview of service delivery.
- 5.2 Whilst the Council has an approved Council Plan in place it was completed before the Covid-19 outbreak. Recently the Council reviewed this plan to ensure it remains fit for purpose. As a result of this review, the Council developed the Council Plan Addendum to take any change in focus brought about by the pandemic, into consideration. The addendum document will sit alongside the current Council Plan for the next twelve months. It is designed to provide an intermediary position ahead of a full review of the Council's long term priorities in 2023. Currently the Council's key strategic priorities are:
- Economic Development and Regeneration
 - Housing Growth
 - Work and Financial Independence
 - Improved Health and Wellbeing
 - Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour
 - Green Thread
 - Financial Stability
 - Organisational Sustainability
 - High Quality Services
- 5.3 The Q1 report is an introduction to the performance data used by the council, as such there is a large amount of data in this first report. It is recognised that effective performance management will enable the Council to use its limited resources in a more targeted manner, maximising the value of Council services and allowing the Council to be even more responsive to customers' needs. It is proposed that future reports will be more structured around particular strategic priorities in order to provide a more focused data set, consequently different priorities will be reported in each quarter.
- 5.4 Appendix E sets out the Strategic Priorities and Performance Measures in detail. For the 9 priorities there is data contained in the Appendix on:

- The Performance Measure being used.
- An update on how it is being used.
- Where relevant, contextual information.

The Strategic Performance Measures and their respective outputs are set out below. Full context is given in Appendix E:

- Economic Development and Regeneration
 - Supporting businesses to start to Grow
 - Measure – Take up of Grants – **Table in Appendix E shows by year**
 - Regenerating our Town and Local Centres
 - Measure – Procure a contractor for the former market hall site redevelopment – **soft market testing to 15/8/22**
 - Measure – Commencement of remediation works on the Windsor Street site – **phase 2 report produced**
 - Measure – Bromsgrove Centres Strategy agreed by March 2023 – **Aim to be presented to Cabinet in November 2022**
 - **Improved Integrated Transport**
 - Measure - Increased number of sustainable transport projects being progressed or implemented across the district – **Officers working to produce pipeline of sustainable schemes.**
- Housing Growth
 - Measure – Number of new Homes – total and affordable (Annual) - **118**
 - Measure – Affordable Homes Completed - **0**
 - Measure - Local housing affordability rate – **11.43**
 - Measure – Number of homeless approaches (Monthly) - **28**
 - Measure – Number of homeless applicants housed – **75% in social housing, 25% in private rented sector**
- Work and Financial Independence
 - Measure – Number of Financial Independence Team client contacts - **Chart in Appendix E sets out by month and year**
 - Measure – Number of clients assessing Starting Well Service - **TBC**
 - Measure – Number of young people with positive outcomes because of Enhanced Youth Support Intervention - **TBC**
 - Measure – Number of eligible children accessing nursery funding across the district – **71%**
 - Measure – Number of households provided with energy advice – **New contract June 2022**
 - Measure – Number of energy rebate payments – **24,365**
- Improved Health and Wellbeing

-
- Measure – Deliver improved outcomes from the actions in the Leisure Strategy – **Strategy will be going to Council later this year.**
 - Measure – Number of Community Builders in post - **2**
 - Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour
 - Measure – Number of young people engaged through Detached/Outreach youth work - **101**
 - Measure – Levels of crime – **chart in Appendix E sets out by type and year**
 - Measure – Number of crime risk surveys carried out - **1**
 - Green Thread
 - Measure – Have an agreed and funded plan and capital replacement programme for the Council's fleet subject to any budget constraints – **EST reports to assist**
 - Measure – Have an agreed plan in place to deliver new requirements of national Resources and Waste Strategy and Environment Act – **WRAP funding for cross County feasibility study**
 - Measure - Introduce vegetable derived diesel into the Council's vehicles to reduce carbon emissions subject to any budget constraints – **Signed up to framework in order to purchase HVO**
 - Measure - Households supported by the Council's energy advice service – **New contract June 2022**
 - Financial Stability
 - Measure - Financial Performance – actuals consistent with budget – **via Finance Report**
 - Levelling Up Fund Project delivered within budget – **via Finance Report**
 - Organisational Sustainability
 - Measure – Number of corporate measures accessible through the dashboard - **29**
 - Measure - % of staff able to work in an agile way - **New**
 - High Quality Services
 - Measure - % of employees who undertake management training – **tbc**
 - Measure – Staff turnover rates in relation to national rates – **16% (compared to 15%)**
 - Measure – Customer satisfaction with service delivery, measured through the Community Survey – **47.4%**

5.5 In addition, Appendix F sets out a Operational Service Measures. As with Appendix E, more context is given in the Appendix, these include:

- Sickness Absence Rates – **6.6 days**
- IT Satisfaction Rates – **98%**
- Average Telephone queue time – **14 minutes and 23 seconds**
- Average number of people waiting in Telephone queue – **1**

- Percentage of Household Waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting – Table by Month and year – **June 22 – 57.51%**
- NI 191 – Residual Waste per household (Kg) **June 22 – 37.28kg**
- Fly Tips – **June 22 – 119**
- Council Tax Collection Rate – **June 22 – 0.8% below target**
- Business Rates Collection Rate – **June 22 – on target**
- Benefits Change of Circumstances turnround – **9 Days**
- Benefits New Claims Turnround – **20 days**
- Customer Services calls by type – **Charts set out by department**

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The financial implications are detailed in the body of the report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising as a result of this report.

8. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 8.1 The Strategic purposes are included in the Council's corporate plan and guides the Council's approach to budget making ensuring we focus on the issues and what are most important for the district and our communities. Our Financial monitoring and strategies are integrated within all of our Strategic Purposes

Climate Change Implications

- 8.2 The green thread runs through the Council plan. The Financial monitoring report has implications on climate change and these will be addressed and reviewed when relevant by climate change officers to ensure the correct procedures have been followed to ensure any impacts on climate change are fully understood.

9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 9.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising as a result of this report.

Operational Implications

9.2 Managers meet with finance officers to consider the current financial position and to ensure actions are in place to mitigate any overspends.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT

10.1 The financial monitoring is included in the corporate risk register for the authority.

11. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Appendix A – Revenue Monitoring
- Appendix B – Capital Monitoring
- Appendix C – Earmarked Reserves
- Appendix D – Asset Disposal Strategy
- Appendix E – Strategic Performance Measures
- Appendix F – Operational Performance Measures

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Geoff Denaro	
Lead Director / Head of Service	Pete Carpenter Michelle Howell	
Financial Services	Michelle Howell	
Legal Services	Claire Felton	
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)		
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)		

