

# Public Document Pack



## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**WEDNESDAY 24TH JANUARY 2024**

**AT 6.00 P.M.**

### **PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE**

**MEMBERS:** Councillors S. Ammar (Chairman), B. Kumar (Vice-Chairman), A. Bailes, R. Bailes, S. J. Baxter, S. R. Colella, A. M. Dale, J. Elledge, S. M. Evans, D. J. A. Forsythe, E. M. S. Gray, C.A. Hotham, D. Hopkins, R. J. Hunter, H. J. Jones, R. Lambert, M. Marshall, K.J. May, P. M. McDonald, B. McEldowney, S. T. Nock, D. J. Nicholl, S. R. Peters, J. Robinson, S. A. Robinson, H. D. N. Rone-Clarke, J. D. Stanley, D. G. Stewart, K. Taylor, S. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

## **AGENDA**

### **WELCOME**

- 1. To receive apologies for absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**

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

- 3. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 6th December 2023 (Pages 7 - 24)**

4. **To receive any announcements from the Chairman and/or Head of Paid Service**
5. **To receive any announcements from the Leader**
6. **To receive comments, questions or petitions from members of the public**

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

7. **Urgent Decisions**
8. **To receive and consider a report from the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing, Health and Wellbeing (Pages 25 - 48)**

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.

9. **Outside Bodies Appointment**
10. **Local Government Boundary Commission for England preliminary stage Boundary Review for Bromsgrove - Council Size Submission (Pages 49 - 94)**
11. **Outcomes of the Corporate Peer Challenge (Pages 95 - 114)**
12. **Recommendations from the Cabinet**

To consider the recommendations from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

Any recommendations from meeting will be published in a Supplementary Papers pack to this agenda.

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

- (i) Planning Enforcement Policy (Pages 115 - 132)
- (ii) Council Tax Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy - Council Section 13a1(C) Policy (Pages 133 - 142)
- (iii) Council Tax - Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums (Pages 143 - 150)
- (iv) Final Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25 (Pages 151 - 158)
- (v) Planning and Environmental Enforcement Business Case (Pages 159 - 166)
- (vi) Medium Term Financial Plan 2024-25 to 2026-27 Tranche 1 (following consultation) (Pages 167 - 246)

14. **To note the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 17th January 2024**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting due to take place on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024 will follow in a Supplementary Papers pack.

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

The Questions on Notice will follow in a supplementary pack.

16. **Motions on Notice**

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

The Motions on Notice will follow in a supplementary pack.

17. **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**
  
18. **To consider, and if considered appropriate, to pass the following resolution to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of item(s) of business containing exempt information:-**

**"RESOLVED:** that under Section 100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act, as amended, the relevant paragraph of that part, in each case, being as set out below, and that it is in the public interest to do so:-

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Paragraph(s)</u>
19	4
20	3

19. **Planning and Environmental Enforcement Business Case (Pages 247 - 274)**
  
20. **Medium Term Financial Plan Tranche 1 2024/5 to 2026/7 (following consultation) (Pages 275 - 276)**

Sue Hanley  
Chief Executive (Interim)

Parkside  
Market Street  
BROMSGROVE  
Worcestershire  
B61 8DA

16th January 2024

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

Please note that this is a public meeting and will be live streamed for general access via the Council's YouTube channel.

You are able to see and hear the livestream of the meeting from the Committee Pages of the website, alongside the agenda for the meeting.

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

### **GUIDANCE FOR ELECTED MEMBERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING MEETINGS IN PERSON**

Meeting attendees and members of the public 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.

#### **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 the live stream will be suspended and that part of the meeting will not be recorded.



## **INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC**

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

You can access the following documents:

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

at [www.bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk)

## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**6TH DECEMBER 2023, AT 6.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors S. Ammar (Chairman), B. Kumar (Vice-Chairman), A. Bailes, S. J. Baxter, S. R. Colella, A. M. Dale, J. Elledge, S. M. Evans, D. J. A. Forsythe, E. M. S. Gray, C.A. Hotham, D. Hopkins, R. J. Hunter, H. J. Jones, R. Lambert, M. Marshall, K.J. May, P. M. McDonald, B. McEldowney, S. T. Nock, S. R. Peters, J. Robinson, S. A. Robinson, H. D. N. Rone-Clarke, J. D. Stanley, D. G. Stewart, K. Taylor, S. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker.

Officers: Mrs. S. Hanley, Mr P. Carpenter, Mr. G. Revans, Mrs. C. Felton, Ms. N Cummings, Mrs B. Talbot, Mrs. J. Bayley-Hill and Mrs J. Gresham.

58\23 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R. Bailes and D.J Nicholl.

59\23 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor R. J. Hunter declared that for the second Motion on Notice at minute item no.72/23 concerning improving rail connectivity at Bromsgrove train station, he was a member of the Bromsgrove and Redditch Rail Users Partnership.

60\23 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 25TH OCTOBER 2023**

The minutes from the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023 were submitted for Members' consideration.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023 be approved as a true and accurate record subject to the inclusion of Councillor S.R. Peters in the list of those present at the meeting and a correction to minute number 43/23, Declarations of Interest, that Councillor P Whittaker's interest related to Tutnall Sewage Treatment Plant and not Frankley Green.

61\23 **TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND/OR HEAD OF PAID SERVICE**

On behalf of the Council, the Chairman congratulated Alvechurch Parish Council on achieving the Quality Gold Award as part of the National Local Council Award Scheme, which recognised that the Parish Council met the high standards set by the Parish Council sector.

The following Parish Councillors were thanked:

Councillor Marc Worrall, Chairman  
Councillor Nigel Cutress  
Councillor Peter Freeman  
Councillor Sue Lambert  
Councillor Brett Shepherd  
Councillor Tony Williams  
Councillor Keith Wiseman  
Councillor Paul Edwards  
Councillor Sam Lewis  
Councillor Rachael Bailes  
Councillor Steve Hornsby  
Councillor Barry Thornton,

together with the Parish Council's Executive Officer Mrs Jane Smailes and Assistant Mrs Faye Murphy.

62\23

## **TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE LEADER**

The Leader wished all Councillors compliments of the season, wished them a happy New Year and thanked all for their work on behalf of the residents of the District.

63\23

## **TO RECEIVE COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Mr. Jinks asked the following question:

“Having worked closely with 80+ High Street businesses, we have been asked to propose the following question. Can you please consider the option of reviewing the pricing structure on all council car parks around Bromsgrove High Street to enable an offering of 1 hours' free parking to be created. We feel that this will have a huge beneficial effect on the flow of business to the High Street and may lead to more businesses choosing to come to Bromsgrove in the future. We would propose that the shortfall created by this scheme be met by increasing the 1+ hour pricing charges.”

Councillor S. Baxter, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration, responded that the Council was currently undertaking a review of its car park charges including the charging periods, charges and any concessions. The outcome of the review would be part of tranche 2 of the reports included in the forward plan for the establishment of the 2024-5 budget. The Council currently supported local businesses and she gave the example of free parking across all car parks on the previous Saturday to support the Small Business Saturday initiative. Councillor Baxter invited Mr Jinks to send her an e-mail with proposals and ideas for car parking.

64\23 **URGENT DECISIONS**

Members were advised that no urgent decisions had been taken since the previous meeting of the Council.

65\23 **STATUTORY OFFICER POSTS - APPOINTMENTS**

Mrs S Hanley, Interim Head of Paid Service and Mr P Carpenter, Interim S151 Officer, left the room prior to consideration of this item. Mrs C Felton, Monitoring Officer, remained to support the Council so that one Statutory officer was present.

The Council considered a report setting out proposals in respect of the fixed term appointment of Mrs Susan Hanley so that she could continue in post as the Council's Interim Head of Paid Service. It also proposed the fixed term appointment of Mr Peter Carpenter to the post of Interim Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive. Members also considered a proposal to appoint Mrs Claire Felton as the Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer for Bromsgrove District Council.

In July 2023, in preparation for the retirement of the former Joint Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service in September, the Council had appointed Mrs Hanley as Acting Joint Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service. An urgent decision on this subject was subsequently taken by Redditch Borough Council in August.

Whilst a recruitment exercise had been undertaken for both the posts of Chief Executive and Section 151 officer, the Council was unable to recruit on this occasion.

The Council therefore needed to

- Arrange for a further recruitment process for the two senior officer posts to take place, which would take time to set up and implement.
- Take steps to ensure the stability and continuity of the existing senior management team until such time as permanent recruitment could be implemented, and
- Ensure that the Council had a Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer during this period of transition.

The Council was required by law to appoint an officer as the Council's Head of Paid Service. Mrs Hanley had expressed a wish to retire on the appointment of the permanent Chief Executive, and therefore not to return to her substantive role as Deputy Chief Executive. As such, she had expressed her intention to resign from her substantive post as Deputy Chief Executive. This enabled both Councils to consider options regarding the Senior Management structure including that of the substantive role of Mrs Hanley ahead of her retirement. It was proposed that on receiving Mrs Hanley's notice, she would be appointed as Interim

Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service on a Fixed Term contract until 30th November 2024.

In addition, following the resignation of Mr James Howse, Mr Carpenter had been appointed as interim Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer. In June, Redditch and Bromsgrove Members separately agreed to extend his appointment until 22nd December 2023. The current arrangement was set up as a placement via West Midlands Employers and Mr Carpenter was paid on a daily rate. The Council remained subject to the legal requirement to have a Section 151 officer in place and Mr Carpenter was currently working on critical projects on behalf of the Council.

To ensure a period of stability at the senior level, it was proposed that Mr Carpenter be appointed as Interim Executive Director of Resources. It was also proposed that he was appointed as Interim Deputy Chief Executive, the post due to be vacated by Mrs Hanley. This role would encompass his current role of Section 151 Officer.

This new expanded role would be secured by way of a direct contract of employment between Mr Carpenter and Bromsgrove District Council, as the employing authority, on a Fixed Term contract until 30th November 2024. Mr Carpenter would be “made available” to Redditch Borough Council under the shared service arrangements and would also continue to act as Section 151 Officer for both Councils. In view of the resignation of Ms Michelle Howells who currently acted as the Deputy S151 Officer, continuity of tenure at the most senior level was important given current challenges and projects.

In practice, elections had to be covered simultaneously at both Councils, and these duties had always been shared by two officers. It was proposed that Mrs Hanley would continue to cover these roles for Redditch, and that Mrs Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services, be appointed as the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer for Bromsgrove.

Councillor K. May proposed, Councillor C. Hotham seconded the recommendations in the report.

Councillors thanked Mrs. Hanley, Mr. Carpenter and Ms. Howells for their work and support to the Council.

**RESOLVED** that

- 1) Mrs Susan Hanley continue to be appointed as the Interim Head of Paid Service for Bromsgrove District Council until 30<sup>th</sup> November 2024, or, if the date is later, until such time as a new permanent Head of Paid Service has commenced employment with the Council.
- 2) Following Mrs Hanley’s resignation from her substantive position as Deputy Chief Executive, Mr Peter Carpenter be appointed as Interim

Deputy Chief Executive and Interim Executive Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer) on a fixed term basis until 30<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

- 3) Subject thereto, Mr Peter Carpenter to be made available under the shared services arrangements with Redditch Borough Council to perform such duties as are required in his capacity as Interim Deputy Chief Executive and Interim Executive Director Resources (Section 151 Officer) for Redditch Borough Council.
- 4) Mrs Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services, to be appointed as the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer for Bromsgrove District Council.

66\23

## **RECOMMENDATION FROM THE LICENSING COMMITTEE**

The Council considered a recommendation from the Licensing Committee which proposed the adoption of a refreshed Statement of Licensing Policy. This had been produced following a period of consultation.

**RESOLVED** that the revised Statement of Licensing Policy shown at Appendix 3 to the report be approved and published to take effect on 1st April 2024.

67\23

## **JOINT AUDITOR'S 2020-2021 AND 2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

The Council had received the Interim Auditor's Annual Report from its External Auditors Grant Thornton for 2021/22 and 2022/23. The report set out progress since the 2020/21 Report and contained an updated Statutory Recommendation with the key reason being the non-delivery of the 2020/21 and subsequent financial statements. This had been considered by the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee on 27th November 2023 and recommendations from the Committee had been circulated to Members.

In presenting the report, Councillor C. Hotham, Cabinet Member for Finance and Enabling, reported the Section 24 recommendation around the delivery of the 2020/21 accounts was still in place and had been extended to subsequent financial years. Of the five key recommendations in the 2021/22 report, only one serious weakness remained, relating to the opening balances linked to the budget, and would be resolved when the accounts were delivered. The others had either been resolved, downgraded or linked to improvement recommendations. There was one new key recommendation relating to organisation capacity and capability, which was being mitigated via the rollout of the Council's workforce strategy. £150k had been committed to supporting this.

Of the thirteen original improvement recommendations, nine had been fully or partially addressed and four were yet to be addressed. Ongoing improvements were linked to the ten new improvement

recommendations in the Auditor's report. The External Auditors had noted the significant progress made by the Council in all areas apart from the delivery of the accounts. The existing Section 24 recommendation therefore remained outstanding in relation to the 2021 and subsequent accounts and the auditors had concluded it was appropriate to use their powers to make written recommendations under s 24 of the Act.

The Audit, Standards and Governance Committee had reviewed the report in front of the External Auditors, and the Vice Chairman of the Committee reported that it had asked probing questions and had agreed the recommendations before the Council today. This included adding a recommendation about the ongoing governance of the actions arising from the report.

**RESOLVED** that

- 1) That the Section 24 Statutory Recommendation is accepted and that Council review the recommendation, endorse the actions included in the management responses which form the rectification process required as per legislation; and
- 2) That Audit, Standards and Governance Committee members are updated on key deliverables, where deemed applicable by the Chairman, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Enabling and the Section 151 Officer, between Committee meetings and that appropriate governance arrangements are put in place to resolve the Council's position.

68\23

**TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER A REPORT FROM THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR LEISURE, CULTURE AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

Councillor S.J. Colella, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Climate Change, introduced his report. In doing so he referred to the Leisure and Cultural strategies that had seen a strong set of deliverables throughout the District and had built strong bonds within communities. The launch of the Cultural Compact's first major participation campaign, 'ReNEW' in the North East of the District was a particular highlight. The culture and heritage days had also been very successful. He thanked all the officers for their hard work and commitment in supporting such activities.

Since the Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and adopted the climate change strategy in 2022, officers had been working to support achievement of the Council's carbon reduction targets. The Council worked in partnership with other organisations, residents and businesses on this. Councillor Colella referred to the carbon literacy training for Members being arranged for January 2024 and urged as many members as possible to attend. Additional finance had been obtained for the Council via grants which helped to support initiatives.

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
6th December 2023

The following were the main items raised during this item:

- Further information was requested about the health intervention activity, especially relating to multiple sclerosis support, and an update was requested about cross departmental working supporting the launch of the youth service. The Cabinet member undertook to respond to Councillor Rone-Clarke outside the meeting on these queries.
- Whether carbon reduction could become a strategic purpose and reference to 'adapting' could be changed to be more robust.
- Whilst the improvement on the government's net zero target of 2050 by including 2040 was welcomed, it was suggested this should be set at 2030 to support achieving carbon neutrality. The Cabinet member responded that the situation was fluid but this was a clear corporate target.
- When the Climate change working party last met and whether this was the most appropriate vehicle for reviewing implementation of the Council's Carbon Reduction action plan. The Cabinet member responded that it last met prior to the elections in May 2023; he considered the issue would be better embedded by holding Cabinet member drop-in sessions open to all to provide opportunities to broaden members' knowledge.
- When the play audit was due to be brought to Councillors and whether there would be any commitment in the budget for improvements. The Cabinet Member responded that the position set out at the previous Council meeting under discussion of a Motion on Notice still remained and a report would be brought forward to members in February 2024.
- When the improvements at the park at the junction of New Road and Ford House Road would be completed. The Cabinet Member responded that the length of the project would be dependent on contract arrangements and the weather conditions.
- A member asked for details of membership of the Ryland Centre Advisory Group. The Cabinet Member advised that representatives from Bromsgrove School, Active Herefordshire and Worcestershire, the Chair of the Wellbeing Theme Group and relevant District Council officers attended this.
- A member sought clarity about the playing pitch strategy and how it was compiled. The Cabinet member reported that the assessment was carried out on both Council owned and other pitches, such as those run by Parish Councils, to identify any gaps in provision. Where a lack of facilities was identified then these could be addressed through planning applications as appropriate.
- The Cabinet member undertook to give details outside the meeting to Councillor D. Hopkins about how the £35k Arts Council grant to support the Cultural Compact in North East Worcestershire would be allocated.
- The view was expressed that focus and drive needed to be applied to the Carbon Reduction Implementation Plan and if the

Climate Change Panel did not continue there was a risk this would be lost. The Cabinet Member commented that any changes to governance would need to be considered by the Constitution Working Group initially. When the new Climate Change Officer had been appointed the Cabinet Member would pick up the current strategic targets and any additional targets brought forward with officers.

- Whether there were any plans to hold roadshows for residents to demonstrate how they could contribute to carbon reduction. The Cabinet Member responded that the Council had used Act on Energy to give advice in the past but agreed to pursue the suggestion as a way of engaging the community.
- Whether the Sanders Park Lights Trail could be held earlier in the year to avoid the busier festive period. The Cabinet member responded that this possibility could be explored.

69\23

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET**

The Chairman advised that there were four recommendations from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023, which were presented for the Council's consideration.

### **Governance Systems Review – Update Report**

Council considered the recommendation which stemmed from action under the review of Council governance following the May 2023 election, where the Council was under no overall control and there was a desire to move forward in a more consensual way.

The Constitution Review Working Group had produced terms of reference for Cabinet Advisory Groups and a Memorandum of Understanding for cross party working. The Overview and Scrutiny Board had supported the documents with minor amendments and subsequently the Cabinet had also agreed their content, including the minor amendments.

In response to a query, the Monitoring Officer clarified that the proposed principle relating to the chairing of Council and certain committee meetings by members not from the ruling administration was currently agreed for adoption by the Council.

The Leader thanked Councillor P. McDonald and members of the Governance Systems Task Group who had carried out an extensive piece of work to support the review and also thanked the officers who supported it.

**RESOLVED** that the proposed Memorandum of Understanding concerning cross party working be approved, subject to an amendment to point 5 of the Principles section to read as follows: "Recognise and respect that each individual Member can contribute to decisions that are

taken and *should be given the opportunity* to be involved and able to provide their opinion before a decision be taken”.

## **Medium Term Financial Plan – Tranche 1 Budget Update Including Fees and Charges**

The Council set a 3 year Medium Term Financial Plan and adopted a 2 stage approach to this. The budget position in late October when Tranche 2 was considered was a predicted deficit of £325,000 at the end of 2024-25 but the position would be clearer once Government grant support was announced before Christmas.