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

2022

14 September

APPENDIX A – 2022/23 Revenue Monitoring

Service area	2022/23 Working Budget	2022/23 Q1 Actuals	2022/23 Adjusted Forecast Outturn	Adjusted Forecast Outturn Variance (Under) / Over spend
Environmental Health / Protection / Enforcement	(5,039)	(10,569)	(5,039)	0
Licenses (all)	(185,300)	(41,614)	(185,300)	0
Regulatory Services client	418,402	99,833	418,402	0
Regulatory Client Total	228,063	47,650	228,063	0
Equalities & Diversity	45,686	2,084	45,686	0
Human Resources	235,772	7,451	193,155	(42,617)
ICT	1,237,313	78,665	1,122,959	(114,354)
Policy	66,917	11,832	66,917	0
Training & Organisational Development	141,907	0	141,907	0
Transformation, Business process re-engineering & Lean Systems	72,435	8,643	72,435	0
CMT - Business Transformation & Organisational Development	57,837	13,892	57,837	0
Business Transformation & Organisational Development Total	1,857,867	122,569	1,700,896	(156,971)
Corporate	1,164,031	114,748	1,164,031	0
SMT	220,494	39,517	220,494	0
Town Centre Development	50,000	0	50,000	0
Central Post	81,023	0	81,023	0
P A & Directorate Support	100,200	3,791	96,907	(3,293)
Communications & Printing	122,032	26,244	122,032	0
Partnerships	59,581	(24,214)	59,581	0
Chief Executive Total	1,797,361	160,086	1,794,068	(3,293)
Climate Change / Energy Efficiency	7,243	(1,801)	7,243	0
CMT - Community	40,988	0	40,988	0
Community Safety	366,136	3,337	331,034	(35,101)
Community Transport	31,674	(4,901)	31,674	0
Grants to voluntary bodies	0	0	0	0
Housing Options	435,689	(36,089)	435,689	0
Housing Strategy & Enabling	310,471	41,148	265,399	(45,072)
Lifeline	(98,886)	(252,466)	(98,886)	0
Starting Well	0	12,166	0	0
Community & Housing GF Services Total	1,093,315	(238,605)	1,013,142	(80,173)
Bereavement Services	13,582	10,773	13,582	0
Car Parks / Civil Parking Enforcement	(287,109)	(561,721)	(287,109)	0
Core Environmental Operations	157,921	25,782	157,921	0
Engineering & Design	291,940	41,267	260,255	(31,685)
Env Services Mgmt & Support	415,826	102,645	415,826	0
Place Teams	985,751	121,451	975,261	(10,490)
Stores & Depots	247,511	13,383	247,511	0
Tree Management inc TPO's	225,508	11,174	225,508	(0)
Waste Management	1,345,899	(1,946,960)	1,345,899	0
CMT - Environment	41,255	(83)	41,255	0
Environmental Services Total	3,438,085	(2,182,290)	3,395,910	(42,175)
Accounts & Financial Management	474,511	52,445	559,645	85,134
Benefits	474,878	16,850	446,590	(28,288)
Benefits Subsidy	(235,534)	0	(235,534)	0
Customer Services	297,221	214	200,114	(97,107)
Revenues	337,694	27,300	290,917	(46,776)
CMT - Finance	57,552	0	57,552	0
Financial & Customer Services Total	1,406,322	96,809	1,319,284	(87,038)
Business Development	201,273	(62,863)	201,273	0
Democratic Services & Member Support	397,181	69,251	374,085	(23,096)
Election & Electoral Services	181,530	48,604	201,612	20,082
Facilities Management	(45,706)	(91,145)	(45,706)	0
CMT - Legal	57,936	13,626	56,716	(1,220)
Legal Advice & Services	354,637	34,065	354,637	0
Legal, Democratic & Property Services Total	1,146,850	11,538	1,142,616	(4,235)
Development Services	210,191	21,881	174,191	(36,000)
Building Control	(82,497)	(15,761)	(82,497)	0
Development Control	209,450	144,681	209,450	0
Economic Development	167,254	0	167,254	0
Emergency Planning / Business Continuity	13,535	0	13,535	0
Parks, Open Spaces and Events	305,389	(35,170)	291,207	(14,182)
Planning Policy	596,793	102,622	596,793	0
Town Centre Development	99,138	121,195	99,138	0
CMT - Planning, Regeneration and Leisure	58,774	0	58,774	0
Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services Total	1,578,027	339,446	1,527,845	(50,182)
Cross cutting savings and efficiency targets	(477,890)	0	0	477,890
Cross cutting savings and efficiency targets	(477,890)	0	0	477,890
Net Expenditure before Corporate Financing	12,068,000	(1,642,797)	12,121,824	53,824

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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2022

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APPENDIX B – Capital Programme 2021/22 and 2022/23

2021/22 monitoring (as at period 11)

Cap Proj	Description	Approved budget date	Original approved Budget £	deration (years)	Department	Budget 21/22 £	reprofiling incl c/fwd £	Budget increase incl savings £	2021/22 Total £	Spend to Date	Slippage to be agreed
GC1064	Home Repairs Assistance	2018/19	50,000		Community & Housing GF Services	50,000	61,221		111,221	-4,522	115,743
GC1223	Energy Efficiency	2017/18			Community & Housing GF Services	0	5,000		5,000	2,510	2,430
GC1337	CCTV	2019/20	120,000		Community & Housing GF Services	0	67,376		67,376	23,315	44,061
GC1341	Energy Efficiency Installation	2018/19	110,000	2	Community & Housing GF Services	0	65,388		65,388	11,873	54,115
GC411	Funding for DFGo	2020/21	750,000		Community & Housing GF Services	750,000	503,101	163,000	1,416,101	608,233	807,862
GC896	OLEV ULEV Taxi infrastructure scheme	2019/20	300,000	1	Community & Housing GF Services	0	200,000		200,000	270,774	0
GC899	New Digital Service	2020/21	57,400	1	Community & Housing GF Services	33,668			33,668	0	33,668
NEW	BDC 7Kw electric vehicle charge points	21/22	120,000	1	Community & Housing GF Services	0		120,000	120,000	0	120,000
	Greener Homes	2020/21	180,000	1	Community & Housing GF Services	0		476,300	476,300	-283,780	760,600
GC894	Burcot Lane	2019/20	10,275,000		Financial & Customer Services	3,275,000			3,275,000	1,124,343	8,150,051
C1107	Bus Shelters	2020/21	18,000		Environmental Services	18,000	18,000		36,000	0	36,000
GC1265	Cemetery Extension infrastructure at North Bromsgrove Cemetery Phase Two	2017/18			Environmental Services	0	12,000		12,000	0	12,000
GC1283	Fleet Replacement	ongoing	ongoing		Environmental Services	0	481,000		481,000	380,290	100,710
GC1312	Wheeler Bin Purchase	2018/19	ongoing		Environmental Services	34,000		45,000	133,000	77,003	61,937
GC1345	Replacement lighting at the Depot	2017/18	23,000		Environmental Services	0	13,538		13,538	3,246	10,292
GC1355	Depot Site resurfacing phase 2	2018/19			Environmental Services	0	252,000		252,000	0	252,000
GC1359	Replacement Parking machines	2020/21	120,000		Environmental Services	0	108,000		108,000	136,331	0
GC900	Fleet Management Computer System	2020/21	17,000		Environmental Services	0	16,600		16,600	0	16,600
GC901	Environmental Services Computer System	2020/21	38,200		Environmental Services	0	157,000		157,000	0	157,000
GC897	Regeneration Fund	2019/20	10,000,000		Financial & Customer Services	0	2,000,000		2,000,000	0	2,000,000
GC895	Re-landscaping of Recreation Ground	2019/20	170,000		Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	0	211,000		211,000	194,221	16,779
GC902	Sanders Park Play Area - Replacement for Tripod Swing (Health and Safety)	2020/21	35,000		Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	35,000	35,000		70,000	35,000	35,000
GC905	Bittell road recreation ground	2020/21	62,000		Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	0	18,000		18,000	17,367	633
GC906	BDC Christmas lights	2020/21	13,000		Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	0			0	0	0
GC1339	Rubery Redevelopment Works				Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	0	32,738		32,738	0	32,738
						10,255,668	4,263,562	804,300	15,324,130	2,662,816	12,820,419

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2022/23 monitoring (as at period 3)

Capital Project Name	2022/23 Approved Budget	2022/23 Q1 Actuals	2022/23 Budget Remaining
Disabled Facilities Grant	913,000	0	913,000
Discretionary Homes Repairs	50,000	0	50,000
Energy & Efficiency Installation	110,000	7,810	102,190
North Cemetery Expansion 0 Phase 2	6,500	15,576	(9,076)
New Finance Enterprise System	0	9,422	(9,422)
OLEV/ULEV Taxi Infrastructure	0	700	(700)
Vehicle Replacement Programme	600,000	0	600,000
Landscaping of Recreation Ground	0	3,120	(3,120)
Replacement Parking Machines	253,000	45,084	207,916
Wheelie Bin Purchase	144,000	0	144,000
New Digital Service	33,668	0	33,668
Bus Shelters	18,000	0	18,000
Salix Project	150,000	533,193	(383,193)
Bromsgrove sporting	0	8,989	(8,989)
Cisco Network Update	5,717	0	5,717
Server Replacement	83,250	0	83,250
Laptop Refresh	5,000	0	5,000
Play Area, POS and Sport improvements at Lickey End Recreation Ground	37,956	0	37,956
Total	2,410,091	623,894	1,786,197

APPENDIX C – Earmarked Reserves

Description	Balance b/fwd 1/4/2020	C/fwd 31/3/2020	Planned use for 2021/22 Budget	Estimated closing balance 2021/22	Proposed release/addition of reserves from RPP exercise	Planned use for 2022/23 Budget	Comment
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Building Control	(7)	(7)	0	(7)	7	0	To Fund the mobile working project
Building Control Partnership	(69)	(83)	0	(83)	0	0	Partnership income has to be reinvested back in to the service.
Commercialism	(10)	0	0	0	0	0	To help fund costs in relation to commercialism projects
Community Services	(43)	(274)	0	(274)	0	0	To help towards a district network feasibility study and unauthorised trespass prevention.
Economic Growth Development	(1,342)	(1,347)	350	(997)	75	0	To fund the Economic Development opportunities across the District. There is provision within this reserve to take into account the potential impact of Covid 19 on service delivery in particular Leisure Services.
Election Services	(96)	(51)	0	(51)	25	0	To support the delivery of individual electoral registration and to set aside a reserve for potential refunds to government
Environmental Services	0	(47)	0	(47)	0	0	To support the costs of the Environmental Services Vehicles
Financial Services	(479)	(1,422)	0	(1,422)	(50)	0	A number of reserves / grants have been set aside to support residents through the changes to welfare reform along with a reserve to support our Business continuity plans. This also includes funds to support the new enterprise system and the balance of the Covid general grant received in 20-21. The proposed addition is in recognition of the need to strengthen the finance team and short term capacity issue risk
Corporate Financing	(2,784)	(3,906)	100	(3,806)	100	100	The reserve has been created to offset the loss on Business rates collection and appeals in 2019/20.
Housing Schemes	(475)	(487)	142	(345)	0	0	To support the feasibility and implementation of housing schemes across the district
ICT/Systems	(87)	(80)	0	(80)	80	0	To provide replacement ICT and systems across the authority.
Leisure/Community Safety	(291)	(329)	0	(329)	0	0	Grant received and reserves set aside to support a number of leisure and well being schemes across the District
Local Neighbourhood Partnerships	(16)	(16)	0	(16)	0	0	Grant received in relation to liveability schemes
Other	(115)	(107)	44	(63)	(75)	0	General reserves including - support for apprentices, set up costs and Brexit reserve. Funds to create an Invest to save reserve to increase efficiencies within the organisation
Planning	(108)	(133)	0	(133)	20	0	Reserves in relation to a custom build grant to provide support to the council towards expenditure lawfully incurred in relation to the provision and maintenance of a self-build register, along with reserves to help towards future planning appeals.
Regulatory Services (Partner Share)	(35)	(47)	0	(47)	0	0	BDC Share of WRS grant related reserves
Shared Services Agenda	(311)	(311)	0	(311)	200	0	To fund potential redundancy and other shared costs
Grand Total	(6,268)	(8,648)	638	(8,011)	382	100	