In the meantime, Council was requested to approve a commitment to additional capital funding for 2023-24 financial year for identified works to play areas in the District. It was anticipated that additional projects would come forward when the Play Audit was published.

In response to a question, the Cabinet Member reported that the fees the Council was able to charge for planning would be increased and it was hoped that there would be additional income to the Council via that route.

**RESOLVED** that the Play capital works for 2023/4 as set out in 3.38 of the report are approved and added to the Capital Programme.

## **Half Yearly Treasury Update Report 2023/24**

In presenting the report, the Cabinet member thanked the finance team for their work in treasury management.

A member referred to a sentence in the introduction to the report which referred to the Council being exposed to financial risks and sought clarification on this. The Section 151 Officer reported that whilst professional advice was sought in terms of investment and risks were mitigated, a risk of adverse change would remain and that should be pointed out in the report.

**RESOLVED** that the position in relation to the Council’s Prudential indicators be noted.

## **Finance and Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2023/24**

In introducing the report, the Cabinet member for Finance and Enabling reported that the deficit at year end was predicted to be £464k. The majority of this was due to the pay award for 2023/24, temporary staff, additional fuel and fleet hire costs and costs of temporary accommodation due to homelessness. This had been offset in part by a utilities underspend and additional income from commercial activities.

In response to a query about whether the Council had received value for money for the Civica Open Revenues system, the Cabinet member assured member that this was the case.

A member asked for details of costs incurred by the Council during the periods when the Artrix was unoccupied. The Cabinet member would provide a copy of a written response recently provided to Councillor P McDonald to all members.

**RESOLVED** that Changes to the Capital Programme in relation to ICT be actioned, bringing forward Cyber Security linked Tape Drive replacements forward from 2024/5 into 2023/4, and increasing the budget in 2023/4 to ensure the continuation of the Civica OpenRevenues system for the administration of council tax, business rates and housing benefits.

70\23

**TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CABINET HELD ON 22ND NOVEMBER 2023**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 were noted.

71\23

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

The Chairman advised that five questions on notice had been received for this meeting.

**Question submitted by Councillor E. Gray**

“Would the Cabinet Portfolio Holder agree that in the interests of shoppers, residents and Bromsgrove businesses, at least the first half-hour of parking should be FREE and thereafter a “Pay on Foot” model, paying on exit, should be adopted across the District?”

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration responded that the Council was currently undertaking a review of car parking charges including the charging periods, charges and any concessions. The outcome of this review would form part of Tranche 2 of the reports included with the forward plan for the establishment of the 2024/5 budget. The Council over recent years had invested heavily in new pay and display machines across its car parks that was agreed by the District Council, as part of its upgrading of the car parking infrastructure. This had modernised its delivery of car parking payments towards a cashless payment system, moving away from the ‘pay on foot’ model to the ‘pay and display’ model which had meant that customers could use cash, card, or pay by app. Pay by App was a convenient method that allowed drivers to add time to their stay without returning to their vehicle/pay station. This also removed the need for a Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO) to be present, in case pay station or exit barriers developed a fault and enabled the CEO to undertake enforcement patrols.

Councillor Gray asked a supplementary question about making it as straightforward as possible to enable drivers to park in the District, such as ANPR and 'pay as you leave', so that people could feel able to stay longer and use local businesses.

Councillor Baxter agreed that the review would look at options to encourage people to stay longer and use local businesses. The decision to change from pay on foot to pay and display had been taken some time ago and the Council had invested in reliable machines, but these would always take cash.

### **Question submitted by Councillor P McDonald**

"Would the Cabinet Member for Finance and Enabling inform me how many additional staff have been employed since May 2023 in the area of Leisure and Cultural Services?"

The Cabinet member for Finance and Enabling responded that Leisure and Culture had employed no additional staff since May 2023. There were currently three vacancies out of sixteen members of staff, two of which were covered by a mixture of agency staff and seconded permanent staff. The Council was looking to fill these posts as soon as possible and one post was on the cusp of being recruited to.

Temporary staff were used for event security and risk assessments of larger events.

Councillor McDonald asked a supplementary question, referring to a statement earlier in the Municipal year that vacancies were being recruited to and the impact these had on the Council's ability to bid for external funds. The Cabinet member replied that the earlier statement had been in relation to the Programme Manager and Project Manager. Since then, a wider review of project management and grant applications across the Council was being undertaken.

### **Question submitted by Councillor S Evans**

"Could you please confirm the budget for the levelling up fund awarded to Bromsgrove and how we are currently tracking against this?"

The Cabinet member for Economic Development and Regeneration responded that the budget details were contained on page 159 of the Council agenda. Council undertook returns to DLUHC on a quarterly basis to update them on spending, deliverables and risks and issues being encountered. Progress was also monitored at the Levelling Up Board which met on a monthly basis now the projects were moving into the design and delivery phases. This Board was Chaired by the Leader, and also included the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Enabling.

Councillor Evans asked a supplementary question, that given there had been an increase in costs for some of the projects, whether the Cabinet member could confirm this would not be to the detriment of the regeneration of the High Street?

The Cabinet member replied that this would not be to the detriment of the regeneration of the High Street.

### **Question submitted by Councillor R. Hunter**

“Could the leader please confirm if it is this Council’s policy to exempt people receiving council tax support from bailiff enforcement action over non-payment of council tax?”

The Leader of the Council responded that the Council looked at each case of recovery of Council tax on its individual merits, so would not automatically exempt those on Council tax support from bailiff action. There was no blanket policy to exclude Council tax support recipients from any specific enforcement action. There would be cases in which - having regard to the debtor’s income, their assets, the period from which the debt accrued; or to the makeup of the household - the use of Enforcement agents was an appropriate course of action. The Council’s appointed enforcement agents were instructed to identify vulnerable cases and to pause action where vulnerability had been identified. The Council was currently in the process of updating its recovery process for the collection of council tax and non-domestic rates.

The recovery policy set out the actions the council would take before instructing enforcement agents to collect the debt. Where a customer was in receipt of council tax support, the authority would take steps to engage with the customer and agree a suitable payment arrangement. Deductions from benefits would be used in preference to the instruction of enforcement agents.

Revenue Services were trialling the use of external data validation to assist in the identification of cases which were not suited to further enforcement. Bromsgrove data was being reviewed in January 2024. The validation would identify, for cases where a liability order for non-payment of council tax was obtained, debtors:

- a) who were vulnerable; or
- b) who had low incomes and were unable to pay; or
- c) had sufficient income to pay their council tax but were prioritising non-priority debts, or
- d) who had the ability to pay.

Communication with the debtor would then be tailored to their circumstances and appropriate steps taken to resolve the debt. A sample of cases had been referred for data profiling and outcomes would be reviewed in quarter 4.

Councillor Hunter asked a supplementary question that as part of the policy review, the Council consider making exempt from bailiff action those in receipt of council tax support. Councillor May responded that this would be considered as part of the review.

### **Question submitted by Councillor S. Robinson**

“Could you please set out the consequences of Bromsgrove not having a five year land supply and explain what the Council is doing to remedy this situation?”

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Licensing and WRS responded that where a five-year housing land supply could not be demonstrated, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applied. This meant that some policies were deemed to be out of date and permission for new housing should more often than not be granted. One of the exemptions from the presumption in favour of sustainable development was if there was green belt, and as Bromsgrove was 89% green belt at the moment, the consequences of not having a 5 year land supply were very limited.

To remedy this the Council was:

- progressing the plan review to bring forward new sites for allocation to be delivered over the next plan period;
- Holding regular Strategic Planning Steering Group meetings, which all members were welcome to attend;
- Bringing reserved matters applications on allocated sites to planning committee.

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### **MOTIONS ON NOTICE**

The Chairman reported that four Motions on Notice had been submitted for this meeting. However, the third Motion, submitted by Councillor Whittaker, had been withdrawn.

With the agreement of all group leaders, Councillor Nicholl's Motion, which featured in the agenda of the last Council meeting, but which was not debated then, had been postponed for consideration at the next Council meeting in January 2024. This would ensure that he could be present for the debate on his own Motion.

### **Publicity Campaign for Dog Welfare**

The Council considered the following Motion on Notice from Councillor H Jones:

After hearing the devastating news, that two innocent, healthy puppies had been killed and dumped within our district, I call upon this council to commit to prioritise the promotion to support a publicity campaign to reminding dog owners and breeders of their responsibilities, in the hope

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we can stop anymore uncalled-for deaths of an animal. Within this campaign we also need to remind residents that they should only buy animals from a reputable source and the steps they should take to ensure the animals they buy are healthy and have been well cared for. The campaign should also emphasise the need for the public to report any situations they identify where people may be breeding dogs illegally, or in circumstances that put the health of animals in jeopardy. WRS has “dog related issues” as one of its key priorities and, whilst they do their best to proactively identify illegal breeders and sales, more help from the public would not go amiss.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Jones referred to advice offered to dog owners by Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) such as temporary kennelling and support for when people could no longer keep an animal. She suggested that a targeted campaign could prevent animals from abuse, suffering or death. The pre-Christmas period would be an ideal time for a publicity campaign to remind people only to purchase a dog from a reputable dealer and also where to go to for help if they were struggling with caring for a pet.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor K Taylor, who referred to the financial and other commitments that should be considered before acquiring a dog.

Members spoke in support of the motion and of the benefits of owning a dog. They also referred to recent incidents which highlighted the need to promote responsible dog ownership and the support available when circumstances changed. It was noted that WRS would lead on a publicity campaign and the Council’s communications team might also be able to assist.

## **RESOLVED** that

After hearing the devastating news, that two innocent, healthy puppies had been killed and dumped within our district, this council commits to prioritise the promotion to support a publicity campaign to reminding dog owners and breeders of their responsibilities, in the hope we can stop anymore uncalled-for deaths of an animal. Within this campaign we also need to remind residents that they should only buy animals from a reputable source and the steps they should take to ensure the animals they buy are healthy and have been well cared for. The campaign should also emphasise the need for the public to report any situations they identify where people may be breeding dogs illegally, or in circumstances that put the health of animals in jeopardy. WRS has “dog related issues” as one of its key priorities and, whilst they do their best to proactively identify illegal breeders and sales, more help from the public would not go amiss.

## **Connectivity from Bromsgrove Train Station**

The Council considered the following Motion on Notice from Councillor S Evans:

This Council supports improving connectivity for rail users travelling from Bromsgrove Train Station so that they can travel to destinations such as Cheltenham, Bristol and Cardiff with ease.

This Council therefore resolves to support the campaign for greater connectivity from Bromsgrove Train Station, as campaigned for by organisations such as BARRUP, and calls on the Leader of the Council to write to Cross Country Trains to request that their service, which currently runs between Nottingham and Cardiff, stops at Bromsgrove train station to improve connectivity between our area and popular destinations, putting Bromsgrove on the map and increasing tourism to our town whilst allowing residents to travel with ease.

In introducing the Motion, Councillor Evans referred to the current hourly service between Cardiff and Nottingham which did not stop at Bromsgrove station. If it did, it would enable passengers to alight at Worcestershire Parkway, Cheltenham and Bristol. He suggested that including Bromsgrove in the route would bring social, economic and environmental benefits to the District. He acknowledged the efforts of groups such as the Bromsgrove and Redditch Rail Users Partnership (BARRUP) to improve the connectivity from Bromsgrove train station.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor S. Robinson.

Councillor H.D.N. Rone-Clarke detailed an amendment he wished to propose, as follows:

In the second paragraph of the motion to insert the words 'as well as Network Rail' after 'calls on the Leader to write to cross Country Trains.....and to insert the words 'and/or Barnt Green' following 'stops at Bromsgrove....'

The proposer and seconder of the Motion accepted the changes as suggested and the motion as amended was debated by the Council. The main points raised were:

- The Council was committed to making the District as accessible as possible and the Leader was supportive of the action proposed by the Motion
- A member raised that there were currently only two trains per hour which called at Alvechurch and it was suggested that the letter from the Leader should be expanded to request an increase in service to this station too. It was argued that to add further destinations into the current motion would dilute its impact
- Efforts should be made to improve connectivity across the District and the wider West Midlands as a whole

- Current arrangements for travelling to the south meant that passengers had to travel via Birmingham, which damaged productivity

**RESOLVED** that

This Council supports improving connectivity for rail users travelling from Bromsgrove Train Station so that they can travel to destinations such as Cheltenham, Bristol and Cardiff with ease.

This Council therefore resolves to support the campaign for greater connectivity from Bromsgrove Train Station, as campaigned for by organisations such as BARRUP, and calls on the Leader of the Council to write to Cross Country Trains as well as Network Rail to request that their service, which currently runs between Nottingham and Cardiff, stops at Bromsgrove and/or Barnt Green train station to improve connectivity between our area and popular destinations, putting Bromsgrove on the map and increasing tourism to our town whilst allowing residents to travel with ease.

**Introduction of 'Live Time' on Bus Shelters**

The Council considered the following Motion on Notice from Councillor P McDonald:

We call upon the Cabinet to modernise bus shelters by introducing 'Live Time'. The new system will tell waiting passengers exactly when the next bus is due by monitoring and reporting on its progress in real-time. It helps make services more efficient, which means a better service.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor McDonald referred to arrangements where real time information was displayed on bus shelters. He considered this encouraged 'casual' users to use the services and an opportunity to do this was being missed.

Councillor McDonald noted that a sum had been allocated to bus shelters in the budget which should be spent, and he suggested that they could be used for advertisements which could bring in revenue to the Council. Replacing car journeys with bus travel would also have environmental benefits by reducing CO2 emissions.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor D Hopkins, who referred to recent changes to bus timetables and the confusion this caused. Real time information would help to give the public more confidence in bus services and support them in planning their time and their journeys. There was a parallel with the system used at the train stations and this should be universally applied to bus routes.

Councillor P Whittaker gave details of an amendment he wished to propose, which was accepted by the proposer and seconder of the

motion. This changed the motion as follows and it became the substantive motion:

We call upon *Worcestershire County Council to work with the Cabinet at Bromsgrove District Council* (delete the words 'to work') to modernise *the* (delete 'our') bus shelters *within Bromsgrove District* by introducing 'Live Time'. The remainder of the motion was unchanged.

In presenting the amended wording, Councillor Whittaker referred to the shared responsibility between the County and District Councils for bus shelters.

Councillor J Robinson proposed an amendment that the words 'That the Cabinet member for finance brings forward proposals for a budget for bus shelter improvements to replace the funds not used in previous years as part of the 2024/25 budget' were added to the end of the motion. The Monitoring Officer advised that this was not an admissible amendment as it had budgetary implications; the substantive motion enabled financial implications to be considered by Cabinet.

During debate on the substantive motion the following were the main points raised

- Live time information was necessary to reassure passengers that a service was running, albeit if there were delays
- Whether the bus stops at the train station would be included in the motion as there was confusion about which organisation was responsible for them
- There was a mixture of ownership of bus shelters across the District, including some Parish Councils, and all involved should work together to make this universally available
- Not all people had access to mobile phone technology so live time at bus shelters would make the services more accessible
- There was a need to better maintain bus shelters across the District, regardless of ownership; funds allocated in the budget had not yet been spent on improvements and the motion should be a catalyst to improvements being made
- It was unlikely that real time information could be used for demand responsive transport
- How the technology would work in more rural areas. Reference was made to the technology being used in rural parts of a neighbouring county
- The Council asked for details of bus services from the County Council before upgrading bus shelters which had led to delays in some maintenance work.

**RESOLVED** that

We call upon *Worcestershire County Council to work with the Cabinet at Bromsgrove District Council* to modernise the bus shelters within Bromsgrove District by introducing 'Live Time'. The new system will tell

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waiting passengers exactly when the next bus is due by monitoring and reporting on its progress in real-time. It helps make services more efficient, which means a better service.

The meeting closed at 8.55 p.m.

Chairman



**Portfolio Holder Report**

**Portfolio Holder Report - Strategic Housing, Health and Wellbeing**

**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:

<b>Strategic Purposes</b>	<b>Council Priorities</b>
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	<b>Internal priorities</b>
	Financial stability
	High quality services
	Sustainability



**Portfolio Holder Report**

**1. Update on Strategic Purposes**

**Living independent, active and healthy lives**

Social Prescribing

Social prescribing is part of a commitment to personalised care. Personalised care means all people have choice and control over the way their care is planned and delivered, based on 'what matters to me' and individual strengths and diverse needs. This happens within a system that makes the most of the expertise, capacity and potential of people, families, and communities in creating better health access, outcomes, and experiences. Personalised care takes a whole-system approach, integrating services around the person. It is an all-age model, from maternity and childhood through to end of life, encompassing both mental and physical health support. It can contribute to advancing equality and reducing inequalities in access and outcomes for all.

Social prescribing can support a wide range of people, including (but not exclusively) people:

- with one or more long term conditions
- who need support with their mental health
- who are lonely or isolated
- who have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing.

The service is commissioned by Bromsgrove Primary Care Network which is made up of nine GP surgeries across the Bromsgrove District. The contract between the PCN and Bromsgrove District Council commenced in November 2020 and two social prescribing link workers are employed to support the nine surgeries.

Social prescribing link workers:

- assess how far a patient's health and wellbeing needs can be met by services and other opportunities available in the community;
- co-produce a simple personalised care and support plan to address the patient's health and wellbeing needs by introducing or reconnecting people to community groups and statutory services;
- evaluate how far the actions in the care and support plan are meeting the individual's health and wellbeing needs;
- provide personalised support to individuals, their families and carers to take control of their health and wellbeing, live independently and improve their health outcomes;
- develop trusting relationships by giving people time and focus on 'what matters to them'; and
- Take a holistic approach, based on the person's priorities, and the wider determinants of health



## **Portfolio Holder Report**

There are three referral pathways – patients can self-refer via the Councils' Monitoring Centre phone number; surgeries can email the Social Prescribers requesting they contact a patient they believe would benefit from the service; agencies can refer using a referral form.

### **Starting Well Partnership**

The Starting Well Partnership focuses on improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities at the individual, family, and community levels across Worcestershire. Redditch Borough Council (operating as a shared service with Bromsgrove District Council) is commissioned by the Trust to deliver parenting and community services across Bromsgrove and Redditch for families with children 0-19. There is a Family Hub in Bromsgrove (Pear Tree Family Hub, Broad Street, Sidemoor) which hosts several maternity and community health services, parenting groups and a range of community led, professionally supported groups. These groups facilitate the development of life skills, volunteering and employment opportunities, information and advice, support, and networking – supporting families from pre-birth until children are 19 (25 if they have additional needs).