APPENDIX D – ASSET DISPOSAL STRATEGY

The Council has a duty to ensure that its fixed assets are continually reviewed to ensure they are fit for their strategic purpose, comply to legislative and regulatory requirements, and do not lose value. A comprehensive affordable repairs and maintenance programme is required to fulfil this.

In the latest Statement of Accounts (2019/20), there were £42m of Fixed Assets. These were stratified as:

- £9m of Land
- £22m of Buildings
- £7m of Vehicles, Plant and Equipment
- £1m of Infrastructure Assets
- £1m of Community Assets
- £3m of Assets declared as Surplus

This stratification and associated valuation levels is being reviewed and updated for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 Statement of Accounts.

All Classes have a requirement to be continually reviewed. However, this should not be done in isolation.

New legislation will mean that by 2026 that all Council building assets (non HRA) will have to comply with Energy Efficiency legislation and be within the top three Energy Efficient levels. This has the potential of significant additional expenditure for the Council to ensure compliance as its stock, as with other Councils, is aging.

Therefore, the Council has commenced condition surveys on all its buildings to assess:

- The present state of those buildings and repairs required to remain compliant to present legislation.
- Repairs and maintenance required to extend the life of those buildings.
- Requirements to move those buildings to the top three Energy Efficiency levels by 2026.
- Assessments of rent levels compared to market rents.

This will lead to the Council reviewing over the next 2 years its asset portfolio in terms of:

- The Overall Property Holding Strategy.

And Individual Properties and Land in terms of:

- Operational necessity.
- Cost of ensuring the buildings remain to compliant to legislation.
- Cost of ensuring buildings move to the top 3 Energy Effective ratings by 2026.
- Rent levels (and net costs for each building).
- Alternative service delivery options.

This will lead to a list of buildings/Land that are

- Surplus to requirements
- Not cost effective to be run (requiring alternative delivery options)

These lists will be brought to Cabinet on a Quarterly basis for approval for disposal. Any disposal, as per the present MRP policy goes into an overall “pot” which can then be used to fund capital programme requirements, including possible acquisitions.

Appendix E Strategic Priorities and Performance Measures**1. Economic Development and Regeneration****Supporting Businesses to Start and Grow**

Opportunities in the digital technology sector and green industries will be key to the future of Bromsgrove. Local businesses demonstrated their resilience and flexibility during the Covid-19 pandemic. The council is now looking to support the businesses started during the pandemic and existing businesses, that have identified growth opportunities. This will be achieved via existing business support packages, including sectoral support, as well as helping businesses access new business grants where available.

Performance measure:

- Take-up of start-up business grants and creativity grants programme.

Update

Detailed below are the grants which have been awarded, and the total value. No grants have been paid so far, this financial year.

Period	Number of Grants	Value of Grants
2020/21	15	£15,104.15
2021/22	8	£16,862.57

Regenerating our Town and Local Centres

The pandemic has emphasised both the economic and wellbeing importance of local centres to our residents. Funding has been secured to support the development of sites in Bromsgrove town centre and a strategy will be prepared to ensure all of the centres in Bromsgrove District will be as vibrant and viable as possible.

Performance Measure:

- Procure a contractor for the former market hall site redevelopment

Update

Following advice from specialist procurement consultants, soft market testing has commenced via Procure Partnership Framework for the old market hall site. The procurement will be a two-stage design and build contract to enable early engagement from the contractor on buildability of the project and cost control. The soft market testing is due to be completed by 15th August 2022, the programme date to issue the Invitation to Tender (ITT) documentation is 1st September 2022.

Performance measure:

- Commencement of remediation works on the Windsor Street site.

Update

The site was acquired by BDC in March 2022, since then ground investigations have been ongoing, a phase two report has been produced which is under review by North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWEDR) and the Environment Agency (EA). The next steps onsite are to carry out a detailed quantitative risk assessment, for which a model parameter guide has been produced also to be reviewed by the EA in July 2022. The programme manager is Naznin Choudhury Naznin.Choudhury@nwedr.org.uk

Performance Measure:

- Bromsgrove Centres Strategy agreed by March 2023

Update

Background work with internal officers/local centres and stakeholders has begun to update the Centres Strategy ready to be presented to Cabinet in November 2022.

Improved Integrated Transport (Bromsgrove)

New innovations can help provide new and more sustainable methods of getting around. Improved transport can help to increase user satisfaction and increase efficiency whilst also helping to reduce the impact on the environment. Working with Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and other partners will enable new, better integrated and more sustainable modes of transport across the district.

Performance measure:

- Increased number of sustainable transport projects being progressed or implemented across the district.

Update

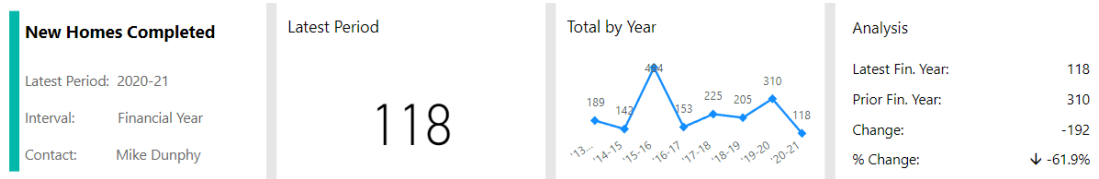
Officers are working with Worcestershire County Council to establish a full pipeline of sustainable schemes.

2. Housing Growth

During 2022/23 we will accelerate the pace of affordable housing development, wherever possible. We will work to enable the building of market value housing and the creation of additional income for the Council.

Performance measure:

- Number of new homes built - total and affordable.

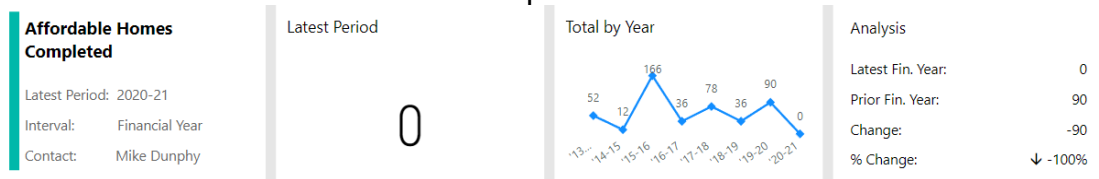


Update 2020-21

The completions by number of bedrooms for 2020/21 has decreased since the previous year. This reflects the smaller number of strategic sites that were in the process of constructing new dwellings.

Performance measure:

- Affordable Homes Completed



Update 2020-21

The graph above shows affordable housing completions in Bromsgrove District. No affordable units were built in the 2020/21 monitoring year. This reflects the lower total completions across the district, and the smaller number of large strategic sites that are currently under construction. There are 270 affordable housing commitments as of 1st April 2021.

Performance measure:

- Local housing affordability rate.

Update

The data in the table below has been extracted from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) house price statistics for small areas, annual survey of hours, and earnings.

The affordability measure, using this data, indicated that the ratio in England is currently 9.05. The affordability ratio relates to workplace-based income which uses the median earnings of those employed in Bromsgrove. When looking at the data

Bromsgrove has a work based median at £28,103. The median house price in Bromsgrove is relatively high at £321,250. This causes a significant difference in the affordability ratio in Bromsgrove.

House prices over the last year have also risen well above the normal expected rate. This will push more households into needing affordable housing.

The council is working with developers to secure the maximum provision of affordable housing on developments and RP's to bring forward affordable housing. A Housing First policy with a local connection criteria is being

presented to Council to ensure these discounted homes are provided for local applicants in the first instance.



Performance measure

- Number of homeless approaches (see table below)

Update

On average we are seeing 28 approaches for homelessness assistance per month this year which is consistent with the last few years with the exception of 20/21 due to the results of the pandemic.

Performance measure

- Number of threatened with homelessness preventions – see comments below

Update

On average 59% of approaches are owed the prevention duty providing the ability to plan for the loss of accommodation rather than having to deal with actual homelessness.

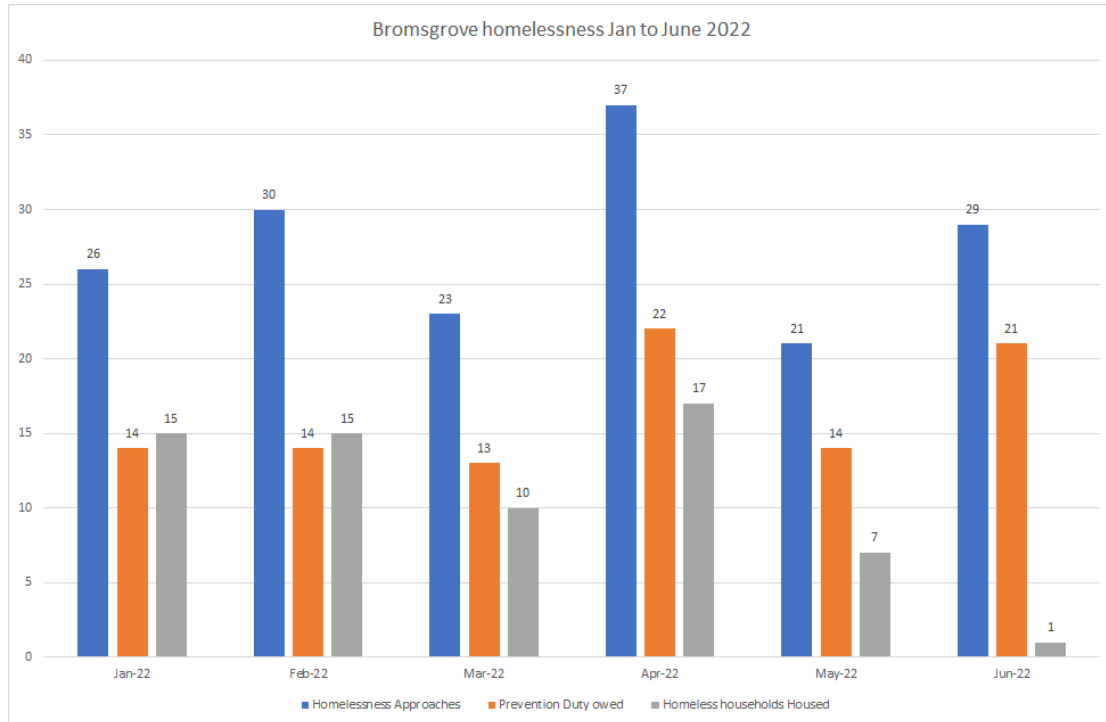
Performance measure

- Number of homeless applicants housed- see comments below

Update

When looking into those housed under homelessness duties the majority (75%) are housed in social housing. It has been positive that 25% have been

housed within the private rented sector helping to reduce the burden on social housing.



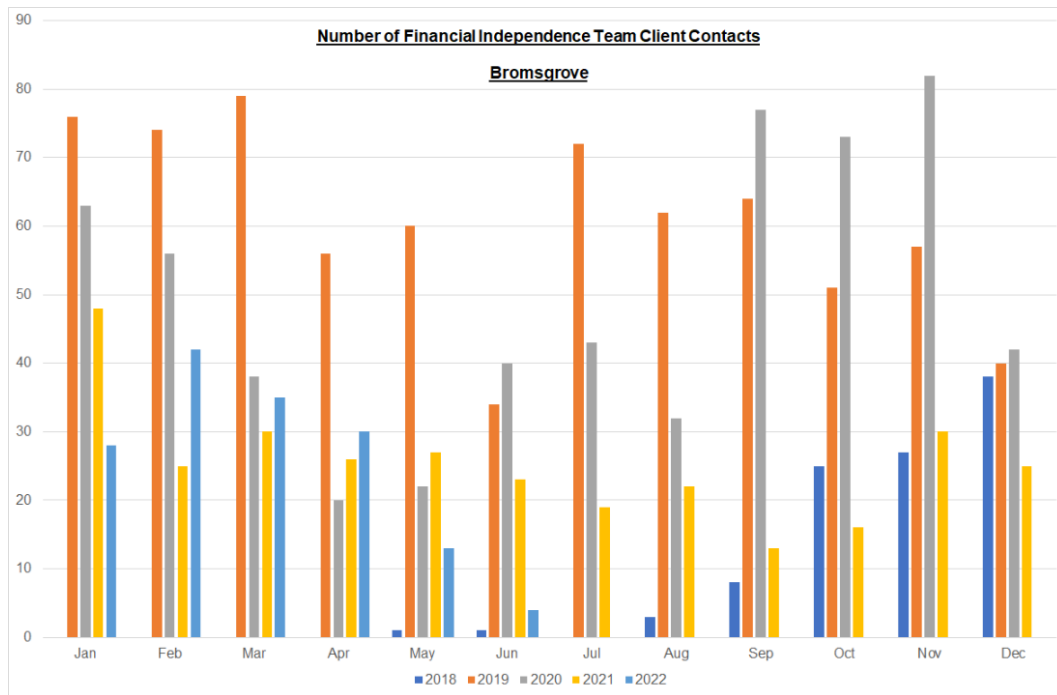
3. Work and Financial Independence

In 2022/23, we will find ways to further support, engage, and empower our residents to maintain / achieve financial independence.

We will provide quality services that help to empower residents through good financial advice, the effective coordination and signposting of services, and partnership working.

Performance measure

- Number of Financial Independence Team client contacts.



Performance measure

- Number of clients accessing Starting Well service.

Update

It is recommended that this measure is removed as it does not add value to this priority and data is not collected to the level to identify work or financial support.

Performance measure

- Number of young people with positive outcomes because of Enhanced Youth Support intervention.

Update

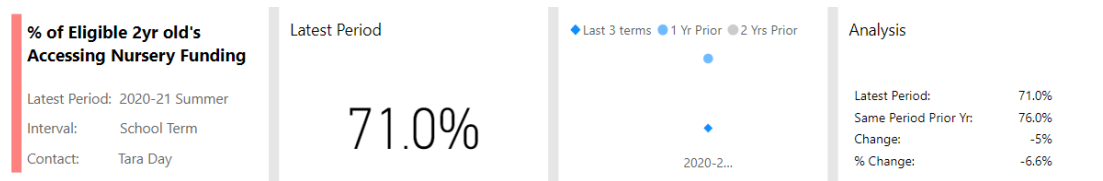
It is recommended that this measure is removed as it does not add value to this priority and data is not collected to the level required.

Performance measure

- Number of eligible children accessing nursery funding across the district.

Update

Data is reported termly, although only summer term data is available at present. The take up of nursery places supports parents in taking up work.



In respect of the above, Bromsgrove performance is good. The County average was 65% and the national average for 2021 was 62%. The impact of COVID is still likely to be a cause on take up being even higher; as well as there not being enough suitable childcare providers.

Work has been undertaken within the Starting Well Partnership with nursery providers and Worcestershire Childrens First (WCF) to look at this. We used to receive a list and would proactively contact all families with eligible children to encourage take up of the funding and support in signposting to suitable childcare providers – over the past year we have not received this list as there was a change made within the DfE and an issue around information sharing/data protection and WCF were unable to share the lists with us – during this time our Community Team held some ‘back to work’ events in collaboration with our Job Centre colleagues; we have promoted the funding on social media and all events/health clinics. In the last few weeks, we have received the lists so once again we will be able to proactively contact families who are eligible. It should be noted some nurseries across the County have closed in the past 6 months due to staffing numbers and not being able to recruit – this may impact once again on the number of appropriate childcare places available.

Performance measure

- Number of households provided with energy advice – see below

Performance measure

- Number of energy rebate payments.

Update

Between 26 April and 18 July 2022, a total of 24,365 payments of £150.00 have been processed.

4. Improved Health and Wellbeing

In 2022/23 we will work with communities to help them identify and develop their strengths. We will look at ways to encourage physical movement into part of people’s normal routines. We will look to catalyse an integrated approach to care.

Performance measure

- Deliver improved outcomes from the actions in the Leisure Strategy

Update

The Leisure Strategy will be going to Council later this year.

Performance measure

- Number of Community Builders in post.

Update

- There are currently two in post:
 - Catshill (started Dec 2021)
 - Rubery (started Dec 2021)

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) is an approach built on tried and tested methods from sustainable community development practice. It is not a set formula that can be prescribed in a one size fits all manner. The aim of ABCD approaches is to create the conditions that will enable both place and people to flourish, reduce inequalities, improve quality of life that supports communities to thrive and to reduce or delay the need for long term care and support

ABCD does this through an approach which consists of:

- Community Builders - paid workers ideally hosted by neighbourhood organisations.
- Community Connectors - individuals living locally who may organise and support local activities.
- 'Small Sparks' grants - funds for groups and individuals to support hyper local activity

Community Builders are on fixed term contracts with the hope that these will be extended, and the longer-term aim is other areas will be covered if funding becomes available for additional Community Builders.

5. Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour

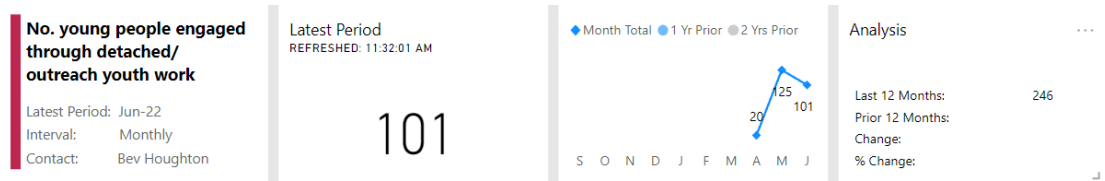
Working with Community Safety partners we will implement crime prevention projects and promote community safety services to reduce the hazards and threats that result from the crime, violence, and anti-social behaviour. We will also promote and support victim services that are in place to help and encourage recovery from the effects of crime.

Performance measure

- Number of young people engaged through Detached/Outreach youth work.

Update

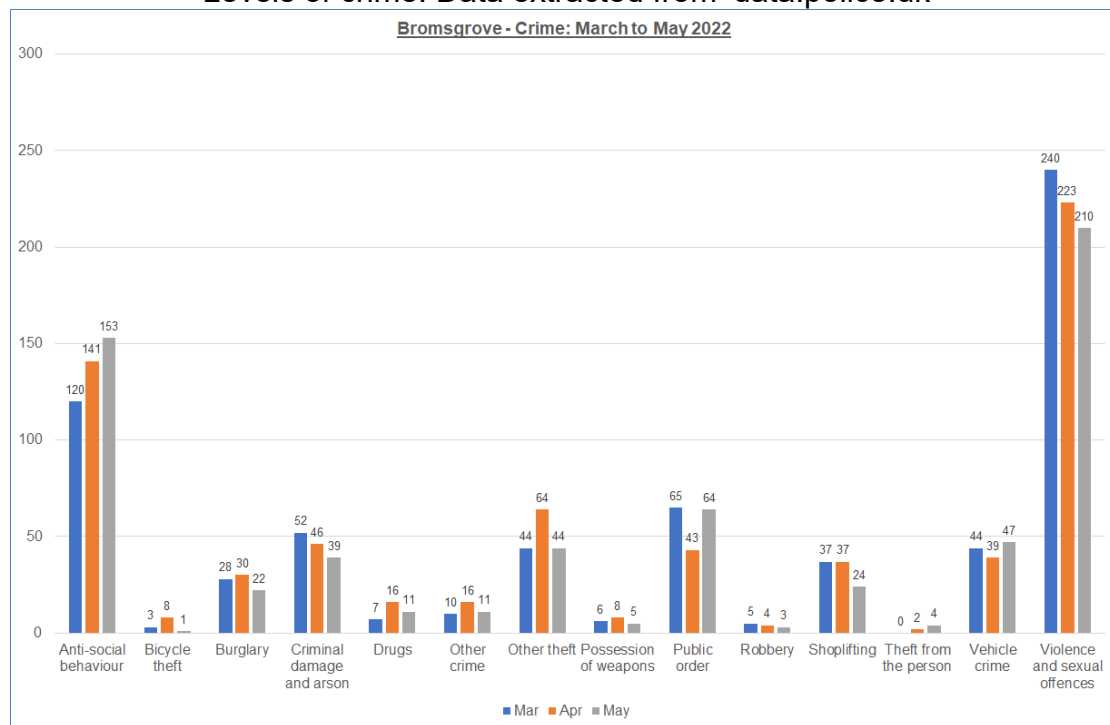
This is a new measure from April 2022.



The youth outreach team periodically support the Bromsgrove Street Pastors with joint patrols, engaging with young people who are found out in the Night-Time Economy hours. Safeguarding intervention and signposting is carried out by the youth workers and followed up with partner agencies in the following days. The month of May saw an increase in community concerns in the Bromsgrove Central areas which led to increased youth patrol activity.

Performance measure

- Levels of crime. Data extracted from 'data.police.uk'



“Total Recorded Crime” is increasing when compared to the previous twelve-month period (which includes periods of Covid-19 restrictions up to July 2021). Recorded crime dropped during lockdown periods as people were restricted to their homes and public places were closed. Many offence types are now returning to pre-Covid reporting levels and North Worcestershire has seen increases in reports of vehicle crime, public order and violent offences as reflected in the district data this quarter. Please note: Crime data is reliant on public reporting of offences – it is widely recognised that some offence groups are known to be significantly under reported and some community groups are known to particularly under report for a variety of reasons. Contrary to reports of crimes, reports of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) incidents increased during the Covid-19 lockdown periods. This was due to extremely high volumes of reported Covid-19 breaches. The end of lockdown measures

and subsequent reduction in reported breaches saw ASB reports reduce considerably. Since a peak in May 2020, there has been a gradual reduction in ASB reports to below pre-Covid levels. However, since Feb 2022 there has been a slight upward trend across all North Worcestershire districts as reflected in this quarter's data. Nuisance ASB is the most common incident type accounting for 88% of all ASB reports. Nuisance ASB is defined as – when a person causes trouble, annoyance or suffering to a community.

Performance measure

- Number of crime risk surveys carried out. This is a new measure from April 2022.



Update

Comment to June 2022 - Partners and Elected members raised concerns around safety and security of several vacant buildings which led to multi-agency working and crime risk assessments being carried out in Windsor Street (x2) and High Street.

6. Green Thread

There will be a renewed focus on innovation as we play our part in the response to climate change and biodiversity challenges. Working with partners across the region, including the LEPs and the Waste Partnership, we will explore the possibilities of modern technologies to our fleet but also how innovative technology can help us deliver greener and more efficient systems internally. We also need to maintain work around waste minimisation and maximising recycling, particularly around recycling quality and the implications of the new Environment Bill.

Performance measure

- Have an agreed and funded plan and capital replacement programme for the Council's fleet subject to any budget constraints.

Update

We now have Environment Savings Trust reports giving information to assist with the future of the fleet.

Presentations regarding the EST reports and findings have been made to the Climate Change panel.

Money is allocated in the capital programme for consultant support regarding greening the fleet and the development of a revised capital programme.

Officers are currently working to procure a suitable consultant and are also arranging a visit to Nottingham City Council who are leaders in this field to learn from their experience.

Performance measure

- Have an agreed plan in place to deliver new requirements of national Resources and Waste Strategy and Environment Act.

Update

Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) funding gained via the waste partnership to fund a study to look at options for waste collection and disposal across Worcestershire.

Findings from the consultants presented to a joint meeting of the Worcestershire Leaders Board and Waste Partnership Board.

Final report awaited, and still awaiting the results of the Government's waste consultation, which will advise what exactly the Council will be required to do. Moving forward we are using the waste board as a task and finish group to examine the options to create a report and recommendations that can be agreed by Worcestershire Councils.

Performance measure

- Introduce vegetable derived diesel into the councils' vehicles to reduce carbon emissions subject to any budget constraints.

Update

Signed up to the framework and just awaiting final documentation so that HVO can be purchased.

Performance measure

- Households supported by the Council's energy advice service

Update

A new contract commenced in June 2022 so data is currently unavailable.

7. Financial Stability

Council resources will continue to be constrained. We will continue to work on ensuring our people, assets and financial resources are focused on the priorities and activities that most effectively deliver wellbeing and progress for our population.

Performance measure

- Financial performance – actuals consistent with budget.
- Levelling Up Fund Project delivered within budget.

Financial information provided within separate report.

8. Organisational Sustainability

The Council will work to maximise the use of digital infrastructures, including cloud technologies, to enhance its support for customers. Ensuring the Councils infrastructure can securely process the increased demand placed on it by the expanding use of Internet of Things devices will be key to its digital success.

Performance measure

- Number of corporate measures accessible through the dashboard.

Update

The organisation is moving from the current legacy dashboard to a new Power BI dashboard. Power BI is an interactive data visualisation software product with a primary focus on business intelligence. Currently there are 29 strategic measures available via the dashboards.

Performance measure

- % of staff able to work in an agile way.

Update

This is a new measure and will be reported from January 2023

9. High Quality Services

Council people are key to its success. We need to recruit, retain, and motivate the right employees, with the right knowledge, skills, and attitude to deliver excellent services and customer care.