Starting Well provides a range of universal and targeted evidence-based parenting interventions to support social/emotional development and reduce behavioural problems. Starting Well provides comprehensive and effective information and advice. This includes self-help materials and accessible interactive on-line and digital solutions. Starting Well delivers specific activities which form part of the delivery of a Family Information Service including general advice and guidance for parents, carers and guardians which includes information, advice and guidance on childcare, early education, benefits, nursery education funding, early years provision for children with SEND and other relevant subjects for all parents, carers and guardians.

### **Community Transport – BURT Bus**

Community transport is about providing flexible and accessible community-led solutions in response to unmet local transport needs, and often represents the only means of transport for many vulnerable and isolated people, often older people, or people with disabilities. Bromsgrove District Council commission Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (BARN) to provide a community transport service – Bromsgrove Urban and Rural Transport – BURT bus. BURT offers many benefits to customers where other schemes are not suitable. Public transport, even where reliable and frequent is not door-to-door. For many isolated and lonely people who are frail, older, or disabled the distance to a bus stop or station is insurmountable. For many individuals, taxis do not provide a suitable alternative, and not just in relation to availability and costs, which many regard as prohibitively expensive. Taxis do not always offer door-to-door service, with responsibilities finishing at the kerbside. Disabled people, including those using wheelchairs, can be hampered by vehicle design and inadequate driver training. Furthermore, the nature of community transport operators and drivers means that the



## **Portfolio Holder Report**

direct social benefit from using community transport scheme as opposed to another mode of transport is far greater.

### NEW Lifeline

NEW Lifeline Technology Enabled Care Service supports individuals to remain living independently at home for longer. NEW Lifeline provides an increasing range of equipment that supports people by:

- Raising an alert in an emergency situation,
- Offering reassurance, help, and guidance to those who feel vulnerable.
- Passively monitoring the home environment and service user activity to ensure that the daily routine is maintained and any unusual occurrences are escalated.
- Monitoring body worn location finders of service users when they are at risk when outside the home eg users with dementia.
- Making daily contacts for those that need to be reminded to take medication or need a wellbeing check.
- Making referrals and sign posting to other organisations in the locality who can also support NEW Lifeline service users.

The service is a paid for by approximately 1000 residents in Bromsgrove. However, Health and care professionals are able to refer residents for a six weeks free service, that supports people to come out of hospital, prevent them from going into hospital or support them through a difficult period (illness, bereavement, new diagnosis etc).

### Strategic Housing

The Private Sector Housing Team provide the Council's statutory disabled facilities grant service through a Countywide Home Improvement Agency Contract with Millbrook HealthCare which provides the following services.

- Mandatory DFG
- Discretionary DFG top up
- Dementia Dwelling grant
- Hospital Discharge grant
- Home repair assistance
- Ceiling tracking and hoists
- Housing options



**Portfolio Holder Report**

- In house OT

*Affordable and sustainable homes*

Strategic Housing

As the local housing authority, the Strategic Housing Services Team delivers those services relating to the affordable and sustainable homes priority.

Homelessness: The Council's statutory housing advice and homelessness service was put out to tender and BDHT were successful with a new contract to deliver on behalf of the Council started on the 1 April 2023. The main reasons for homelessness approaches remain as friends and family no longer willing to accommodate, end of assured shorthold tenancy and relationship breakdown. The introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed additional duties on the Council to provide temporary accommodation as 'safe accommodation' for victims of domestic abuse. We have 2 units designated as 'safe accommodation' to meet our identified need, which is currently being reviewed and have an officer providing additional support to those applicants presenting due to domestic abuse.

We continue to receive and manage the Homelessness Prevention Fund from central government which is ringfenced to provide service that:

- Fully embed the Homelessness Reduction Act and contribute to ending rough sleeping by increasing activity to prevent single homelessness.
- Reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation by maximising family homelessness prevention.
- Reduce the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families and eliminate family B&B placements beyond the statutory six-week limit.

Affordable Housing: The Housing Strategy Team work with developers and Registered Providers to deliver affordable housing in the district. Developer contributions through s.106 agreements have been secured in 22/23 to provide 162 units of new affordable housing and 78 units started on site between April 23 to September 23.

Private Sector Housing: The Private Sector Housing Team support both tenants and landlords of private rented accommodation and manage the licensing requirements of houses in multi occupation (HMO) and mobile home park sites. The primary role is to enforce standards of



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accommodation and management predominately through the provisions of the Housing Act 2004 undertaking Housing Health Safety Rating System (HHSRS) inspections. The team also manage the Home Repairs Assistance Grants to assist homeowners to keep their homes in a liveable standard and Disabled Facilities Grants to provide adaptations to properties to assist occupants to remain in their home. The team also play an active role in a controlling migration project working with the Police, Fire Service and Immigration Service focusing on migrant workers and substandard accommodation provision.

**Energy Efficiency:** The team are responsible to the management of the Sustainable Warmth Programme used to assist occupiers to increase the energy efficiency of their properties using retrofit technologies.

**Housing Development:** The team are leading the work on the construction of 61 homes being delivered on the Council's former offices at Burcot Lane. These energy efficient homes will provide 18 units of affordable housing to be delivered by BDHT and propose to have 37 homes for private rent and 6 homes to purchase on the open market.

**Homes for Ukraine:** The team organises the Council's response to the Homes for Ukraine response from administering the emergency funds to providing on going support to these residents and their sponsors. There have been 202 guests from Ukraine in Bromsgrove since the start of the scheme.

**Key activities since last report:**

**Social Prescribing**

Key activities for the Social Prescribing service have included continuing to promote the service and achieve positive outcomes with patients through their "What Matters to Me" plans. Data for 2023 as follows:

- **490** referrals received.
- Involved in the Warmth on Prescription pilot project and supported **25** Bromsgrove residents to achieve support through this.
- Supported **20** families with supermarket vouchers from the Household Support Fund
- Attended **10** Local Community events.
- Supported **54** patients through funded counselling services.

**What is the 'Warmth on Prescription' pilot scheme?**

Worcestershire County Council worked with Bromsgrove PCN to identify vulnerable residents with long-term health conditions who are living in a cold



**Portfolio Holder Report**

home. Residents were referred into the scheme directly by the social prescribers and were offered a grant towards their energy bills for the period of January – March 2023. Funding was calculated based on the average energy use for the property size and fuel type. The aim of the pilot was to assist those at risk of worsening a long-term health condition by living in a cold home, & to decrease the risk of potential hospital admission. The energy bill calculations and payments were administered by Act on Energy, our local Energy charity. Act on Energy also provided the residents with additional energy advice & support with other local grants & schemes they may qualify for.

One Stop Bus in Rubery – in partnership with the Primary Care Network and several other partners, a one stop vaccination bus was provided to the Rubery community for four dates. Rubery was chosen as a place of focus due to recent feedback that the people living there felt it was the “forgotten village”, and due to transport links and the rise in cost-of-living people are unable to travel to access some services. Rubery has a great community spirit and supports itself in a variety of ways such as setting up their own Stay and play and community groups. Local businesses are proactive and have supported many Community initiatives. The aim was to inform residents what is available locally and help them to navigate services, as well providing COVID -19 vaccinations, education on health matters and provide some services on the spot, such as Health checks, parenting advice, and highlight people who would benefit from accessing the social prescribing service. The Rubery Community Builder was available to support the community with their passions and ideas. It was an opportunity to follow an asset-based approach to have conversations with the people of Rubery to see if in partnership we can bring in additional funding to meet needs/gaps in services in the area, involving the community as much as possible in this. 85 residents attended the events.

**Our One Stop Bus is coming to Rubery!**

**A safe space for the community to come & access support**

**The bus team will be able to help with:**

Applying for childcare funding	Connecting you with local support & activities
Energy bill advice & support	Self-weigh scales for infants under 2 (At Rubery Library dates only)
Parenting advice	NHS Health Checks
Healthy Start Vitamins	Support for over 50s
£1.80 - children's & 91p - Women's	
Free with Healthy Start pre-paid card	

Date/Time	Venue
Tues 22nd Aug, 10am - 4pm	St Chad's Church, 160 New Road, Rubery, B45 9JA
Wed 20th Sept, 10am - 4pm	Library, 7 Library Way, Rubery, B45 9JS
Sun 15th Oct, 11am - 3pm	Fathers Barn, New Road, Rubery B45 9JA
Wed 1st Nov, 10am - 4pm	Library, 7 Library Way, Rubery, B45 9JS

**Have you got an idea for Rubery?**  
Come & speak to the Rubery Community Builder on any date above



## **Portfolio Holder Report**

### Starting Well Partnership

Relationships with schools and delivery of Parenting groups from within schools has been successful. Parent Support Worker's and Community Health Connectors have attended coffee mornings at schools with parents to promote the Starting Well service, supporting parents with issues around parenting and encouraging them to attend the evidenced based parenting groups.

There are 28 active volunteers recruited and working within the service. The volunteers are building relationships within the Starting Well team and supporting the service in a variety of ways including breastfeeding peer support, parenting group peer support and within the family hubs.

Data for 2023 as follows:

- **729** parenting referrals received.
- **778** parents have received 1:1 or group support.
- **601hrs** of volunteering support.
- **31** community events facilitated/supported.
- **405** Healthy Start Vitamins provided.

### Community Transport – BURT Bus

The contract between BARN and BDC remains in place and there are two years remaining with the option of an extension of another two years. The main reasons customers use BURT are to attend day centres; to go shopping; and to attend social events. Trips are steadily increasing as several clubs did not reopen following the pandemic. BURT work in partnership with several organisations including the Council's Sports Development Team to transport customers to exercise classes such as Strength & Balance. They arrange trips to local garden centre and are offering these outings to residents who are rurally isolated. They have approximately **450 registered users** and did approximately **4200 journeys**.

### NEW Lifeline

Key activities of NEW Lifeline service relate to nationwide Telephony Digital Upgrade.

- The Team are replacing the analogue equipment in people's homes with digital equipment that uses sim card technology to communicate with the 24hr Monitoring Centre. This ensures the resilience of the service and reduces the risk of equipment failure as the network changes.
- The new range digital equipment available has meant that there has been a focus on trialling new equipment to meet the specific and sometimes complex needs of each service user.
- NEW Lifeline has increased the equipment types on offer, for example the passive and preventative technology that unobtrusively monitors the daily activities of a person i.e. checking they are out of



## **Portfolio Holder Report**

bed at their usual time or boiling the kettle for a morning drink by a certain time etc.

NEW Lifeline have been promoting the service to reflect the new technologies available, finding the balance between the great advancements made but keeping the information simple and outcome based. The NEW Lifeline leaflet has been updated to reflect the services recent changes.

Winning a new contract to provide call monitoring in Gloucestershire enabled the service manager to add an additional post into the Team structure. The role of Senior Monitoring Centre Operator has been created and recruited to. The post holder co-ordinates the activities of the team ensuring that all daily tasks are completed and calls are handled in accordance with the correct procedures and response times, tasks previously completed by the Monitoring Centre Team Leader. This additional post provides an excellent resource when the monitoring centre is particularly busy ensuring that 97.5% of calls are answered within the 1 minute, and ensuring that all the modules of Quality Standards Framework is achieved. The risk of not achieving QSF would be that we would lose income from contracts and the service would be less safe. This was previously a risk on the risk register but has now been mitigated and removed.

### **Strategic Housing**

Key activities for the Strategic Housing Team have continued to focus upon the provision of affordable housing, the reduction of homelessness, raising standards in the private rented sector and the retrofit of energy efficient technologies including:-

- The completion of the construction of 61 units of accommodation at the former Council Offices Burcot Lane has been completed. This will provide 6 units for open market sale, 18 units of affordable housing and 37 units of private rented accommodation through Spadesbourne Homes, the Council's own housing company.
- The Council has approved the Worcestershire Housing Strategy and action plan and work is being undertaken to devise a Bromsgrove District Council action plan to sit under this strategy.
- Work is currently underway to reprocure the Home Improvement Agency contract with colleagues from the other Worcestershire local authorities.

### **Anticipated Activities/Key Milestones For Next Period**

#### **Social Prescribing**

The Social Prescribing objectives going forward:



**Portfolio Holder Report**

1. Measuring impact as follows:
  - Impact on the person – six-month distance travelled and review of assessment and plan and case studies – this includes a longitudinal study of approximately 10 patients where we aim to undertake a further follow up to evidence longer term impact.
  - Impact on the community groups – understanding any gaps in provision or over capacity of VCSE sector sessions/services – there is a need for home visiting befriending services.
  - Impact on the health care system – information from GPs and other local health organisations
2. Ongoing relationship building with the GP surgeries, community groups, and promotion of the service – this includes further health bus sessions planned for 2024.
3. The Primary Care Network have sourced further funding to enable a third social prescribing link worker to be employed for at least one year – recruitment has taken place, and the social prescriber will start in February 2024.
4. Warmth on Prescription for Winter 2023/24 – following the success of the Warmth on Prescription pilot we are undertaking this again with the opportunity to refer 45 residents to the scheme.
5. Further health bus visits are planned for 2024 in Rubery, central Bromsgrove and Sidemoor or Catshill.

**Starting Well Partnership**

Starting Well is funded by WCC Public Health – a refresh of the service has been undertaken by Public Health to link in with the Worcestershire Joint Local Health and Well-Being Strategy and providing children with the “best start in life” and with the Government’s vision for the 1001 critical days – “Start for Life” and “Family Hubs” programme. There is one year remaining on the contract and this year will focus on continuing to provide evidence based parenting programmes and evidencing the impact of these on children, young people and families; a focus on the 1001 critical days and best start in life so the community team will focus predominately on families with under 5’s - The Community Health Connector role will remain as a paid role within the service and will focus on developing and maintaining ongoing knowledge and relationships with the wider early help offer in the local community. They will serve as champions of the Family Hub with those services and agencies who identify and navigate families to access the offer, as well as helping families accessing the Family Hub, other local community-based help and support that families need to thrive. They will ensure that the locally based information and resources are communicated through the virtual offer and will be updated regularly.

Volunteering will remain as part of the offer as well as encouraging more parent peer support led groups in the community.



## **Portfolio Holder Report**

### Community Transport (BURT Bus)

The contract will continue with BARN providing community transport within the district – an area to explore is further funding streams to enable the opportunity for BARN to have another vehicle to be able to provide more journeys to more customers within the district. They will continue to be part of the Worcestershire Community Transport Consortium.

### NEW Lifeline

The digital equipment upgrade will continue through the next 12 months, ensuring each service user is visited, their equipment is replaced, and they are supported through the national telephony changes.

The target will be to remove all analogue equipment by the end of 2024.

Some Service Users are resistant to change and are reluctant to accept the equipment, this can result in multiple contacts. NEW Lifeline accepts the responsibility for supporting service users transitioning from old to new equipment and deal with each individual with care.

Advancement in technology is widening the range of equipment available and NEW Lifeline is currently looking to expand the product range. We are currently testing a new location finder device to support individuals outside of the home who may be at risk of wandering and getting lost.

The Technical and Special Projects Officer is working with our call handling platform provider and IT to introduce “SCAIP over ethernet” which will be a secondary avenue of connectivity to allow service users to utilise their broadband for Lifeline connectivity. This will add further resilience, particularly where mobile phone signals are poor.

The Installation Team are now at full capacity for the first time in over 2 years and this will allow the team to review administrative processes, and streamline paperwork.

### Strategic Housing

The Strategic Housing Teams objectives going forwards:

- Homelessness reduction including rough sleepers.
- Re-tender of the Home Improvement Agency Contract
- Letting and management of the Burcot Lane development
- Delivery of other housing development opportunities



## **Portfolio Holder Report**

- Management of the Homes for Ukraine scheme
- Implementation of the Worcestershire Housing Strategy and the Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy
- Delivery of the Sustainable Warmth Programme
- Delivery of the Rough Sleeper Initiative funding programme

## **2. Partnership Working:**

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

### **Partnership working examples:**

#### **Social Prescribing**

Social Prescribers work with a variety of partners to ensure knowledge of the service reaches those in need, taking referrals from GP surgeries, Occupational Therapists, Social Services, BDHT, Age UK, Onside and a host of other organisations as well as from patients themselves. The Social Prescriber's role is to signpost patients to appropriate services, so partnership working is crucial.



#### **Starting Well Partnership**

The Starting Well service works in partnership with others to lead and develop pathways across the whole system particularly in support of the High Impact Areas with the aim of promoting a holistic approach to prevention. Including

- Health Visitors



## **Portfolio Holder Report**

- GP's,
- Other health Partners
- Midwifery services
- Early educational and childcare providers
- Schools
- LA social care and family support teams
- Other statutory, voluntary and community partners

The Starting Well events involve a wide variety of partner agencies at County and local level.



### **Bromsgrove Partnership**

#### **Partnership Groups**

As the relevant Portfolio Holder, Councillor Shirley Webb is part of the Bromsgrove Partnership, namely Community Wellbeing Theme Group and the Ageing Well Group, as well as the Children and Youth Provider Group (which links to both the Community Wellbeing Theme Group and Community Safety Partnership too).

To support residents to live active and healthy lives and to help address health inequalities, it is vital for the Council to work in partnership with other local agencies across statutory and voluntary sectors in particular. In addition to meeting separately with representatives from other agencies as and when, Councillor Shirley Webb engages with the relevant Bromsgrove Partnership groups to continue to develop good working relationships with a variety of agencies. It is through building those links with relevant local agencies that delivery opportunities can open up, such as St Basils and BDHT coming together to open the Bistro opening at The Pod in Charford.

#### **District Collaborative Arrangements**

There have been significant changes to the NHS Structure over the last few years, including the formation of an Integrated Care System (ICS). ICS are partnerships of organisations that come together to plan and deliver joined



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up health and care services and became statutory in July 2022. As part of the ICS structure for Herefordshire and Worcestershire, there is a Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board (see next section) and District Collaboratives.

In July 2022, the Bromsgrove Primary Care Network, as a member of the Bromsgrove Partnership Board, suggested that the Partnership Board take on the role of the Bromsgrove Collaborative and this was agreed. The Partnership Groups referred to above are part of the Bromsgrove Partnership structure and therefore form part of the Bromsgrove District Collaborative arrangements, which means we are able to build on our existing partner networks and relationships to strengthen the collective voice for Bromsgrove District at County level groups that are part of the ICS.

### **County Health and Wellbeing Board & Being Well Strategic Group**

Councillor Shirley Webb continues to be a member of the Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board and now represents Bromsgrove District Council (rather than Districts Councils in North Worcestershire as in previous years). This helps ensure a strong link between District and County level. Following a Governance Review at County level, along with changes with the Health and Wellbeing Board, the former Health Improvement Group, a sub group of the Health and Wellbeing Board, has been changed into the Being Well Strategic Group with officer representation from the District Council and District Collaborative too. With all the recent changes across the health system, it is important that Bromsgrove District Council is represented at these county groups as well as the District Partnership Groups and this has continued.

### **Asset Based Approaches**

The Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach empowers citizens to make the changes that are important to their community, recognising and building on the strengths. It shows that connecting people and creating more resident-to-resident relationships builds interdependence and reliance on each other. Connecting people to their shared interests, and enabling them to exchange skills and resources, helps communities identify and act on the issues that are most important to them.

The ABCD approach, which was initially presented by Public Health to the Partnership Board back in 2020, has continued in terms of having two Community Builders in place, hosted by the local voluntary and community sector, as recommended by Public Health as per best practice. Community builders are supported through a number of mechanisms, including the Bromsgrove and Redditch ABCD Learning Network, currently facilitated by Public Health, and has involved relevant District Council officers from different teams as well as the Portfolio Holder. There are 3 officers from Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils who form part of a handful of trained officers across the County who work with Public Health to deliver short briefing sessions to anyone with an interest in understanding asset based approaches, which all elected members, officers and partners have been



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encouraged to attend to find out more on asset based approaches and how working in such a way benefits local communities.

### **NEW Lifeline**

The New Lifeline team work with a range of Health and Care Partners to deliver services to Lifeline Service Users. Supporting individuals to access the services they need to be healthy and cared for enabling them to live independently.

NEW Lifeline has a longstanding Partnership with Platform Housing who deliver the Falls Response Service to service users who have fallen but are uninjured.

NEW Lifeline works with a number of partners to ensure knowledge of our service reaches those in need, taking referrals from the Hospital discharge teams, District Nurses, GP surgeries, Occupational therapists, Social Services, BDHT, Age UK, and other charities. Referrals from partners will qualify the service user for a 6 weeks free trial.

### **Strategic Housing**

All elements of the Strategic Housing Service work with many partners in the delivery of its services. The reduction of homelessness requires the team to work with both statutory partners and partners from the voluntary and community sector for example through the Rough Sleeper Outreach Service and the provision emergency accommodation for Housing First and No Second Night Out.

### **Key activities since last report:**

#### **Social Prescribing**

The partnership between the PCN and BDC continues to grow and develop with internal referral systems to ensure seamless services for patients. The PCN now have their own well-being team and relationships are being developed to ensure the social prescribers and well-being coaches work collaboratively. Clinical Supervision is provided by the PCN Clinical Leads to the Social Prescribers, and they continue to forge good relationships and understanding the needs of patients.

Attendance at a variety of partnership events including the BDHT events, the Rubery vaccination bus, and the libraries are other examples of how the social prescribing service ensures they are working with a variety of organisations and community groups.



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### Starting Well Partnership

The 31 events Starting Well were involved in during 2023 are all positive examples of partnership working not only with other professionals and community groups but with families – using an asset-based approach and co-production to understand the types of support and activities children, young people and families are asking for and what they are able to do themselves.

### NEW Lifeline

The Management team have introduced a new process to include referral to the NHS Urgent Community Response Team (UCR) for a multi Factorial Falls Assessment for service users who fall but do not see a health professional at that time, for example are helped up by a family member. They will be assessed and supported to reduce their risk of falling again.

Monitoring Centre Team have visited the West Midlands Ambulance Service Head Quarters, spending time to listen to incoming calls, streamlining their triage skills and understand the pressures on the ambulance service. This led to a revised triage document being produced by the Monitoring Centre Team leader.

NEW Lifeline has been supporting BDHT through the telephony digital transition change, replacing their tenants analogue Lifeline equipment with the latest digital technology.

### **Anticipated Activities/Key Milestones and Priorities For Next Period**

#### Social Prescribing

The Social Prescribing partnership objectives going forward:

- Ongoing promotion of the service locally through partnership working and increased social media presence to increase referrals due to the increase in social prescribing link workers.
- To continue to develop strong local relationships with VCSE sector organisations and community groups.

#### Starting Well Partnership

The Starting Well partnership objectives going forward:

- To continue the development of the family hub and family hub network approach including delivery of parenting programmes in partner venues and within easy reach of local parents.



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- As part of the Starting Well refresh Public Health expect Community Health Connectors to develop and maintain ongoing knowledge and relationships with the wider early help offer in the local community and to be champions of the Family Hub with those services and agencies who identify and navigate families to access the offer.

**NEW Lifeline**

NEW Lifeline are already working in partnership with The Community Housing Group based in Wyre Forest, on a Pilot Technology enabled Care project. All people who are eligible for a domiciliary care package are given a telecare assessment to determine what equipment could support their independence. We are then installing the appropriate equipment, which is often complex. This pilot is coming to an end and WCC are tendering a new contract. NEW Lifeline and The Community Housing Group are going to enter into a new partnership agreement and tender for the contract together.

It is always a priority to engage with Partners to inform and educate about the benefits of Technology Enabled Care. There are many new solutions that support people to live at home, simple for the end user, such as a button to close curtains or turn on a light when it becomes dark. The pull cord in the bathroom is ancient history but often how people think of community alarms. It is a priority to continue a marketing program so that TEC becomes part of everyday living not something you have to try and understand at a crisis point in life.

**Strategic Housing**

The Strategic Housing Team partnership objectives going forwards will be to continue to build and create new opportunities for the service provision it delivers especially in the reduction of homelessness.

**3. Good News Stories and Awards**

**Starting Well Partnership (SWP) - Grace Church Nativity & Charford Christmas Meal Project**

**Starting Well  
Community Storyboard**

**Date:**

02/12/2023

**Project Title:**

Grace Church Nativity

**Who was involved?**

Grace Church members, SWP Community Team ,Community members , Morrisons community champion , Charford Coop, Local Polcing team

**Aim of the group/course?**

To offer families a chance to do something for free as a family in the christmas period.  
to provide a chance to understand the true meaning of christmas in a fun and creative way, children had to be detectives and work out the story-  
by going around the activities - they spoke to live characters such as shepherds and were able to question them , each child had a spy pen ( invisible ink) and pads to write down and crack the code. There were a variety of activities such as card making for the chip shop project, salt doh christmas tree decorations, smoores, and more on offer. There was a selfie station at the end where they got a print to stick on to their refugee ID cards.

To bring the community together and bring a sense of community/ christmas spirit to the area.  
To highlight and teach children about current refugee situation and encourage acceptance.

**How much did we do/reach?**

Most of the families were from Charford or Bromsgrove area

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**Funding**

SWP supported the church to access COOP community funding - £150 to help buy resources  
SWP contacted the Community champion at Morrisons and got the snacks, hot chocolate, squirry cream and marshmallows. £25  
SWP contacted the COOP team leader and sought donations of Chocolate coins , and snacks such as mince pies and salt doh ingrediants -£40  
SWP contacted the local shop for additional ingrediants for the smoores activity. £5  
SWP contacted the local caribbean food establishment and asked for donations for snacks - we were donated Jerk Chicken. £20  
SWP donated craft supplies for the activities £10  
SWP helped to create and design the flyer for the event.  
SWP supported the event on the day with man power

**How well did we do?**

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there were 80 childrens places available, 60 children attended on the day, some booked but didn't attend due to illness. Parents had to accompany the children and some had partners and grandparents also attend.  
there were around 40 volunteers intotal and some didn't help on the day but they made props and helped plan the event.  
Using the local Love Charford page - was a great way of promoting the event.  
Lots of community members brought items from home , such as furniture , vases etc - which showed how much effort they made to make it a success

**Community Voice**

Just a selection of the feedback received...

"The children had a great time, it was a clever way to tell the story of Jesus."

"My favourite bit was being able to use the spy pen and take it home"

Coop Manager " its nice to be able to support this event and see it grow over the years, its pulls us all together and makes everyone feel christmassy"

**Portfolio Holder Report**

**Next Steps/ follow ups generated from the event**

Continue to support the event and help it grow each year, continue the momentum of this event throughout the year by encouraging and supporting where necessary community members to make their ideas happen, continue to build the links with the local businesses.

**What advice would you give to someone trying to deliver a similar activity?**

There are a lot of skilled community members , give them ownership of different parts of the event. Asking local shops etc to support works well as they want to give back and help where they can.  
no matter what age the person is who wants to volunteer - there is always something they can do to support the events, no matter how small.

## **Starting Well Community Storyboard**



**Date:** 25th December 2023 - 12-2pm

**Project Title:** Chip shop Free Meals

**Who was involved?** Charford Fish Bar , SWP Community Team , Local community members , Health visiting Team and the Coop

**Aim of the group/course?**

To provide Free hot meals on Christmas day to people who live in Bromsgrove. This is the second year this project has happened.

This project is a community project, The chip shop opens up and provides the food for free and it is open to all.

SWP community team created the flyer and organise promotion and take the bookings. We also support / highlight volunteers for the day. Bookings came through at all times of the night and day- via text or call.

SWP community team also approach local businesses to provide chocolates to give out with the meals

SWP community team encouraged local children attending a different event to make christmas cards to be given out with each meal.

**How much did we do/reach?**

BBC Hereford and Worcestershire Radio, Bromsgrove Advertiser and BBC westmidlands TV - covered the story

The project was promoted via local media pages - such as Support Bromsgrove, Free to collector Bromsgrove and Love Charford. We saw huge amounts of likes and comments.

Posters were put up at the Local Family Hub, shops, pubs, and sheltered accomodation.

Every order was for Bromsgrove families including 1 order in Wychbold. Some people were Single, we had an increase this year in large families accessing the meals. We had care leavers, house bound elderly, Temporarily Housed homeless people access the support.

the areas we delivered to were Charford, Sidemoor, Astonfields, Wychbold, Catshill and Norton Farm.

## **Funding**

Coop Charford - 4 bags of Chocolates and Hot chocolate sachets

30 christmas cards were made by local children.

we took 65 bookings in advance and on the day we had 6 additional bookings within the opening times, as well as drop ins

110 meals in total were given out on the day.

word of mouth definitely helped spread the word for example people who were asking for help on social media pages - other community members were signposting people to the chip shop for support.

We had a family of 4,2 adults and 2 children volunteer on the day to deliver, and one of our Healthvisitors and their daughter also delivered meals.

## **How well did we do?**

## **Community Voice**

Just a selection of the feedback received...

text received 25th December 1pm "I know this is extremely last minute and i would understand if you can not help but i was wondering (im astonfields area) if it is possible to grab a couple of christmas meals? either doner kebab or sausage for me and my partner? im a care leaver and struggling at the moment, my last food parcel fell through so thought i would check if it is possible but totally understand its so last minute i just saw your advert on the facebook for a free meal?"

text received 25th Dec 9pm " just wanted to say thank you for the food today it was hot and the kids really enjoyed it, so thanks again, merry Christmas"

Child who helped on the day to deliver meals she was asked why she felt so excited about helping out today? " because i like helping other people and giving stuff to people who cant afford it, i will be giving out the cards and chocolates."

we received hundreds of status comments on social media - praising the project for doing a kind thing and helping people in need".

**Next Steps/ follow ups  
generated from the event**

Build on what we have already achieved for next year, ask for donations of gifts earlier on in the year

This is a great example of the community coming together to support itself, try and keep it as simple as possible and pull on different peoples strengths to make it happen. Offering a drop in as well as booking option enables more people to access. Definetly using local social media pages helps to spread the word. Many people were unable to collect food, and nominated neighbours etc , so it is beneficial to offer a delivery option on the day, especially with no public transport available.

**What advice would you give  
to someone trying to  
deliver a similar activity?**



**Portfolio Holder Report**

**NEW Lifeline:**

NEW Lifeline service was audited against the industry standard “Quality Standards Framework” in September 2023. The external auditor granted certification against the framework.

The Audit included a review of the service against the set requirements under the following headings:

- User and Carer experience
- User and Service safety
- Effectiveness of Service
- Information Governance
- Partnership working and integrated services
- The Workforce
- Business continuity
- Ethics
- Performance and Contract Management
- Continuous Improvement and Innovation

**Strategic Housing:**

Completion of the 61 units of accommodation on the Burcot Lane development providing a number of different properties and tenure types to assist in balancing the housing market.

**Recommendations from the Electoral Matters Committee Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**Local Government Boundary Commission for England preliminary stage  
Boundary Review for Bromsgrove - Council Size Submission**

**RECOMMENDED** that

The Council puts forward a council size of 31 in its submission to the LGBCE.

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### **Electoral Matters Committee    7 December 2023**

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#### **Local Government Boundary Commission for England preliminary stage Boundary Review for Bromsgrove – Council Size Submission**

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillors May, Leader, and Hotham, Cabinet Member for Finance and Enabling
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Head of Service		Claire Felton
Report Author	Job Title: Electoral Services Manager, Darren Whitney Contact email: darren.whitney@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881650	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		Not Applicable
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)		All
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

#### **1.    RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Electoral Matters Committee RECOMMEND that:-**

- 1) Council put forward the Council Size Submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England including any amendments made.**

#### **2.    BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) last reviewed Bromsgrove in 2012/13.
- 2.2 Each year, the LGBCE calculates the level of electoral inequality arising in each local authority area to establish whether there is a need for an electoral review.

Under the criteria adopted by the LGBCE, either of the following conditions are considered to warrant a review if the imbalance is unlikely to be corrected by foreseeable changes to the electorate within a reasonable period:

## **Electoral Matters Committee 7 December 2023**

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- Any local authority with an electoral division or ward that has an electoral variance of 30% or over. This means a ward having 30% more or fewer electors per councillor than is average for the council as a whole.
- Any local authority where more than 30% of wards have an electoral variance of over 10% from the average for that authority.

Based on electoral data, in the Bromsgrove District Area:

- Eight of the 30 (27%) electoral wards have a variance of greater than 10%
- One of the electoral wards has a variance of over 30%

Accordingly, the LGBCE decided to commence a review of the Bromsgrove District Council area.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 None at this stage other than officer time, the cost of the review is borne by the LGBCE. Any future changes in council size will have a direct impact on the member allowance budget in 2024. The current (2023/24) basic allowance is £4,732 per annum.

### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The LGBCE is a statutory body accountable to Parliament that conducts reviews of local authority electoral arrangements in England. Its statutory obligations are set out in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.
- 4.2 One of the objectives of the LGBCE is to provide electoral arrangements for English principal local authorities that are fair and deliver electoral equality for voters.

### **5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 5.1 As the review will affect the number of Councillors in the future it will have a bearing on all Strategic Purposes. The results of the review will not be implemented until 2027.

### **6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

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### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

6.1 No direct impact at this stage.

### **Operational Implications**

6.2 The LGBCE will seek to deliver electoral equality for voters in local elections.

6.3 The electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for the whole local authority. These are:

- The total number of councillors to be elected to the council: council size.
- The names, number and boundaries of wards.
- The number of councillors to be elected from each ward.

This report only relates to the first bullet point of Council size, the others will be considered later on in the process and the Council will have the opportunity to feed into the process.

6.4 The LGBCE will come to a conclusion on council size after hearing the Council's views during the preliminary phase.

6.5 The draft Council Size Submission is included at Appendix 1 for which the contextual information is completed. Committee Members are invited to agree a Council size and make any amendments they see fit before recommending the Submission to Council.

6.6 In March 2024 the LGBCE will decide on the Council size and will then start a consultation regarding warding patterns.

6.7 The LGBCE will publish draft recommendations regarding warding patterns in October 2024. A consultation on the draft recommendations will run from October 2024 to January 2025 and final recommendations will be made in March 2025.

6.8 The legal order will be made in summer 2025 and be implemented at the 2027 elections.

6.9 Other Districts in Worcestershire have recently completed a review and Worcestershire County Council is currently undergoing one.

## **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

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- 7.1 The LGBCE makes the decision on council size and any delay in agreeing the Council size document may result in the LGBCE not taking the Council's submission into account.

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1: Draft Council Size Submission

Background papers:

LGBCE – Electoral Review of Bromsgrove

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#### 9.    REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr C Hotham	28 November 2023
Head of Service		
Financial Services	Pete Carpenter, Interim Section 151 Officer, Interim Director of Finance and Resources	27 November 2023
Legal Services		

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## Council Size Submission:

Bromsgrove District Council

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## How to Make a Submission

It is recommended that submissions on future governance arrangements and council size follow the guidance provided and use the format below as a template. Submissions should be treated as an opportunity to focus on the future needs of the council and not simply describe the current arrangements. **Submissions should also demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been considered in drawing up the proposal and why you have discounted them.**

The template allows respondents to enter comments directly under each heading. It is not recommended that responses be unduly long; as a guide, it is anticipated that a 15 to 20-page document using this template should suffice. Individual section length may vary depending on the issues to be explained. Where internal documents are referred to URLs should be provided, rather than the document itself. It is also recommended that a table is included that highlights the key paragraphs for the Commission's attention.

'Good' submissions, i.e. those that are considered to be most robust and persuasive, combine the following *key success components* (as set out in the guidance that accompanies this template):

- Clarity on objectives
- A straightforward and evidence-led style
- An understanding of local place and communities
- An understanding of councillors' roles and responsibilities

## About You

The respondent should use this space to provide the Commission with a little detail about who is making the submission, whether it is the full Council, Officers on behalf of the Council, a political party or group, a resident group, or an individual.

## Reason for Review (Request Reviews Only)

Please explain the authority's reasons for requesting this electoral review; it is useful for the Commission to have context. *NB/ If the Commission has identified the authority for review under one of its published criteria, then you are not required to answer this question.*

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

## The Context for your proposal

Your submission gives you the opportunity to examine how you wish to organise and run the council for the next 15 - 20 years. **The consideration of future governance arrangements and council size should be set in the wider local and national policy context.** The Commission expects you to challenge your current arrangements and

determine the most appropriate arrangements going forward. In providing context for your submission below, please demonstrate that you have considered the following issues.

- When did your Council last change/reorganise its internal governance arrangements and what impact on effectiveness did that activity have?
- To what extent has transference of strategic and/or service functions impacted on the effectiveness of service delivery and the ability of the Council to focus on its remaining functions?
- Have any governance or capacity issues been raised by any Inspectorate or similar?
- What influence will local and national policy trends likely have on the Council as an institution?
- What impact on the Council's effectiveness will your council size proposal have?

## **Previous Electoral Review & Changes**

The Council's Size was last changed in the Bromsgrove (Electoral Changes) Order 2014, when the number of councillors was reduced from 39 to 31.

In 2015, Bromsgrove District Council conducted a community governance review which focused on Hagley and Clent parish councils and their boundaries. As a result of this review, The Bromsgrove District Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance No.1) Order 2016 was made in February 2016. The order amended the boundaries of both existing parishes to ensure effective community governance which reflected the identities and interest of the community.