Performance measure

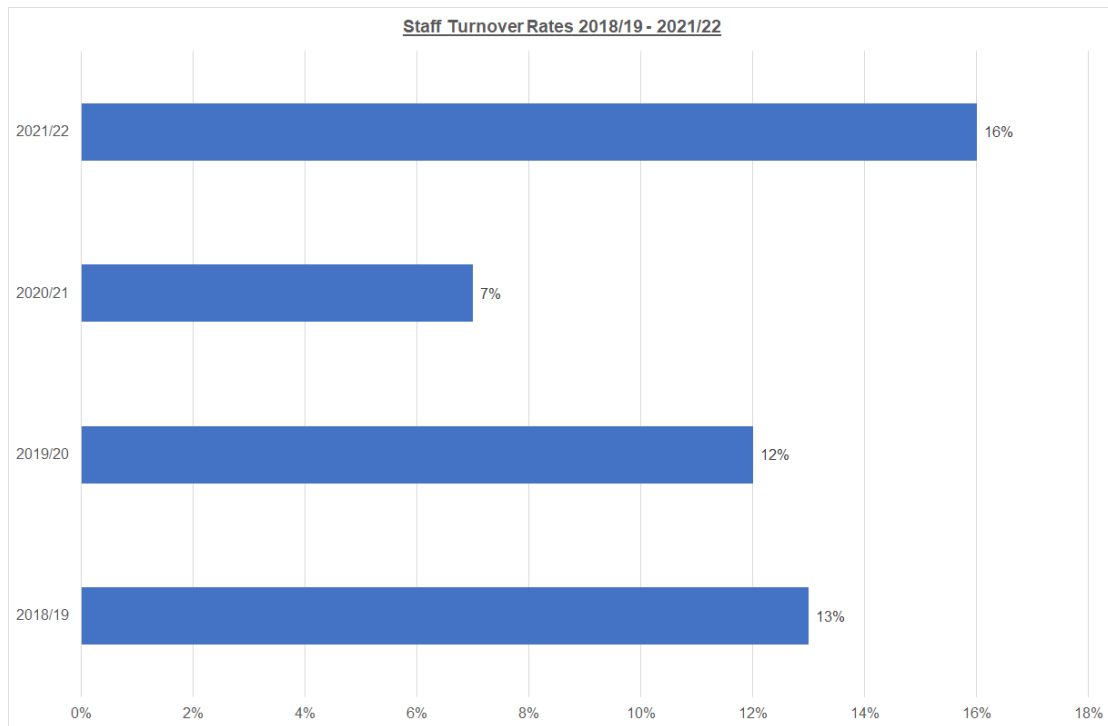
- % Of employees who undertake management training.

Update

The management training was launched for the first time in Summer 2022. It is an annual measure; the first data will be reported in 2023.

Performance measure

- Staff turnover rates in relation to national rates



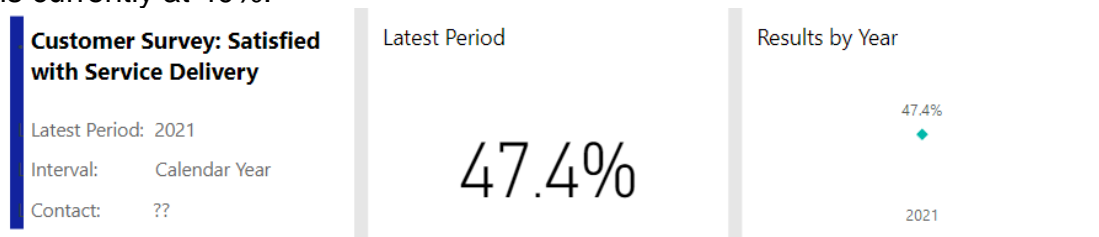
Staff turnover for 21/22 was 16%. This compares with the national average of 15% for 2021.

Performance measure

- Customer satisfaction with service delivery, measured through the Community Survey.

Update

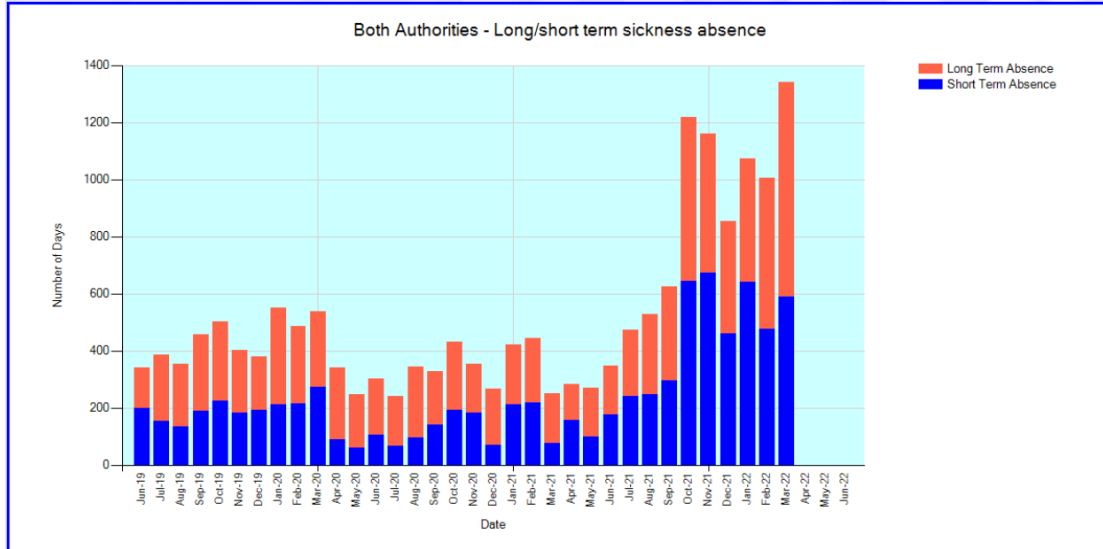
This is a new data set and as such, there is no historical data to provide context until after the next survey in October 2022. However, national customer satisfaction with LA's according to the Local Government Chronicle is currently at 40%.



Appendix F Operational Measures Business Transformation, Organisational Development & Digital Services

Performance measure

- Sickness absence (to the end 2021/2022):



Update

The data provided now includes Covid related absences. We have seen an increase in sickness compared to 19/20 which was the last data pre-covid, with 6.6 days lost per FTE. For this reason, it is difficult to compare to previous years, but we can clearly see a rise in days lost. By way of a comparator the national number of days lost to sickness absence in 2021 according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) was 4.6 days.

Environmental Services

BDC Domestic Waste Collection

Performance Measure

- Percentage of Household Waste sent for re-use, recycling & composting.

	21/22	22/23
April	44.40	46.69
May	49.24	55.59
June	59.99	57.51
July	57.58	
August	49.75	
September	48.45	
October	36.71	
November	50.72	
December	50.87	
January	39.59	
February	33.89	
March	42.89	

Update

This is a National Indicator measuring the percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the Authority for reuse, recycling, and composting, and is used in the national league tables ranking Local Authority performance. In 2020/21 Bromsgrove was ranked 175th

Recycling levels fluctuate over the year due to both seasonal effects and personal habits of residents. Bromsgrove has an established garden waste service with nearly 50% take up across the District that supports a strong recyclable percentage against the residual waste.

Performance Measure

- NI191 Residual Waste per household (kg) - BDC

	21/22	22/23
April	50.01	42.43
May	38.81	37.22
June	39.35	37.28
July	38.16	
August	40.89	
September	45.06	
October	41.50	
November	39.36	
December	35.86	
January	39.86	
February	35.38	
March	49.26	

Update

Although Bromsgrove still has high levels of residual waste it also has good use of the dry recycling service throughout the year that combined with the garden waste supports a strong overall recycling percentage. Waste Composition Analysis currently being done across sample areas of Bromsgrove will give us further insight into what residents are disposing of in their residual waste bins, which will support future service planning and communication campaigns to target this waste and seek to further reduce it.

Performance measure

- BDC Fly Tipping

Update

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2021	163	159	240	182	113	132	104	148	103	56	76	84
2022	75	85	125	102	85	119	96	0	0	0	0	0

This overview reflects the number of fly tips identified across the District requiring resources to remove and indicates the scale of the problem and any trends resulting from enforcement and education actions. The detailed data is used to identify patterns of behaviour and geographic locations that can be targeted with signage and cameras to identify those responsible and deter behaviour or support further enforcement action against those who continue to illegally dump their waste.