Whilst there have been no other changes to governance arrangements since the 2014 order, several undertakings have been made in more recent years to evaluate the effectiveness of the Council.

## **Corporate Peer Challenge**

In December 2022, Bromsgrove District Council commissioned a corporate peer challenge (CPC) with a request for specific focus on the governance and culture theme, in order to provide an understanding of improvement requirements around governance systems and decision making.

The feedback report<sup>1</sup> detailed that the council has successfully established collaborative partnerships with Redditch Borough Council while maintaining their political sovereignty. The peer team acknowledged that the council take pride in their dedicated and long-serving staff who feel a deep sense of belonging to the organisation. They noted that while the council has a clear vision and priorities, there's room for enhancing communication and implementing a robust performance management framework to better align efforts with their objectives.

The peer team noted that there's a commitment to economic regeneration, and while there may be capacity challenges at senior levels and in project management, these can be addressed positively. It was noted that Elected Members are highly motivated and focused

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<sup>1</sup> [LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Final Report 2021 \(bromsgrove.gov.uk\)](https://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk)

on improving the quality of life for residents as well as being actively engaged in the council's mission.

The team identified that strong, trusting partner relationships exist at the senior levels through the Local Strategic Partnership, which is dedicated to improving local services and making a positive difference. They also stated that the Council has effectively navigated the challenges of the pandemic and is now well-positioned to adapt and thrive. This includes a potential post-pandemic reset of working arrangements to align with their priorities effectively.

Overall, findings show that residents have a positive perception of the Council and its services. However, there's an opportunity for even more effective communication and engagement to ensure that members, staff, and residents are well-informed about the council's activities and their positive impact.

As a result of the recommendations made by the peer team in their final report, the Council created a series of action plans in response to each recommendation made, and noted that work to address some of the issues raised had already begun since the review had been conducted. Considering the review, the Council revisited its current priorities to ensure that the council's mission and its resources are correctly aligned<sup>2</sup>.

The Local Government Association (LGA) undertook a CPC Progress Review in December 2023, and the feedback report will be considered by Council in January 2024. Whilst the report is not yet published reference is made to "the positive way in which the council addressed the recommendations of the Corporate Peer Challenge of March 2023, the actions it has taken so far, and the evidence provided to show the progress being made".

## **Council Review of Governance arrangements**

In May 2023, a motion was approved at the Annual Council meeting to review the council's governance system. The Overview and Scrutiny Board established a Governance Systems Task Group for this purpose. The task group aimed to assess available governance options for Bromsgrove District Council, considering cost implications and Member and Officer time commitments. Its objectives included ensuring effective decision-making, promoting cross-party engagement, fostering inclusive policy development and decision-making, and embedding principles of equality, inclusiveness, efficiency, and accountability within the constitution. The task group sought to make recommendations to the Council for the most suitable governance model that aligns with these objectives. The Local Government Association (LGA) arranged for support from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) to assist the task group.

The Task Group began its work in July 2023, setting objectives to explore governance options, assess costs, and ensure inclusive and accountable decision-making. They held meetings throughout August, conducted interviews with experts and considered various models.

The following factors influenced the evaluation of governance systems and the recommendations for the most suitable model for the council:

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<sup>2</sup> [Agenda item - Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan - Orb](#)

- No Universal Best Practice: There's no single best governance model for local government; it should be tailored to each Council's needs.
- Local Context Matters: What works in one Council might not in another, highlighting the need to consider local circumstances.
- Strengths and Weaknesses: The review identified strengths (cross-party engagement, inclusiveness) and weaknesses (limited access to information, trust issues) in the current system.
- Design Principles: The report established design principles, including timely information, skills-based roles, consensus, resident-centred decisions, assurance, trust, and cost-neutrality.
- Comparison with Governance Models: The Leader and Cabinet model and the Committee system were assessed against the above design principles.
- Active Participation of Backbench Members: Considerations included Cabinet Advisory Panels in the current system and increased Committee meetings in the Committee system.

In its final report in September 2023, the Task Group recommended that the Council does not consider a move to the committee system, but rather adopts a hybrid Leader and Cabinet Model moving forward. It is believed that this model incorporates various features and considerations to ensure effective governance.

## **Proposed Hybrid Leader and Cabinet Model – Features:**

**Working Protocols:** The introduction of working protocols that detail expectations for cross-party working to maintain a collegiate approach to governance. These protocols would help allocate Chairmen of Committees that reflect the council's composition at the time.

**Cabinet Advisory Panels:** The introduction of Cabinet Advisory Panels, consisting of both Cabinet and backbench councillors. These panels would be responsible for reviewing and contributing to the development of critical strategies and policies. They would be chaired by relevant Portfolio Holders, offering backbench councillors more opportunities to influence decision-making.

**Improving Communication:** Steps to enhance communication with members, including inclusive Member-led work programming in the Overview and Scrutiny process, timely access to reports, and continued sharing of information through political group meetings. Additionally, raising awareness of resources available to members through ongoing training.

**Memorandum of Understanding:** The proposal to establish a Memorandum of Understanding between all political group leaders, aiming to maintain the working arrangements for at least the next four years, while allowing flexibility for the council to determine alternative working arrangements if needed.

It is noted in the report that these changes will lead to an increase in the number of meetings held, due to the introduction of Cabinet Advisory Panels. Further details have been included where relevant in the strategic leadership and accountability sections of this document.

The final report of the Overview & Scrutiny Board Governance Systems Task group is also available for more information<sup>3</sup>.

## **Consultation with Current Members**

Officers created a councillor workload survey to get a thorough picture of views on the council's current size and effectiveness, as well as the way in which councillors deal with their casework, and how they feel this has changed in recent years. The survey was conducted electronically in early November 2023 and received a response rate of 30%. A summary overview of relevant responses can be found in Appendix 1.

To summarise:

- Councillors generally felt that their overall workload was about right.
- Most Councillors felt that the current council size is about right.
- Councillors noted that the way in which they communicate with residents has changed in more recent years. With more casework arising via social media and a higher expectation placed on councillors to respond quicker. It was noted that issues are also still raised from residents via other channels such as email and telephone.
- It was noted that councillor face more complex issues from residents in more recent years, with factors such as the cost-of-living crisis attributed to this.

## **Comparison with Neighbouring Authorities**

Whilst it is acknowledged that each council is different, in order to assist with initial discussions on a proposed council size, a comparison against CIPFA nearest neighbours, as well as the other authorities within the Worcestershire County was conducted.

Bromsgrove <sup>4</sup>	31	75,538	2436
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### Nearest Neighbours

Local Authority	Council Size	Electorate	Electors per Councillor
Stroud	51	96,307	1,888
Litchfield	47	82,021	1,745
Maldon	31	50,839	1,640
South Staffs	49	85,031	1,735
Harborough	34	72,831	2,142
Tewkesbury	38	71,171	1,873

### Worcestershire County

Local Authority	Council Size	Electorate	Electors per Councillor
Redditch	29 (reducing to 27)	63,666	2,195 (2,358)
Worcester	35	76,340	2,181

<sup>3</sup><https://moderngovwebpublic.bromsgrove.gov.uk/documents/s54984/Governance%20Systems%20Task%20Group%20-%20report.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Based on 01 December 2023 electoral register

Malvern Hills	31	62,233	2,008
Wychavon	43	102,872	2,392
Wyre Forest	33	72,234	2,340

Whilst considering neighbouring council sizes, it was noted that Bromsgrove District Council currently has the highest electoral ratio when considering both neighbouring authorities within the county and ‘nearest neighbours’.

As described above, the Council has given significant consideration to future governance arrangements in recent years, including a critical evaluation of its current arrangements. The Council has a clear vision as to the proposed model of governance moving forward and is currently in the process of implementing any necessary changes, including recommendations identified during the corporate peer challenge. The consultation with members provided an insight into the ways in which members operate within the community and the impact that this has on the council’s function. After such consideration, it is felt that the Council is in a good position to suggest an appropriate council size moving forward.

## Local Authority Profile

**Please provide a short description of the authority and its setting, in particular the local geography, demographics and community characteristics.** This should set the scene for the Commission and give it a greater understanding of any current issues. The description should cover all of the following:

- Brief outline of area - are there any notable geographic constraints for example that may affect the review?
- Rural or urban - what are the characteristics of the authority?
- Demographic pressures - such as distinctive age profiles, migrant or transient populations, is there any large growth anticipated?
- Community characteristics – is there presence of “hidden” or otherwise complex deprivation?
- Are there any other constraints, challenges, issues or changes ahead?

Further to providing a description, the Commission will be looking for a submission that demonstrates an understanding of place and communities by putting forth arguments on council size based upon local evidence and insight. For example, how does local geography, demographics and community characteristics impact on councillor casework, workload and community engagement?

## Geography

Bromsgrove District Council is located within the West Midlands Region, situated 14 miles from the centre of Birmingham. It is a non-metropolitan district council operating as part of a 2-tier administrative structure, with Worcestershire County Council responsible for social services, education, and highways.

The 84 square mile district is predominantly rural, with approximately 90% of the land designated as Green Belt. There are population clusters including Alvechurch, Barnt Green, Catshill, Hagley, Rubery and Wythall, with the town of Bromsgrove being the main centre of population.

## Demography

Bromsgrove District has 99,200 residents. Population Projections for Bromsgrove<sup>5</sup>

Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2030	2033
Bromsgrove	104,115	104,937	105,714	106,490	108,695	110,667

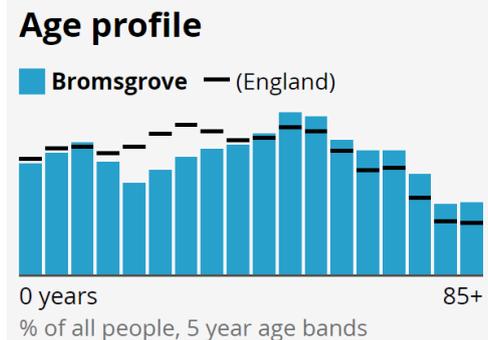
As per the 2018 based ONS statistics, Bromsgrove is projected to have an increase to its population of 6,552 between the years 2024 – 2033.

There are 45,000 homes and businesses in the district. Many residents commute to Birmingham, and the district has the highest % of self-employed and business start-ups in England.

The district has a higher percentage of economically active residents at 57.2% in employment (compared to 56.5% across the West Midlands) as well as a higher percentage of retired residents at 27.1% (compared to 22.1% across the West Midlands). Workers are employed in a variety of industries, with wholesale & retail trade, human health & social work activities and education the top three industries.

According to the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), Bromsgrove Ranked at 271 of the 317 local authorities in England.<sup>6</sup> Whilst the authority does have higher median income levels, it also has isolated areas of deprivation.

According to 2021 Census data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS)<sup>7</sup> The district has an above-average number of over 50s, when compared against the national averages.



Approximately 17.1% of the population are under 15 and 23% are over 65 years old.

Issues such as an ageing population, a lack of affordable housing and developing the local economy all impact on the district.

In January 2017, Bromsgrove District Council adopted its [Bromsgrove District Plan](#) which sets out the Council's vision and strategy for the area until 2023 and provides the basis for decisions on planning applications. The plan sets out the Council's economic, social and environmental characteristics as well as identifying 14 key challenges which the district faces. These include regeneration of the Town Centre, Maintaining the vitality of smaller villages attracting inward investment. It also identifies the need to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the community, in particular the provision of affordable housing and housing suitable for the elderly.

<sup>5</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/dataset/localauthoritiesinenglandtable2>

<sup>6</sup> [English indices of deprivation 2019 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

Bromsgrove currently has the following Neighbourhood Plans in place:

- Alvechurch Parish
- Lickey & Blackwell and Cofton Hackett
- Catshill & North Marlbrook Parish

## Council Size

The Commission believes that councillors have three broad aspects to their role. These are categorised as: **Strategic Leadership, Accountability (Scrutiny, Regulatory and Partnerships), and Community Leadership**. Submissions should address each of these in turn and provide supporting evidence. Prompts in the boxes below should help shape responses.

## Strategic Leadership

Respondents should provide the Commission with details as to how elected members will provide strategic leadership for the authority. Responses should also indicate how many members will be required for this role and why this is justified. **Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.**

Topic	
Governance Model	<p><i>Key lines of explanation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>What governance model will your authority operate? e.g. Committee System, Executive or other?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>The Cabinet model, for example, usually requires 6 to 10 members. How many members will you require?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>If the authority runs a Committee system, we want to understand why the number and size of the committees you propose represents the most appropriate for the authority.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>By what process does the council aim to formulate strategic and operational policies? How will members in executive, executive support and/or scrutiny positions be involved? What particular demands will this make of them?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Whichever governance model you currently operate, a simple assertion that you want to keep the current structure does not in itself, provide an explanation of why that structure best meets the needs of the council and your communities.</i></li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Governance Model:</u></b></p> <p>Bromsgrove District Council completed a scrutiny Task Group review of governance structures in 2023. The review was launched after the Council elections held in May 2023 which resulted in a position of No Overall Control. A copy of the report and minutes from the extraordinary Council meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023, when this report was considered, have been provided separately for information.</p>

This was a comprehensive review of the available governance structures, which was designed to enable the Councillors to determine which governance model was most suitable for Bromsgrove District Council and the communities the authority serves moving forwards. Evidence was obtained from a Deputy Leader of a Council that operates a Committee system as well as through interviews with a governance expert from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS). The Task Group also received impartial advice from a representative of the CfGS throughout the course of the review.

As a result of this review and based on the evidence gathered, Members concluded that retaining the Leader and Cabinet model of decision-making would be the most appropriate governance option for Bromsgrove District Council moving forward. However, it was agreed that the Leader and Cabinet model should be retained in a hybrid form. Under this hybrid model, there will continue to be a Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Board, with a new Cabinet Advisory Panel to be introduced to enable greater participation by backbench Councillors in terms of influencing the decision making and policy development process. Members were also keen to embed the more collegiate, cross-party methods of working that have emerged since the elections held in May 2023 and to ensure that there would be a requirement for opposition Members to be appointed to key roles, such as that of Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, in line with best practice.

A number of changes will need to be made to the Council's constitution and working practices moving forward in order to implement the Task Group's proposals. Currently, action is being undertaken to review the Council's constitution and it is envisaged that these changes will be put in place in time for implementation in the 2024/25 municipal year and subsequent years.

#### Cabinet – number of Members

The number of Members appointed to the Cabinet is determined by the Leader of the Council. In recent years, the Leader has tended to appoint either 6 or 7 Councillors to Cabinet; at the time of writing there are 7 Members on the Cabinet. It is envisaged that a

similar number of Members would continue to be appointed to the Cabinet in future.

The current membership of the Cabinet comprises representatives of two different political groups; the Conservative group and the 2023 Independents group. The Leader of the Council is the leader of the Conservative group, which is the largest group at the Council. The Deputy Leader of the Council is the leader of the 2023 Independents group. All of the members on the Cabinet represent particular portfolios, although they do not have individual decision-making powers. Instead, decisions are taken collectively by the Cabinet. This arrangement is something that the Councillors would be keen to continue moving forward to ensure that a collegiate approach to decision making remains in place in future, in line with the Governance Systems Task Group's findings.

#### Policy Development

The Council publishes a Cabinet Work Programme, which is the Council's Forward Plan. The Council aims to publish both key and non-key decisions on the Cabinet Work Programme and to provide more than 28 days' notice of these items wherever possible.

Following on from the Governance Systems Task Group review in August 2023, a Cabinet Advisory Panel is due to be established at the Council. The final arrangements for the operation of this Advisory Panel remain to be confirmed at the time of writing. However, it is envisaged that the Cabinet Advisory Panel, to be chaired by a member of the Cabinet, will consider key policies and strategic issues some time in advance of decisions being taken by the Cabinet on those subjects. The membership of the Advisory Panel will not be limited to Cabinet members only. Instead, the aim is to open up membership to non-executive Councillors to provide backbench Members with greater opportunities to influence the policy development and decision-making process. Suggestions put forward at meetings of the Cabinet Advisory Panel will be taken on board by report authors when drafting their reports.

The Governance Systems Task Group recognised the value of the Overview and Scrutiny process at Bromsgrove District Council. The proposal was made for there to be a scrutiny prioritisation session at the

		<p>start of the municipal year, whereby scrutiny Members could identify key policies and strategic issues that they feel should be subject to scrutiny that year. This will be incorporated into the Council’s calendar of meetings and Member development process from the 2024/25 municipal year onwards.</p> <p>In addition, the Overview and Scrutiny Board receives a copy of the Cabinet Work Programme for consideration at every meeting. Members can and do identify items from the work programme which they feel would benefit from pre-decision scrutiny and these items are then scheduled for consideration at subsequent meetings of the Board. Any recommendations arising from pre-scrutiny of reports are reported for the consideration of the Cabinet. As Overview and Scrutiny is a Member-led process, the Councillors on the Overview and Scrutiny Board determine which items they wish to scrutinise.</p> <p>It has been recognised by elected Members that there will be a need to ensure that the Cabinet Advisory Panel and Overview and Scrutiny Board do not duplicate work. As part of the actions that are being taken following agreement of the Governance Systems Task Group’s recommendations, this will be reviewed further.</p>
<b>Portfolios</b>	<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>How many portfolios will there be?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>What will the role of a portfolio holder be?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Will this be a full-time position?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Will decisions be delegated to portfolio holders? Or will the executive/mayor take decisions?</i></li> </ul>
	Analysis	<p><u>Number of Portfolio Holders</u></p> <p>It is likely that there will continue to be 7 Members appointed to the Cabinet in future years. The exact number is determined by the Leader of the Council.</p> <p><u>Role of a Portfolio Holder</u></p> <p>At Bromsgrove District Council, Portfolio Holders do not have individual decision-making powers. Instead, decisions are taken collectively by the Cabinet.</p> <p>At the Council, Portfolio Holders do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as spokespersons for the services/projects within the remit of their portfolios. This includes being consulted on and providing quotes for press releases/in response to press enquiries.</li> </ul>

- They are consulted on the content of draft reports within their remits.
- Meet with senior officers to discuss actions/services within their remit.
- Present reports at Cabinet for items within their remit.
- Help to present reports to Overview and Scrutiny meetings for items within their remit.
- Attend Overview and Scrutiny Board / Finance and Budget Working Group (on budget matters) / Scrutiny Task Group meetings when invited to provide answers to questions from scrutiny Members.
- Present Annual Portfolio Holder reports at meetings of full Council.
- Attend Cabinet Surgeries, which are held in private and at which Portfolio Holders answer questions from other Members about areas within their remits. (This is a new arrangement introduced during the 2023/24 municipal year).
- Attend meetings of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee to answer questions from Members where invited to do so. (The lead Cabinet Member for the budget attends every meeting of the Committee to answer questions and help present reports, although is not permitted to be a Member of the Committee).
- Represents the Council on external organisations where appointed to outside bodies in an ex officio capacity.
- Answers questions raised at Council meetings by other Members which relate to issues within their Portfolio remit.

#### Time Allocated to Being a Portfolio Holder

Portfolio Holders do allocate additional time to fulfil their roles, for which they receive remuneration in the form of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs). The SRA for the position of Portfolio Holder is assessed on an annual basis by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for Worcestershire.

Whilst the role of Portfolio Holder does take more time than that for standard Councillors, it is not a full-time job. Bromsgrove District Council holds most meetings during the evening and many of the functions listed above can be fulfilled during the evenings. Some of the Portfolio Holders hold full-time jobs alongside their roles as Portfolio Holders.

		<p>The position of Leader of the Council (and to some extent the Deputy Leader of the Council) is closer to a full-time job than Portfolio Holder, due to the volume of meetings that the Leader is required to attend in addition to the Leader also holding a Portfolio at the Council. These additional duties are reflected in the level of remuneration granted in SRAs to the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council.</p>
<p><b>Delegated Responsibilities</b></p>	<p><i>Key lines of explanation</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>What responsibilities will be delegated to officers or committees?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>How many councillors will be involved in taking major decisions?</i></li> </ul>
	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>The Council has an Officer Scheme of Delegations, which is included at Part 6 of the Council’s constitution. The Officer Scheme of Delegations details the delegations granted to officers on an ongoing basis per department. The content of the Officer Scheme of Delegations is reviewed on an annual basis, usually at the Annual Council meeting held in May, to ensure that the delegations remain appropriate for the Council and the communities it serves.</p> <p>The Officer Scheme of Delegations at the time of writing can be accessed from the attached link: <a href="#">6 Scheme of Delegations May 2023.pdf (bromsgrove.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>Members sometimes delegate specific actions to particular Officers when considering reports at Cabinet meetings. Officers are required to complete Officer decision forms, once these “one off” delegations have been enacted, in order to ensure transparency in the decision-making process.</p> <p>The terms of reference for the Committees are detailed at Part 5 in the Council’s constitution. Again, the content of the terms of reference are reviewed on an annual basis alongside the review of the political balance at the Council. The agreed terms of reference for Committees at the Council at the time of writing can be accessed from the attached link: <a href="#">Committee Terms of Reference - May 2023</a></p> <p>The majority of Committees at the Council comprise a membership of 11 Councillors; the exceptions to this are the Cabinet and Electoral Matters Committee, with 7 members each as well as the Appeals, Appointments and Statutory Officers Disciplinary</p>

		<p>Panels, which each have a membership of 5 Councillors.</p> <p>The Council recently established a Council Housing Company and there will be a Shareholders Committee for this company, comprising a membership of elected Members. It is likely that 7 Councillors will be appointed to this Committee.</p> <p>Key decisions are taken collectively by Councillors serving on the Cabinet. Full Council, comprising all Members, reserves the right to make decisions that would impact on the budget framework and on items within the Policy Framework, which is detailed in The Articles at Part 2 of the constitution.</p>
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## Accountability

Give the Commission details as to how the authority and its decision makers and partners will be held to account. The Commission is interested in both the internal and external dimensions of this role. **Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.**

Topic	
<b>Internal Scrutiny</b>	The scrutiny function of authorities has changed considerably. Some use theme or task-and-finish groups, for example, and others have a committee system. Scrutiny arrangements may also be affected by the officer support available.
<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>How will decision makers be held to account?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>How many committees will be required? And what will their functions be?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>How many task and finish groups will there be? And what will their functions be? What time commitment will be involved for members? And how often will meetings take place?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>How many members will be required to fulfil these positions?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Explain why you have increased, decreased, or not changed the number of scrutiny committees in the authority.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Explain the reasoning behind the number of members per committee in terms of adding value.</i></li> </ul>
Analysis	The Council has a single Overview and Scrutiny Board that commissions time limited Task and Finish reviews, referred to as Task Groups at the Council. The Board holds the Cabinet to account by scrutinising decisions taken by the Cabinet as well as through pre-decision scrutiny of items on the Cabinet Work Programme. The Overview and Scrutiny process is Member-led at Bromsgrove District Council; Members

determine what they wish to scrutinise, what evidence to gather and what recommendations they wish to make.

During the Governance Systems Task Group investigation, Members proposed that in future there should be a constitutional requirement for the positions of Chairmen of both the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Board to be members of opposition groups. Whilst opposition Members have been appointed to these positions in recent years, this is not currently a constitutional requirement and has therefore been with the consent of the majority group(s). The requirement to appoint opposition Members to these positions would be in line with what is considered to be national best practice and helps to ensure that there is some separation between the executive and scrutiny functions.

There is also a permanent, cross-party Finance and Budget Working Group at the Council. The working group, which is chaired by the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, meets in private and takes a lead on scrutinising important budget documents. The lead Portfolio Holder for finance attends every meeting of the working group and answers Members' questions at these sessions. As well as scrutinising budget figures, the group also makes recommendations to Cabinet where Members feel this to be appropriate.

The number of Task Groups at the Council varies from year to year; at the time of writing, there is a single Task Group investigating community shops and food banks in the District. Task Groups can focus on a range of issues that impact on the local community, not just Council services. In previous years, reviews have focused on issues as diverse as car parking, libraries, flooding and homelessness. The Overview and Scrutiny Board determines the scope of a Task Group investigation and sets the deadline for completion of the review.

A member of the Board is required to be appointed as Chairman of a Task Group and is expected to provide verbal updates to the Board on the progress of a review on an ongoing basis. The remainder of the membership of a Task Group are derived from the "Overview and Scrutiny pool"; non-executive members who may or may not also be members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board. The Task Group Members determine the number and frequency of the meetings, which are scheduled on an ad hoc basis in accordance with Members' availability (most meetings are held in the evenings as many Members have work commitments). Members participating in Task Group investigations are expected to prepare in advance by reading

through agenda packs, to suggest questions for interview with expert witnesses, to suggest evidence for consideration and to attend meetings. Members of Task Group sometimes undertake and present their own research, although this varies. At the end of a review, the Chairman of the Task Group is expected to present the group's findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Board, Cabinet as well as Council and / or partner organisations where appropriate.

There are no specific rules at the Council in respect of the numbers of Councillors appointed to Task Groups. However, generally, Members are encouraged to limit the membership to a maximum of 5 Councillors, as this makes it easier to convene meetings that all Members of the Task Group can attend. This number of Councillors also enables all political groups at the Council (currently 4) to be represented, although there is no requirement for the political balance to be applied to the membership of Task Groups.

In terms of the number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees at the Council, the authority has had a single Overview and Scrutiny Board commissioning Task Groups for a number of years. This model has worked well at Bromsgrove. There are a relatively small number of Councillors available to participate in scrutiny activities (24, as Cabinet Members are not permitted to take part in scrutiny). These Members are also all involved in other Committees, including Planning, Licensing and so forth and additional scrutiny Committees could create conflicts in terms of Member availability to participate in meetings if the number of Committees was to increase without a commensurate increase in the number of Members available to serve on those Committees.

There are currently 11 Members on the Overview and Scrutiny Board. This is a similar number to the membership of other important Committees, such as the Planning Committee. Membership of this Committee tends to be quite popular and therefore a membership of 11 provides a significant number of Councillors, compared to the overall number of Members at the Council, with an opportunity to participate in meetings.

As Bromsgrove District Council is in a two-tier authority area, health scrutiny powers are vested in Worcestershire County Council. However, Bromsgrove is represented on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) by a Member of the Bromsgrove Overview and Scrutiny Board who is appointed at the start of the municipal year. This Councillor is expected to attend HOSC meetings throughout the year, to raise issues on behalf of the Bromsgrove Overview and Scrutiny Board at HOSC meetings and to report back to the Board on the work of HOSC.

	<p>Currently, Council and Committee meetings, including scrutiny Task Groups, are supported by the Council’s Democratic Services team. This is a relatively small team comprising 6 full time equivalent members of staff, including a Trainee, and one part-time Officer (10 hours per week). In recent years, there has been a significant volume of meetings at Bromsgrove District Council as well as Redditch Borough Council, with which Bromsgrove shares many services including Democratic Services. As such, there is currently only capacity to support one Task Group review at the Council at any one time. However, the Governance Systems Task Group proposed that an additional Democratic Services Officer should be employed to help support increasing workloads and, once in post, this additional officer would help to increase capacity within the team which could be used to support more Task Groups.</p>				
<p><b>Statutory Function</b></p>	<p>This includes planning, licencing and any other regulatory responsibilities. Consider under each of the headings the extent to which decisions will be delegated to officers. How many members will be required to fulfil the statutory requirements of the council?</p>				
<p><b>Planning</b></p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;"> <p><i>Key lines of explanation</i></p> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>What proportion of planning applications will be determined by members?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Has this changed in the last few years? And are further changes anticipated?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Will there be area planning committees? Or a single council-wide committee?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Will executive members serve on the planning committees?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>What will be the time commitment to the planning committee for members?</i></li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;"> <p>Analysis</p> </td> <td> <p>From the 01 October 2022 to the end of September 2023, there have been a total of 605 planning applications and related decisions. Of these, 579 were determined under delegated powers, meaning that 4.3% were determined by members. There are no planned changes to the Scheme of Delegation that would alter the current position as to which applications are automatically required to be determined by members.</p> <p>The independent Planning Advisory Service (PAS) undertook a review of the Council’s Planning Committee in 2022. The recommendations arising from this review have been reported to the Constitution Review Working Group and a number of changes were proposed to the Council’s Planning Committee which were agreed at the Council meeting that took place on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023. A copy of the PAS review of the Council’s Planning Committee has been attached for consideration</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><i>Key lines of explanation</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>What proportion of planning applications will be determined by members?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Has this changed in the last few years? And are further changes anticipated?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Will there be area planning committees? Or a single council-wide committee?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Will executive members serve on the planning committees?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>What will be the time commitment to the planning committee for members?</i></li> </ul>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>From the 01 October 2022 to the end of September 2023, there have been a total of 605 planning applications and related decisions. Of these, 579 were determined under delegated powers, meaning that 4.3% were determined by members. There are no planned changes to the Scheme of Delegation that would alter the current position as to which applications are automatically required to be determined by members.</p> <p>The independent Planning Advisory Service (PAS) undertook a review of the Council’s Planning Committee in 2022. The recommendations arising from this review have been reported to the Constitution Review Working Group and a number of changes were proposed to the Council’s Planning Committee which were agreed at the Council meeting that took place on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023. A copy of the PAS review of the Council’s Planning Committee has been attached for consideration</p>
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	<p>together with a copy of the report to Council in respect of proposed changes to the Council's constitution.</p> <p>The Changes proposed in the PAS review include; live streaming Planning Committee meetings on a regular basis, reviewing the length of reports for Planning Committee meetings depending on the significance of the application, introducing officers present at the meetings, the Committee considering information in respect of the outcomes of appeals and, given the quasi-judicial nature of the meetings, using white nameplates for Members rather than coloured nameplates that denote political party affiliations.</p> <p>Whilst changes are proposed to the operation of the authority's Planning Committee, there are no proposals to introduce an Area Planning Committee at the Council. Instead, the Council intends to continue to have a single Planning Committee considering and determining planning applications.</p> <p>Cabinet Members, with the exception of the Leader of the Council, can be appointed as members of the Planning Committee. However, the Chairman of the Planning Committee cannot be a member of Cabinet.</p> <p>In recent years, two meetings of the Planning Committee have been scheduled to take place each month; a lead meeting and a reserve meeting. This arrangement was introduced to provide additional capacity to consider a greater volume of applications that had been delayed during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, over the last 12 months only one meeting of the Committee has tended to take place per month. It is therefore proposed that from 2024/25 onwards, a single meeting of the Planning Committee should be scheduled to take place. Where additional meetings may be needed in future, this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and extra meetings booked in where needed.</p> <p>Members of the Planning Committee are required to attend meetings of the Committee to participate in the debate and vote on items. Prior to serving on the Committee, Councillors are required to attend planning training. Comprehensive planning training is provided to Members at the start of their terms of office, with for example training having been provided by expert external trainers in May 2023. Planning refresher training is offered to Councillors on an annual basis thereafter which Members of the Planning Committee are strongly encouraged to attend alongside additional, ad hoc training arranged throughout the year, e.g. there was an additional training session in respect of planning enforcement in October 2023. Training is provided jointly to Bromsgrove District</p>
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		<p>Councillors and Redditch Borough Councillors to help share costs. In future, it is intended that a mock Planning Committee meeting will form part of this training process.</p> <p>Further commitments may be required from Members of the Planning Committee during the year in terms of attending site visits. Currently, Bromsgrove Members arrange to attend site visits individually. However, prior to the pandemic, site visits were arranged collectively and transportation was provided to Members and this practice may return in due course.</p> <p>The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee are required to commit additional time to the Committee. In advance of Committee meetings, they are invited to attend briefings with relevant officers to discuss the agenda. They may also be consulted with respect to public speaking arrangements, for example where requests to speak have been received from residents after the registration deadline.</p>
<b>Licensing</b>	<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>How many licencing panels will the council have in the average year?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>And what will be the time commitment for members?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Will there be standing licencing panels, or will they be ad-hoc?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Will there be core members and regular attendees, or will different members serve on them?</i></li> </ul>
	Analysis	<p>The Council has a “parent” Licensing Committee and three different types of Licensing Sub-Committees that focus variously on Taxi licencing, gambling, premises hearings, sex establishments and street trading licences.</p> <p>The main Licensing Committee meets three times per year to consider Licensing policies, although can hold additional meetings during the year where necessary.</p> <p>In terms of Licensing Sub-Committee (Taxi hearings), Bromsgrove District Council schedules in 6 meetings per municipal year and they can take between 2 to 3 hours per meeting, with a 30-minute Member pre-briefing prior to the meeting commencing. Additional meetings can be convened on an ad hoc basis where required.</p> <p>Hearings in respect of Street Trading Consent Applications are held on an ad hoc basis as and when Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) receive Street Trading Consent Applications which have received representations. The Council has cancelled one such hearing this municipal year (the applicant withdrew their application) and one went ahead recently. These hearings can take between 2 to 4 hours depending on the number of representations received and the number of public speakers attending, and if the meeting is</p>

		<p>adjourned in order for Members to conduct a Site Visit, with a 30-minute Member pre-briefing prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Premises Applications / Review hearings are also held on an ad hoc basis as and when WRS receive Premises Applications or Reviews. The Council have had 2 such hearings this municipal year. They can take between 2 to 6 hours depending on the complexity, the volume of information received, the number of representations and if the police are involved. These hearings also entail a 30 to 45-minute Member pre-briefing prior to the meeting commencing.</p> <p>Currently, only members of the Licensing Committee are permitted to serve on Licensing hearings conducted by Licensing Sub-Committees. There are 11 Councillors on the Committee and three Councillors are required to serve on each Licensing Sub-Committee hearing plus a reserve Member where available. The membership of the Licensing Sub-Committee hearings is supposed to vary, although it is reliant on Members' availability. As the hearings are held during the day, to accommodate the needs of Licensing applicants, some Members struggle to participate due to work commitments. This means that in practice the number of Councillors from the Committee available to participate in hearings is fewer than 11 and those Members who do regularly participate in hearings are required then to allocate a disproportionate amount of their time, compared to other Councillors on the Committee, to participate in those hearings.</p> <p>Councillors are not permitted to serve on a Licensing hearing (sub-committee) until they have received Licensing training. Training is provided to Members at the start of their terms of office as part of the Member induction process and refresher training is provided on an annual basis thereafter.</p> <p>Any member of the Licensing committee can chair sub-committee hearings. Chairing skills training is provided to Members as part of the Member induction process and Licensing Committee members are strongly encouraged to attend Chairing skills training before they can chair a meeting.</p>
<b>Other Regulatory Bodies</b>	<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>What will they be, and how many members will they require?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Explain the number and membership of your Regulatory Committees with respect to greater delegation to officers.</i></li> </ul>
	Analysis	<p>The Council has a combined Audit, Standards and Governance Committee. The Committee previously held 4 meetings a year. However, the Council was issued with a Section 24 Notice in 2022 and in response to this notice, the number of meetings of the Committee increased to provide Members with greater oversight of the Council's progress in</p>

		<p>terms of addressing the recommendations made by the external auditors in that notice. Once these points have been addressed, it is anticipated that the number of meetings will reduce back to 4 meetings per year, although there is uncertainty at the time of writing about when this will take place.</p> <p>There are currently 11 members serving on the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee. In previous years, 9 Members were appointed to the Committee. However, during the 2022/23 municipal year, difficulties were experienced in terms of holding meetings of the Committee that were quorate and the decision was taken to increase the number of Councillors appointed to the Committee from May 2023 onwards in an attempt to address this problem. To date, meetings of the Committee held since the membership increased have all been quorate.</p> <p>The Audit, Standards and Governance Committee has an important role to provide assurance to Members and the public that there are sound financial management measures in place at the authority. Reports are received from both the Council's financial services team, as well as both the external and interview audit teams. In addition, the Committee has a role in monitoring the Council's standards process and again it is important to make sure that these updates are provided in the public domain to ensure that there is openness and transparency in relation to how the Council handles issues with non-compliance with the authority's Code of Conduct. In this context, it would not be appropriate to delegate the functions of the Committee further to officers in case this should undermine that transparency.</p>
<b>External Partnerships</b>	<p>Service delivery has changed for councils over time, and many authorities now have a range of delivery partners to work with and hold to account.</p>	
<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Will council members serve on decision-making partnerships, sub-regional, regional or national bodies? In doing so, are they able to take decisions/make commitments on behalf of the council?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>How many councillors will be involved in this activity? And what is their expected workload? What proportion of this work is undertaken by portfolio holders?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>What other external bodies will members be involved in? And what is the anticipated workload?</i></li> </ul>	
Analysis	<p>Members of the Council are appointed to external organisations as outside bodies every year. Depending on the requirements of that organisation, some appointments are made for a year whilst other appointments can be for a longer period of time. The Cabinet agrees Portfolio Holder appointments made in an ex officio capacity whilst Members</p>	

agree other outside body appointments at a meeting of Council held early in the municipal year.

The extent to which Councillors appointed to outside bodies make decisions at these meetings varies in accordance with the terms of reference for the body to which the Councillor is appointed and the capacity in which the Councillor is appointed. For example, Members appointed to the Joint Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Board on behalf of the Council can take part in collective decision making with representatives of other Councils in that shared service, however, the Council's representative on the Worcestershire HOSC, whilst representing the Council, does not make any decisions as the HOSC is not a decision making body.