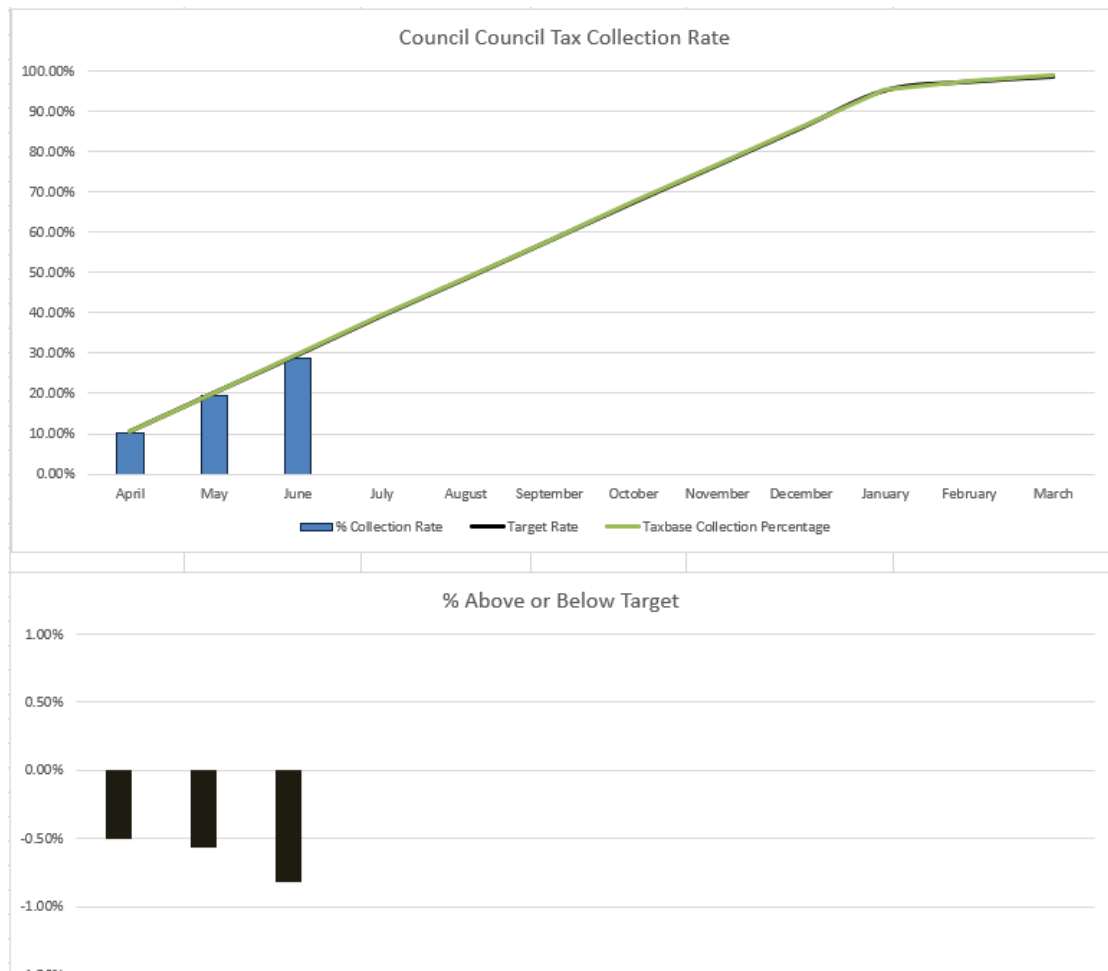
Finance and Customer Services (incl Revenues & Benefits)

Performance measure

- Council Tax Collection Rate

Update

The Council is responsible for the collection of Council Tax income on behalf of itself and precepting authorities such as the County Council, The Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia, and the Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority. Any reductions to the target collection rates result in additional charges to the precepting authorities in the following financial year. Collection rates are a reflection of the economy and with the current “cost of living crisis” it is expected that collection rates might fall.

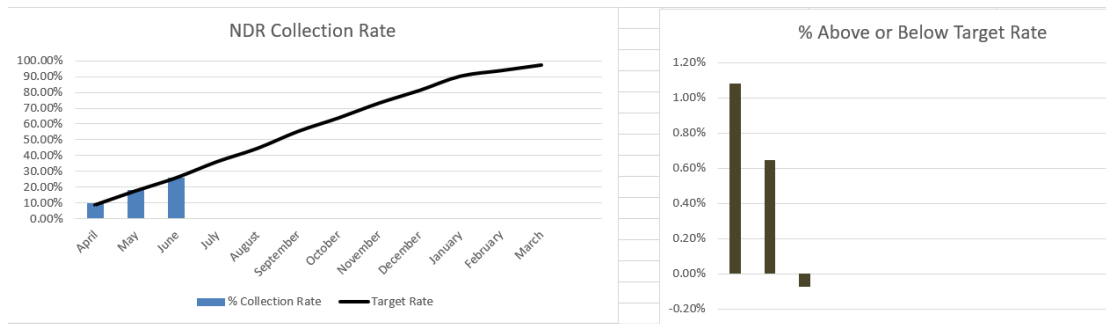


Performance measure

- NDR Collection Rate

Update

The Council is responsible for the collection of Business rates on behalf of itself and the Government. Like the Council Tax, any reductions to the target collection rates result in additional charges to the collecting authorities in the following financial year. Collection rates are a reflection of the economy and with the current “cost of living crisis” it is expected that collection rates might fall. Presently as of June we are slightly below these target rates already. It should be noted that for the past 2 years during the C-19 pandemic there were significant reliefs for businesses. 2022/23 is the first year without those reliefs.



Performance measure

- Revenues Processing

Update

There are always significant quantities of items being processed by the Revenues team including both on Council Tax and Business Rates queries. This activity has been increased in the initial 3 months of 2022/23 by the administration of the Energy Rebate Payments. In terms of Benefits processing, new claims are being turned round in 20 days and changes of circumstances are being actioned within 9 days

Month	Completed Items	Completed < 7 Days	Completed < 14 Days	Completed < 21 days	Completed < 28 Days	Completed > 28 days	Outstanding Documents
Apr	2550	527	313	280	718	712	1869
May	4887	991	505	452	810	2129	2044
Jun	7660	1500	773	609	947	3831	2031
Jul	9388	1819	935	706	1059	4869	

Performance measure

- Online Customer Interactions

Update

Online Customer transactions and Revenues calls (the next two tables) are being significantly affected by the administration of the Energy Rebate scheme which affects over 27,000 households in the district.

Month	On-Line Service Requests	Auto Processed	Referenced	Rejected
Apr	1097	270	350	477
May	1602	559	474	569
Jun	4297	3462	331	504

Customer Services

Performance measure

- Revenues Calls

Update

Revenues Calls					
Date	Calls Answered	Avg Queue Size	Avg Wait Time	Avg Number Logged in Staff	Average call length*
Jan-22	2962	2.1	06:29	4.7	08:06
Feb-22	2758	1.4	05:20	4.1	07:23
Mar-22	3888	4.9	07:56	4.0	07:45
Apr-22	3307	3.5	07:20	4.0	07:29
May-22	4086	4.4	07:05	4.9	07:55
Jun-22	3981	6.8	09:32	4.8	07:58

* call length does not include 'wrap up' time which is the work involved after the customer has ended the call

Performance measure

- Number of Web Payments

Update

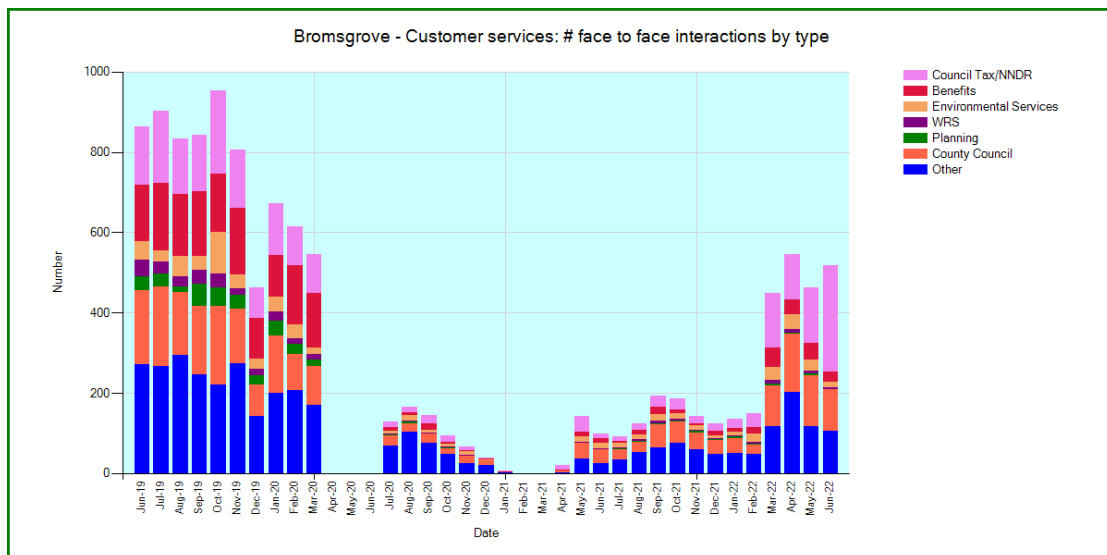
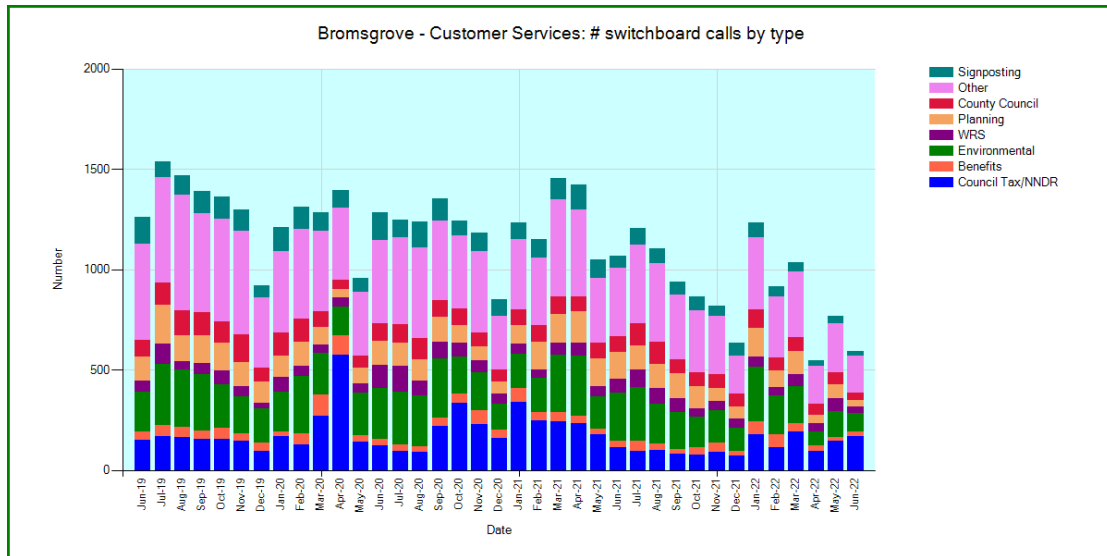
Number of Web Payments		
Date	RBC	BDC
Jan-22	3637	2019
Feb-22	2582	2175
Mar-22	2795	1450
Apr-22	3445	1339
May-22	3693	1754
Jun-22	3337	1189