The Portfolio Holders have a greater workload than other Members arising from working on Outside Bodies as they are appointed to more bodies in an ex officio capacity. However, the amount of time that Councillors appointed to outside bodies have to spend working on duties for external organisations varies according to their terms of reference.

Outside body appointments are shared out, cross-party, amongst approximately 20 Councillors. Approximately 50% of the appointments are made in an ex officio capacity.

The Chairman of the Council may have additional involvement with other external bodies, in respect of their fund-raising activities for their nominated charities and in terms of the civic engagements they attend.

The Leader of the Council and other political group leaders may meet more frequently with representatives of other organisations to discuss matters impacting on the District. In addition, the Leader of the Council, group leaders and Cabinet Members may come into contact with representatives of bodies such as the Local Government Association (LGA), both through attendance at the LGA's annual conference and through attendance at training provided by the LGA. As part of the Member induction process, opportunities to attend all of the LGA training sessions designed for new Councillors is promoted to new Members by Democratic Services.

## Community Leadership

The Commission understands that there is no single approach to community leadership and that members represent, and provide leadership to, their communities in different ways. The Commission wants to know how members are required to provide effective community leadership and what support the council offers them in this role. For example, does the

authority have a defined role and performance system for its elected members? And what support networks are available within the council to help members in their duties? The Commission also wants to see a consideration of **how the use of technology and social media by the council as a whole, and by councillors individually, will affect casework, community engagement and local democratic representation. Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.**

Topic		Description
<b>Community Leadership</b>	<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>In general terms how do councillors carry out their representational role with electors?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Does the council have area committees and what are their powers?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>How do councillors seek to engage with their constituents? Do they hold surgeries, send newsletters, hold public meetings or maintain blogs?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Are there any mechanisms in place that help councillors interact with young people, those not on the electoral register, and/or other minority groups and their representative bodies?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Are councillors expected to attend community meetings, such as parish or resident's association meetings? If so, what is their level of involvement and what roles do they play?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Explain your approach to the Area Governance structure. Is your Area Governance a decision-making forum or an advisory board? What is their relationship with locally elected members and Community bodies such as Town and Parish Councils? Looking forward how could they be improved to enhance decision-making?</i></li> </ul>
	Analysis	<p>Members manage their ward work individually. Some Councillors choose to hold surgeries whilst other Councillors communicate with their residents in different ways. All Councillors are provided with a Council email address which they are required to use for Council business and they can also opt to provide a telephone number to the public. Members' contact details are publicised on the Council's website.</p> <p>Many Councillors attend meetings of Parish Councils held in their wards, even in cases where they are not Parish Councillors. The decision as to whether to attend these meetings is made by the Members themselves. Some Councillors represent wards in which there are a number of Parish Councils, so this can involve attendance at a number of meetings.</p> <p>Some Members use social media to interact with residents. This is organised by Members themselves and is not directly facilitated by the Council. However, Councillors are required to abide by the Council's Member Code of Conduct when</p>

		<p>using social media and this is covered in Code of Conduct training as part of the Member Induction process.</p> <p>The Council's public speaking rules for the Planning Committee enable Councillors to register as ward Members to speak on particular Planning applications. Members are consulted in respect of planning applications for their wards and have the power to call in applications for the consideration of the Planning Committee where they feel that a debate at a meeting of the Committee would be helpful.</p> <p>The Council has a standard report template. Within that template, there is a requirement for report authors to consult with ward Councillors, where appropriate, in respect of proposals that may have specific implications for their wards. The frequency with which this occurs varies according to the focus of the reports.</p> <p>Bromsgrove District Council does not have Area Committees. Currently, there are no plans to introduce Area Committees.</p> <p>There are no particular mechanisms in place to enable the Councillors to interact specifically with minority groups or young people. However, the Council does have an Electoral Matters Committee, which reviews and determines many (although not all) issues relating to elections and issues relating to engagement with people in relation to the local electoral process can be discussed at these meetings, depending on items on the agenda.</p>
<b>Casework</b>	<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>How do councillors deal with their casework? Do they pass it on to council officers? Or do they take a more in-depth approach to resolving issues?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>What support do members receive?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>How has technology influenced the way in which councillors work? And interact with their electorate?</i></li> <li>➤ <i>In what ways does the council promote service users' engagement/dispute resolution with service providers and managers rather than through councillors?</i></li> </ul>
	Analysis	<p>Councillors deal with their case work individually and each Member has their preferred approach to resolving case issues. Sometimes, Councillors choose to refer issues on to Officers, either for a resolution or in order to gather information or clarify factual details. Currently, there is a corporate requirement for Council staff to respond to Member queries within 10 working days, however officers are currently reviewing the guidance and protocols.</p>

		<p>All Members are provided with a key Officer contact list when they are elected, which is included in their induction packs. Members also have access to staff contact details on the Council's Outlook email system.</p> <p>Members do not receive specific support in terms of managing their case work. However, the Democratic Services team are often contacted by Members for information, including contact details for relevant departments or advice in respect of referring queries on to other services or organisations. All of the Democratic Services team's contact details are provided to Councillors in their induction packs early in their terms of office and the team is in regular contact with Members.</p> <p>In addition, the Democratic Services team produce the Members' newsletter, which contains information useful for Members. The newsletter is published on a monthly basis and is circulated by email for all Members' consideration, with paper copies placed on display in the Members' Room at Parkside.</p> <p>The email addresses provided by the Council to elected Members can be used to communicate with the public alongside any telephone numbers they agree to share with local residents. These details are published on the Council's website.</p> <p>The Council currently provides the majority of Members with paper copies of agenda packs and other key documentation, although Members can go paperless on request. In line with key targets set in the Council's Carbon Reduction Strategy, action is currently being taken to try to reduce the amount of paperwork generated for Committee meetings. This has included the Democratic Services team providing training to Members on how to use the modern.gov app to access and annotate agenda packs, including private papers, electronically. (Modern.gov is the Council's Committee management system).</p> <p>At the request of Members, the Council is gradually in the process of starting to live stream more Council and Planning Committee meetings on a regular basis. This should not change the way that Members interact at Committee meetings, as there remains a legal requirement for Councillors to attend formal meetings in person. However, this does help to enhance the transparency of the local democratic process.</p> <p>Members of the public do request the contact details of Members from time to time via the Council's contact centre.</p>
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		Where this is requested by phone, the contact details are provided and Officers do check whether the public would also like to be provided with contact details for the relevant Council department.
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## Other Issues

Respondent may use this space to bring any other issues of relevance to the attention of the Commission.

## Summary

In following this template respondents should have been able to provide the Commission with a robust and well-evidenced case for their proposed council size; one which gives a clear explanation as to the governance arrangements and number of councillors required to represent the authority in the future.

Use this space to summarise the proposals and indicate other options considered. Explain why these alternatives were not appropriate in terms of their ability to deliver effective Strategic Leadership, Accountability (Scrutiny, Regulation and Partnerships), and Community Leadership.

### Summary

The Council has provided through this submission a detailed analysis of its regard to:

- Its current governance arrangements and how it makes decisions.
- Its scrutiny functions relating to its own decision making and The Council's responsibilities to outside bodies; and
- The role of its councillors in the local community and how they engage with their residents and conduct casework, including how this may have changed in recent years and is affected by community characteristics and financial challenges.

Based on this analysis, The Council considered its options in terms of its future size. To do so effectively, the consideration of council size was initially taken to a meeting of group leaders before being discussed at a meeting of the cross-party Electoral Matters Committee, where the following options were considered:

### Option 1 – Reduce the number of Councillors

The option of reducing the number of councillors was carefully considered. During discussions the following points were noted:

Electoral ratio – Bromsgrove currently has the highest ratio of elector per councillor when comparing both its CIPFA nearest neighbours and all other authorities within the

Worcestershire County. It is felt that increasing this ratio by reducing the number of councillors would not provide Bromsgrove with any improvement in comparatively effective local government representation for electors. It was noted that in the last electoral review in the council had reduced its size from 39 to 31 councillors with an aim to remove multi member wards. The council would like to continue with the most effective patterning of wards where possible and feel that a further consecutive reduction would be excessive.

Community leadership - It was noted that a reduction in the number of Councillors would also increase councillor workload during a time in which Councillors have identified additional complexities of casework. It was identified that such complexities arise due to national factors such as the rise in the cost of living, but also due to community characteristics in Bromsgrove, such as an above average aged population. Most importantly it was felt that the community could be negatively impacted by any such reduction.

The impact of recent governance reviews - As set out in the contextual section of this document, the Council has recently agreed to amend its constitution as a result of a review of its governance arrangements, including the introduction of a Cabinet Advisory Panel. Considering this amongst other proposed changes, a reduction in the number of councillors would further increase workload, with commitments to outside bodies also requiring consideration. It is therefore felt that any reduction in the number of councillors could impede the Council's future operational arrangements.

**For the reasons stated above it is the view of the Council that Reducing the number of councillors is not a viable option for Bromsgrove District Council.**

## **Option 2 – Increase the number of Councillors**

Serious consideration was given to the option of increasing its number of councillors. It was noted that there is a projected population growth of 6552 in the next 10 years within Bromsgrove. It was also noted again that the electoral ratio is higher that of neighbouring authorities.

However, responses to the survey from councillors shows that most feel that the council size and their current workload is about right. It was also noted that an increase of one additional councillor could potentially raise an operational issue from a political balance perspective, as it would create an even number of councillors. Whilst not outweighing any of the main focuses of the Electoral Review, such operational considerations appear reasonable.

As can be seen in option 3 the recent assessment on the Council's governance arrangements there is already a view that there is effective governance based on the current number of councillors.

Whilst financial implications are not a consideration of the Electoral review itself, any additional councillors would have a financial implication, with costs such as member allowance, training and IT equipment worth noting.

**Ultimately, whilst there are some indicators that an increase in council size could be an appropriate course of action, there were not any strong driving factors within either analysis or discussions which warranted the additional increase when balancing this against discussions for maintaining the Council's current council size.**

## **Option 3 – Maintaining the current number of Councillors**

Effective governance - The recent undertakings to assess the Council's governance arrangements and the proposed model have been based on the current council size and therefore it is felt that the Council is in a good position to operate successfully with its current 31 councillors.

Electoral variance - The Council acknowledges that this review provides an opportunity for an assessment of the current ward boundaries to ensure effective local governance. There are currently some significant imbalances in ward electorates, with Perryfields having a - 62% and Hilltop a -34% electoral variance. In places these variances are due to housing development, which were accounted for in the previous review, but delayed. Despite this, there is a clear need to look at electoral balance in each of the wards for some redistribution where possible. It is felt that this is where the work is needed to ensure successful governance in Bromsgrove, which will take place in the latter stages of the review.

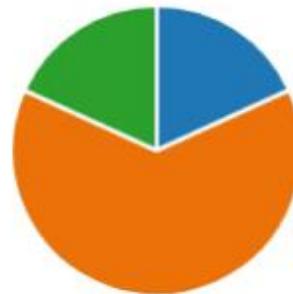
Councillor views - Most Councillors who responded to the survey implied that they are currently happy with both their current workload and the current council size.

The Council has undertaken a comprehensive analysis with considerations given to each option. Maintaining the current number of councillors is the preferred choice for Bromsgrove District Council. This option aligns with the councillors' views with their existing workload and council size, whilst recognising the Council's vision for its future governance arrangements. Additionally, addressing electoral imbalances within the existing council size at later stages of the review will ensure effective local governance without the potential consequences of reducing or increasing the number of councillors. Preserving the status quo is considered to be the most balanced decision when assessing the options available.

## Councillor Workload Survey – Response Summary

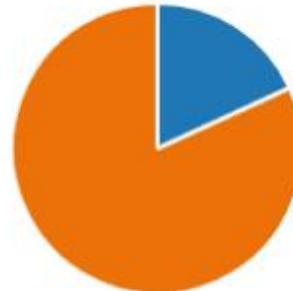
12. Which statement best describes the way you feel about your current workload as a councillor?

- I could take on a bigger workload 2
- I feel my workload is about right 7
- I feel my workload is too large 2



13. Do you feel that the number of councillors in Bromsgrove District Council is:

- too few 2
- about right 9
- too many 0



15. What is your employment status (outside of your role as a councillor)?

- working full time 4
- working part time 5
- retired or not working 2
- self employed 0

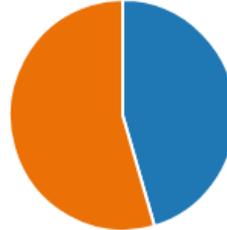


8. Do you feel that your duties (Council business and/or within the community) have changed in recent years

[More Details](#)

 Insights

- Yes 5
- No 6



9. What do you think is the reason for this?

5 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Covid, more residents working from home. A more pronounced feeling of entitlement to fast responses ,different attitudes as people have moved out of more urban areas, lack of understanding (rural areas have less streetlights pavements etc. Loss of trust in the political landscape, politicians infected by Westminster bad behaviour.
2	anonymous	Increase in demands as society's expectations are for immediate responses to enquiries.
3	anonymous	more planning and enforcement issues are coming to light
4	anonymous	Social media and more proactive engagement with the public and voluntarily get involved with community issues.
5	anonymous	People contact me more frequently during traditionally 'out of office' hours since the pandemic.

10. How would you say your duties have changed in recent years?

5 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	More traffic issues, more tree issues. Finances have tightened so less to offer,
2	anonymous	More demands and higher expectations from the residents.
3	anonymous	i have only been in a year
4	anonymous	More of a 'go to person' which I'm happy with.
5	anonymous	More people are in need of help for a variety of issues but particularly relating to the cost of living crisis and complex issues, as well as issues with wider WCC plans.

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## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MEETING OF THE ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE**

**7TH DECEMBER 2023, AT 6.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors H. D. N. Rone-Clarke (Chairman), J. Robinson (Vice-Chairman), S. R. Colella, C.A. Hotham, K.J. May and S. T. Nock

Officers: Mr D. Whitney, Mrs J. Bayley-Hill and Ms M. Bassett

#### **MINUTE EXTRACT**

15/23

#### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND PRELIMINARY STAGE BOUNDARY REVIEW FOR BROMSGROVE - COUNCIL SIZE SUBMISSION**

The Chairman agreed to this item being considered first.

The Committee considered a report which set out the stages for a review of the electoral boundaries in Bromsgrove, which would be carried out by the Local Government Boundaries Commission for England (LGBCE). There had been an update to the timetable to take into account the Police and Crime Commissioner elections in May 2024. The planned dates were now:

- Consultation on ward patterns 30th July – 30th September 2024
- LGBCE to meet on 17th December 2024 to decide its draft recommendations
- Consultation on draft recommendations between 14th January and 24th March 2025
- Publication of the LGBCE final recommendations on 24th June 2025
- Order to be laid in summer of 2025
- Implementation in May 2027.

If the Council wished to make a submission on council size, it should do this by 23rd February 2024 and the Committee was asked to decide whether the Council should make a submission and if so, what the indicative number of Councillors should be.

Officers had prepared an initial draft submission using the template provided by the LGBCE. The draft contained contextual information to aid discussion by the Committee.

The following were the main points discussed by the Committee during consideration of the report:

- it was suggested that reference on page 58 to 'require opposition members to be appointed as Chairmen of the Audit, Standards, and Governance Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Board' should be amended to acknowledge that this would be impractical if the Council was made up of only one political group
- further to a query, officers would check the ONS data available following the 2021 census to ensure that data quoted in the submission was as up to date as possible
- members queried whether the Council should aim to have an odd or even number of Councillors. It was acknowledged that for practical reasons many Councils preferred to have an odd number of Councillors. This tended to enable a majority administration to be formed in the event of an election outcome leading to political groups of the same size. However, the view was expressed that whilst this was a reasonable consideration, it should not be given more weight than improving the ratio of electorate to councillors across the District
- Members asked for details of the range between the lowest number of electors per Councillor currently and the highest
- It was noted that the previous review of Council size had reduced it from 39 to 31 Councillors and removed multi member wards. With this background Members agreed that there should not be any further reduction in the number of Councillors.
- The view was expressed that the estimated increase in electorate due to proposed development used in the previous review had not materialised, which meant there was an uneven distribution of the electorate across the District currently. Members were reminded that the review was carried out in stages. The LGBCE was looking at the total number of Councillors for the projected electorate as a whole at this initial stage and the Council should focus on that. There would be an opportunity to examine the distribution of wards at the next stage of the review
- The Committee was also reminded that the LGBCE guidance stated submissions should include challenges specific to the District, and examples suggested included an ageing population and increasing complexity of Councillor case work and decisions. It was suggested that this would mitigate against reducing the number of Councillors further.

# Agenda Item 10

Electoral Matters Committee  
7th December 2023

- A member commented that the final number should take into consideration the need to attract a diverse range of councillors and keep individual workloads to a manageable level
- Whilst the projected increase in the number of electors indicated an additional councillor might be required, as developers might decide to 'landbank' land earmarked for development, it was possible that the number would not be reached in the timescale for the current review (2027) and at this stage an increase in the number of councillors was not justified
- It was suggested that the Committee could recommend the number of Councillors stay the same for the current review and suggest a further review in 8 years' time, by which time it would be known whether or not proposed developments would have been built out. However, it was noted that the timing of reviews was at the discretion of the LGBCE who responded to changes in electoral equality.

Having considered the views put forward, the Committee agreed that the Council put forward a council size of 31 to the LGBCE.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council puts forward a council size of 31 in its submission to the LGBCE.

The meeting closed at 7.14 p.m.

Chairman

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**Council**  
2024

24th January

**LGA Corporate Peer Challenge – Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council 2023 – Progress Review**

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Karen May, Leader of the Council
Portfolio Holder Consulted		
Relevant Head of Service		Sue Hanley, Chief Executive
Report Author	Job Title: Chief Executive Contact email: <a href="mailto:s.hanley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk">s.hanley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</a>	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)		All
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Council is asked to RESOLVE that:-**

**The report in respect of the outcomes of the Corporate Peer Challenge progress review from the Local Government Association peers be noted, and thereafter published on the Council’s website.**

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The report details the outcomes of the progress review from Local Government Association (LGA) peers, following completion of a full Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) review of Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council in spring 2023.
- 2.2 Members are invited to consider the report provided and to identify further actions, if any, that need to be taken.

**3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- 3.1 Since 2012 the LGA has provided, as part of its support to the local government sector, the facilitation of CPC reviews whereby senior members and officers from other local authorities, supported by LGA staff, visit the Councils with the objective to inform their improvement plans and how to develop corporate learning. It is designed to be forward looking, and to facilitate reflection on issues and how they may be resolved. While it can be used as an external ‘health check’ on an

authority's corporate governance, the peer challenge is not a form of inspection.