Performance measure

- Customer Service calls

Update

There have been slightly fewer Customer Services calls the first quarter of 22/23 compared to the previous 2 years, although those numbers might be slanted due to the Country being under C-19 restrictions. This can be seen better in terms of the face to face interactions which reflect the periods when the Cash Office was closed and the fact that C19 has led to customers interacting with us in other ways.



Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services

The Leisure Strategy has been received and shared with CMT (Corporate Management Team), it will be reported to Committee in October and there will be a prominent level of stakeholder engagement and discussions with CMT.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

27TH JULY 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: Mr. K. Dicks, Mrs. S. Hanley, Mr P. Carpenter, Mrs. R. Bamford, Ms. C. Flanagan, Mrs. J. Bayley-Hill and Mr G. Day

17/22 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

18/22 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

19/22 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 6TH JULY 2022**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 6th July 2022 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 6th July 2022 be approved as a true and correct record.

20/22 **UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND**

The Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services presented a report on the subject of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Cabinet was informed that Bromsgrove had been allocated £2.8 million in the UK Shared Prosperity Fund by the Government. The Council needed to submit an Investment Plan to the Government by 1st August 2022, detailing how this funding would be spent.

The Government had identified three pillars that Councils needed to address through the expenditure of the funding. These pillars included:

- Communities and Place
- Supporting Local Business
- People and Skills

In addition, there were 41 interventions that had been identified by the Government for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund scheme. Local authorities needed to demonstrate in the Investment Plan which of these interventions would be addressed through the expenditure of the funding

at the local level. Officers were suggesting links to particular interventions, based on local knowledge and information about projects that had already been submitted for consideration.

Councils were required to explain in the investment plan how the funding would be allocated in relation to the Government's three key pillars for the scheme. In Bromsgrove, Officers were suggesting that 40 per cent of the funding should be allocated to Communities and Place and 30 per cent allocated each to Supporting Local Business and People and Skills respectively. The Government had clarified that Councils would have the flexibility to vary these allocations by up to 30 per cent.

The UK Shared Prosperity Funding would be available for a three-year period, from 2022/23 to 2024/25. The level of funding available in each year was due to increase from £340,499 in 2022/23 to £1.784 million in 2024/25. The funding allocated to year three of the programme was particularly high because this would be the only year in which funding would be available for the People and Skills pillar. Prior to this date, EU funding would continue to be used to address the skills agenda. Underspends could be carried over from one year to the next, however, the Council would need to be able to demonstrate to the Government that there were credible plans in place to ensure that both this funding and those funds allocated for that year would be spent within the year.

Under the terms of the scheme, Councils were able to allocate a portion of the funding for use for administrative purposes. Due to the capacity constraints impacting on local government, Officers were proposing that 4 per cent of the funding should be allocated to administration of the scheme.

Members welcomed the proposals detailed in the report and the allocation of £2.8 million UK Shared Prosperity Funding to Bromsgrove District. In discussing the funding, Members questioned the potential to alter the interventions that had been identified for inclusion in the scheme at this stage and the suggestion was made that E10 (funding for local sports facilities, tournaments, teams and leagues; to bring people together) should be added to the list of interventions for the District. The suggestion was also made that E41 (funding to support local digital skills) could be added to the list, as this would help to support people in the community, particularly elderly residents, to develop the skills needed to work in a digital manner. Officers explained that changes could be made to the list of interventions and there would be some work required to amend the planned allocation of funding between the various interventions.

Consideration was given to the timescales in which the funding would need to be spent. Cabinet was advised that there were some concerns about the relatively tight timescales available and the need for the Council to be able to justify any underspends to the Government in order not to lose any of the funding.

Reference was made to the process that would be followed, following approval of the investment plan, when considering and approving proposed projects. Officers clarified that the investment plan would provide the criteria against which projects would be assessed. Officers were requesting delegated authority, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Regeneration and Strategic Partnerships, to develop projects and to deliver the outcomes. In a context in which decisions would need to be taken and the funding spent in extremely tight timescales, Members agreed that this proposal should be amended to also grant authority to agree the projects.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The Investment Plan is approved for submission to the UK Government;
- 2) Authority to finalise the Investment plan be delegated to the Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Regeneration and Strategic Partnerships and in light of advice from the Bromsgrove Partnership;
- 3) Authority to develop and agree projects to deliver the outcomes contained in the investment plan be delegated to the Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Regeneration and Strategic Partnerships and in light of advice from the Bromsgrove Partnership; and

RECOMMENDED that

- 4) The Medium Term Financial Strategy is amended to include the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Allocation when next reviewed.

21/22

QUARTERLY RISK UPDATE BROMSGROVE- JULY 2022

The Interim Section 151 Officer presented the Quarterly Risk Update for Cabinet's consideration.

Members were advised that in 2018/19 there had been an audit of risk management arrangements in place at the Council. As a result of this audit, Zurich Municipal was commissioned to consider the Council's risk management arrangements and the suggestions made in this review led to the Council adopting a Risk Management Strategy. The Internal Audit team subsequently reviewed risk management arrangements in place at the Council and unfortunately this had concluded that there was a lack of evidence that the requirements detailed in the Risk Management Strategy were being fully complied with. The Corporate Management Team (CMT) had subsequently reviewed arrangements and, whilst finding some compliance, had concluded that this was not consistent across the authority. A Risk Management Board had subsequently been introduced and all departments were required to nominate a risk champion who attended meetings of the board.

The Audit, Standards and Governance Committee was the responsible body for considering the Council's management of corporate risks. However, as no report had been presented for Members' consideration on the subject of risk management for three years, a decision had been taken to also report to Cabinet on the arrangements.

The Council used the 4Risk system to manage both corporate and departmental risks. This system had been reviewed and had been found to be fit for purpose as long as correct information was logged on the system. However, the Council was not prescriptive about how the system should be used.

Members discussed the content of the report and in doing so made reference to the two departmental risks categorised as "red risks", both in relation to the ICT department. These related to failure to identify, maintain and test disaster recovery arrangements and system functionality to manage records. Officers explained that the ICT department had been very strict in reviewing their departmental risks and a lot of action was in the process of being taken to try to address these risks, including in relation to cyber security, which was considered to be a corporate risk.

Reference was made to the Risk Management Handbook which referred to the Leader as the lead Councillor for risk management. Officers confirmed that this would be updated in the handbook and Members were advised that in fact the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee was the lead for risk management.

Cabinet discussed the definition that had been provided in the report for a corporate risk, which needed to have significant impact on the Council's finances, be cross departmental and / or result in serious reputational damage. Questions were raised about what was considered likely to fall within this definition and the potential for departmental risks to also be considered corporate risks. Officers clarified that corporate risks tended to be cross cutting across various departments. The only corporate risk that was specific to one department related to the Planning process.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the definition of a Corporate Risk be approved;
- 2) the present list of Corporate Risks be approved;
- 3) the use of the Risk Management Framework devised by Zurich be approved; and
- 4) the progress made on the Action Plan approved by CMT on the 16th March 2022 be approved.

The meeting closed at 6.33 p.m.

Chairman