- 3.2 By means of background, at a Council meeting held on 7th December 2022, Members discussed reports which detailed the Section 24 Statutory Recommendation given by the External Auditors, Grant Thornton, to the Council. An action plan to address the issues was agreed and Council also agreed to commission a CPC from the LGA with a specific focus on corporate governance and financial planning and management. Redditch Borough Council (RBC) received similar reports in November 2022 and accepted their Section 24 Recommendation along with the action plan to address the issues identified. Due to the shared nature of the Councils and the issues identified, BDC and RBC agreed to jointly commission this CPC.
- 3.3 The peer team visited Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council over a four-day period in March 2023. Following consideration by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Leaders of both Councils, a Council response to the CPC Feedback Report and a more detailed action plan were developed. A report updating Members on the outcomes of the process was considered at a Cabinet meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023, following pre-scrutiny at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023.
- 3.4 Ten months after a CPC review has been conducted, the LGA organises a CPC Review. This is a short, facilitated session which creates space for the Council's senior leadership to update peers on its progress against the action plan and to discuss next steps. This progress review was held at Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023.
- 3.5 In line with the standard process for CPCs, the LGA produced a brief a report following the review meeting which was received in January 2024. This reflects on the Council's progress since the original CPC was undertaken. Members should note there are no new recommendations contained in the review report, a copy of this update can be viewed at Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.6 Having considered the findings and suggestions in the progress review report, other than formally reporting this to Council with the requirement thereafter to publish on the Council's website, there are no additional recommendations being proposed.
- 3.7 In providing assurance to Members that the Council continues its delivery to the agreed actions and equally ensuring that impacts are measured, the following arrangements and actions are advised.

- The development and drafting of a Council Plan for 2024 to 2027 continues and the Plan will be brought to Council during 2024 for consideration and endorsement.
- Review of the Council's constitution will be brought to full council at the Annual General Meeting 2024.
- Officers continue to overview arrangements and processes to ensure Members receive comprehensive, accurate and timely reports, with ownership for oversight resting with the responsible officer within the Corporate Management Team.
- The Workforce Strategy Board chaired by the Chief Executive Officer will ensure that there is delivery to the agreed workforce action plans alongside Governance and overview of the implementation of the Authority's Agile Working Policy.
- Overview and reporting of the Council's Accounting policies is taken to each Audit Standards and Governance Committee meeting with regular reporting to Cabinet and thereafter Council on the Finance Recovery Plan including the status of the accounts submission for Audit.

3.8 Whilst no further follow up CPC meetings are anticipated at this stage, Members are invited to consider the content of this follow up report and, in doing so, to identify any additional actions that Members may feel need to be taken.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The cost of the CPC is included within the authority's annual subscription to the LGA. Other costs are internal ones related to officer time. The cost of implementing the CPC action plan is being met from current budgets (unless separate specific reports were required).

4.2 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

#### **6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Relevant Strategic Purpose**

6.1 The update in respect of the follow up to the CPC is relevant to all of the Council's strategic purposes, which were considered during both

the original challenge and in the follow up. Further information can be viewed in the original CPC document and at Appendix 1 to this report.

- 6.2 By taking action as detailed in the CPC report and listening to the advice from peers, Bromsgrove District Council is demonstrating its commitment to be an effective and sustainable Council.

### **Climate Change Implications**

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

### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.4 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications arising from this report.

## **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 There are no specific risks arising from this report as it is considered that the appropriate governance arrangements are in place.

## **8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Corporate Peer Challenge Follow Up Report 2023

### Background Papers:

‘Corporate Peer Challenge – Bromsgrove DC and Redditch BC 2023’ – report considered at the meeting of Cabinet held on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023  
[Cabinet agenda - 12th July 2023](#) (Item 8, Pages 195 – 266)

Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023: [Cabinet minutes - 12th July 2023](#)

**Council**  
2024

24th January

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**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Karen May	15/01/24
Lead Director / Head of Service	Sue Hanley, Chief Executive	15/01/24
Financial Services	Pete Carpenter, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer	15/01/24
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal solicitor (Governance)	15/01/24

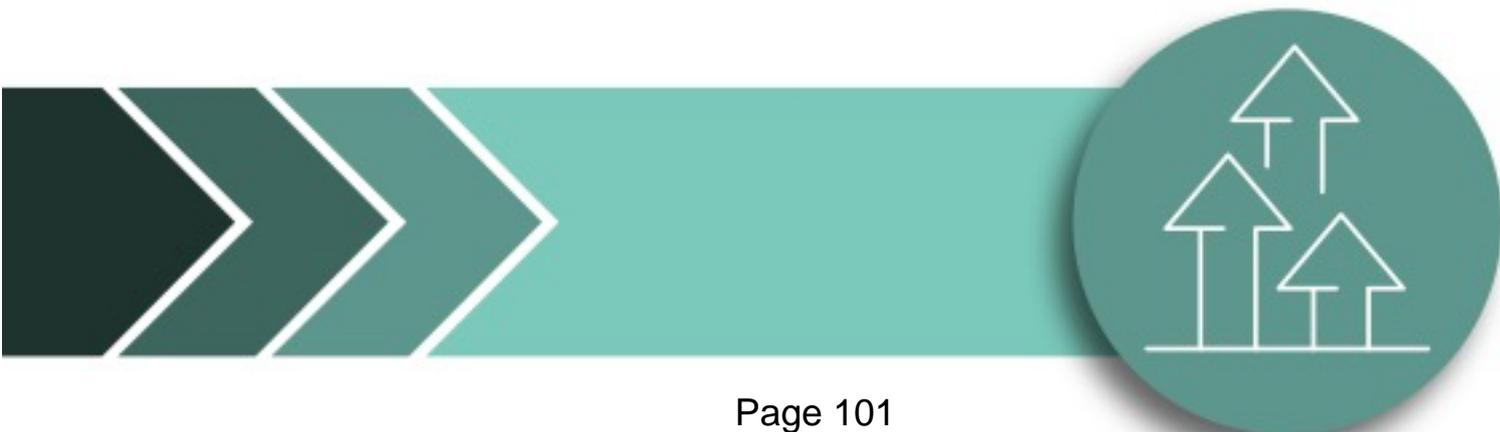
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# LGA Corporate Peer Challenge – Progress Review

Bromsgrove District Council

6<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Feedback



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## 1. Introduction

The council undertook an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) during March 2023 and published the full report in March 2023 and an action plan in July 2023.

The Progress Review is an integral part of the Corporate Peer Challenge process. Taking place approximately ten months after the CPC, it is designed to provide space for the council's senior leadership to:

- Update peers on the early progress made and to receive feedback on this including how the action plan aligns to the CPC's recommendations
- Consider peer's reflections on any new opportunities or challenges that may have arisen since the peer team were 'on-site' including any further support needs
- Discuss any early impact or learning from the progress made to date

This progress review was undertaken within the context of significant changes within the managerial leadership of the council as a result of the departure of the former chief executive and political changes at Bromsgrove District Council following the local elections in May 2023.

The LGA would like to thank Bromsgrove District Council for their commitment to sector led improvement. This Progress Review was the next step in an ongoing, open and close relationship that the council has with LGA sector support.

## 2. Summary of the approach

The Progress Review at Bromsgrove District Council took place on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

The progress review had full regard for the political and managerial changes in the council alongside each of the recommendations from the Corporate Peer Challenge as follows:

## **Recommendation 1**

*The council needs to review its strategic priorities and realign resources accordingly.*

Getting the right priorities in place to maximise emerging opportunities and deal with the challenges will provide the council with the strategic framework for engaging with citizens, collaborating with partners, improving the quality of life for residents, facilitating the transformation of the organisation, and will enable everybody to better understand their place and role in delivering for Bromsgrove.

## **Recommendation 2**

*The organisation should consider a governance review to improve decision-making.*

There is room for improvements in the council's governance arrangements and a review will strengthen decision-making through more Member engagement and provide a greater level of scrutiny, challenge and assurance. It will also improve the processes and support arrangements across the council to enable Members to deliver on their democratic and leadership responsibilities.

## **Recommendation 3**

*Embed the 2022-2026 Workforce Strategy and develop an action plan which needs to be implemented at pace.*

This will help to align organisational capacity, corporate resources, transformation, workforce development, succession and talent management, and performance management to the new priorities. It will also strengthen the link between the council's ambitions and delivery as well as providing a clear corporate line of sight on how resources are being deployed, what is being achieved and how the organisation is feeling.

## **Recommendation 4**

*Agile working principles and policies need to be implemented consistently.*

This calls for flexible and hybrid-working plans to be supported by clear management and staff guidance on how this will work in practice for the whole workforce in an equitable way. Not having clear guidelines and parameters in place exposes the council to potential unequal and discriminatory practices leading to inconsistencies across the organisation.

## **Recommendation 5**

*Ensure the Section 24 Notice and Interim Annual Audit Report recommendations are fully implemented.*

This is a key priority for the council as it impacts on the reputation of the council and statutory compliance. Furthermore, the implementation of the recommendations will lead to improved governance and financial management in the organisation.

## **Recommendation 6**

*Use engagement, shared values, and improved processes to create a positive democratic culture.*

This means finding ways to involve a greater number of Members in the work of the council and fostering a more supportive and cordial culture between Members and enhanced understanding and joint working between Members and staff to strengthen the democratic process.

For this progress review, the following members of the original CPC team were involved:

- **Joanne Wagstaffe** - Chief Executive at Three Rivers Borough Council
- **Peter Fleming OBE** – Former Leader at Sevenoaks Borough Council
- **Councillor Georgina Hill** – Independent Member at Northumberland County Council
- **Satvinder Rana** - Senior Regional Adviser at the LGA

Members of the peer team had online discussions with their counterparts prior to the onsite visit and had face to face meetings in Redditch Borough Council over the course of one day with the following representatives from the council:

- **Sue Hanley** – Interim Chief Executive, Redditch BC & Bromsgrove DC
- **Councillor Karen May** - Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Bromsgrove DC
- **Councillor Sue Baxter** - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration, Bromsgrove DC
- **Councillor Rob Hunter** – Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Bromsgrove

DC

- **Councillor Peter McDonald** – Leader of the Labour Group, Bromsgrove DC
- **Peter Carpenter** – Interim Director of Finance & Resources (s151 Officer), Redditch BC & Bromsgrove DC
- **Guy Revans** – Interim Executive Director, Redditch BC & Bromsgrove DC
- **Claire Felton** – Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services (Monitoring Officer), Redditch BC & Bromsgrove DC
- **Staff focus group**

### 3. Progress Review – Feedback

The peer team was pleased to see the positive way in which the council addressed the recommendations of the Corporate Peer Challenge of March 2023, the actions it has taken so far, and the evidence provided to show the progress being made. The council's leadership briefed the peer team about the work it has been doing and the context within which it has been operating since the peer challenge.

The council continues to operate in a shared services agreement with Redditch Borough Council and this arrangement is working well across both councils.

There have been some fundamental changes in the managerial leadership since the corporate peer challenge in March 2023. The previous chief executive retired in September 2023 and the councils' former deputy chief executive was appointed as interim chief executive until a permanent appointment is made. The interim chief executive is supported by two executive directors, both of whom are also in interim positions. There continues to be capacity challenges within the council including those at senior level due to staff turnover - although all leadership posts are being covered by interim arrangements endorsed by the Council.

The May 2023 local elections delivered Bromsgrove DC to 'no-overall control' and the council now has a coalition Cabinet made up of the Conservative Group and the Independent Group. The new Cabinet is gelling well together and has been undergoing 'top team' development, as well as drafting a shared political vision and political priorities for the council.

Despite these structural and contextual changes, the peer team was pleased to note renewed energy at the senior level in the organisation and a stronger sense of purpose and direction. The council developed and published an action plan in response to the recommendations of the corporate peer challenge and has been delivering against this. The peer team was impressed with the progress made so far and would encourage the council to continue its delivery whilst ensuring that it is measuring the impacts of its efforts.

## **Recommendation 1**

*The council needs to review its strategic priorities and realign resources accordingly.*

Following detailed work by the Portfolio Holders, Cabinet drafted a political vision and political priorities. At a recent session facilitated by the LGA which involved the Cabinet and the corporate management team, next steps have been agreed for the development of the council plan.

This was critical in the development and delivery of the review of priorities. The new 3-year council plan for the period 2024-27 detailing strategic priorities and aligned resources will be presented to full council and published in 2024. Having an aspirational and forward-looking District-wide strategic vision supported by a comprehensive council plan with a clear set of priorities for the council will help to inject confidence and positivity among elected members, staff, partners, and citizens as they take Bromsgrove forward.

## **Recommendation 2 and Recommendation 6**

*The organisation should consider a governance review to improve decision-making.*

*Use engagement, shared values, and improved processes to create a positive democratic culture.*

A comprehensive review of the council's constitution is currently underway by external lawyers and should be in place from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. This review will consider the findings of the Governance review in Bromsgrove as well as changes to the constitutions agreed by Members through the constitution review process.

In addition, several actions have been taken to improve decision-making, including for example:

- Putting in place a hybrid form of Leader and Cabinet model of decision making with a Memorandum of Understanding between the Leaders of the two groups on how they are going to work together.
- Progressing the recommendations made by the governance systems task group, which are being monitored by overview and scrutiny committee.
- Holding Cabinet surgeries once a month and meeting of political group leaders once a month.
- Putting in place independent support to the Cabinet via the Local Government Association (LGA).
- Implementing the recommendations of the review of the council's planning committee by the Planning Advisory Service's (PAS)
- Extra briefings for all Members on specific subjects to help improve communications and understanding among Members.
- The joint calendar of meetings for the Cabinet for the 2024/25 municipal year has been reviewed and work planning days have been included to provide the Cabinet with an opportunity to plan its work for the year ahead.
- Overview and Scrutiny work prioritisation events for the council have been booked to take place early in the municipal year alongside refresher training.
- Dates have been scheduled throughout the year for Member briefings on emerging issues.
- Individual Cabinet Members have been provided with opportunities to attend training provided by the Local Government Association (LGA).
- The council is progressing with the introduction of the modern.gov report management system and this should help to ensure that the quality of reports improves in future whilst the system should also help to encourage report authors to meet deadlines.
- Members have agreed that Council and planning committee meetings should all be live streamed to the council's YouTube channel moving forward to help improve the transparency of the decision-making process.
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings have been scheduled to take place in advance of the Cabinet meetings in 2024/25 to reduce the gap between publication of the main Overview and Scrutiny Committee agenda and supplementary packs containing Cabinet reports for pre-scrutiny.

This is impressive progress and is helping to improving decision-making across the council. Nevertheless, processes to ensure that Members receive comprehensive, accurate and timely reports can be further tightened and will help to lessen strain on officer capacity and foster a positive democratic culture in the organisation.

Furthermore, the introduction of the new constitution will require additional Member training to ensure that they have a better understanding of how the democratic process works in the council and how the constitution will support that.

### **Recommendation 3**

*Embed the 2022-2026 Workforce Strategy and develop an action plan which needs to be implemented at pace.*

Implementation of the strategy is in force and an action plan for Year 1 and additional resources have been signed off by the corporate management team (CMT). Year 2 and 3 of the action plan is kept under review to ensure the interdependencies within the action plan are considered and addressed and that it remains fluid to address any priority needs that may arise. To give weight and ensure robust project management, a workforce strategy board, chaired by the interim chief executive, has been established.

A reset of the culture of the organisation is underway and this is being driven by the council's four key principles of people, performance, pride, and purpose. It was encouraging to hear senior managers refer to these and how they are using them to manage their service areas.

The corporate apprenticeship programme has been launched and work is ongoing to implement the first cohort of apprentices under the programme. The first cohort of the council's leadership development programme – AWARE+ began in September and a second cohort is planned for the spring of 2024.

Improvements to the council's appraisal system are being implemented and a revised appraisal process is due to be launched by early 2024 which will support workforce planning. A new recruitment system is being developed and is also to be implemented at the beginning of 2024. This will be accompanied by a programme of training for managers both in using the system and in the skills and behaviours

required to carry out successful recruitment campaigns.

An exit Interview survey has been developed and was implemented in November 2023 with the aim of improving understanding of why people leave the councils' employment and what might be done to reduce staff turnover. A Staff Induction Working Group has been set up to look at the best ways of onboarding new starters and has been tasked with creating a revised induction to be rolled out early in 2024.

These are tangible steps that the council has taken and should continue with this work at pace to ensure that it is able to both retain quality staff and attract new talent into areas where it currently has capacity gaps.

#### **Recommendation 4**

*Agile working principles and policies need to be implemented consistently.*

The council's Agile Working Policy was launched in June 2023 with managers tasked with rolling out the policy within their service areas. Member briefings have also taken place, a project board constituted and CMT has set clear parameters for agile working. The nature and extent of agile working will be dependent on specific roles (for example front-office vs back-office) to ensure customer service and delivery of outcomes remains the priority.

The Workforce Strategy Board is now the revised governance body overseeing implementation of the policy, and will provide additional guidance where required and review the effectiveness of implementation. Heads of service and fourth tier managers will be responsible for applying the policy.

Manager training has been ongoing, covering topics which support the rollout of the policy, and the potential of artificial intelligence and robotics are being explored to help carry out routine activities to enable staff to be released to focus on activities that add value to customers. Managers have welcomed the policy as it provides structure and flexibility to enable them to meet business and operational needs.

Agile working in all councils was accelerated because of the pandemic and the new ways of working will take time for it to get embedded across organisations. The peer team would reiterate that it will be essential to continue to keep implementation under review so that parameters can be fine-tuned where necessary, and consistency and equity across the organisation ensured. This will help continue delivering outcomes

for the organisation and help attract talent to the council.

## **Recommendation 5**

*Ensure the Section 24 Notice and Interim Annual Audit Report recommendations are fully implemented.*

The S24 notice recommendation around the delivery of the 2020/21 accounts is still in place and has been extended to the subsequent accounting periods now outstanding. Of the 5 key recommendations in the 2020/21 report, only one serious weakness remains in relation to opening balances linked to the budget which will be resolved with the delivery of the Accounts, the remainder of those significant weaknesses have been resolved or linked to improvement recommendations.

The council is taking the following actions to rectify issues highlighted in the S24 notice recommendation as well as key recommendations of the draft 2020/21 External Audit Report:

- The accounting policies report goes to every audit committee. The frequency of audit committee meetings has been increased from 5 a year to 6 a year until the financial position is rectified.
- The key closure deliverables for each financial year are clearly set out. The owners of these deliverables are the s151 and deputy s151 officers.
- Closure and audit of the 2020/21 accounts within the next few weeks will deliver the S24 notice recommendations. The owners of these deliverables are the s151 and deputy s151 officers.
  - The cash receipts suspense accounts will be cleared by the end of the 2023 calendar year.
  - The council has had difficulties in obtaining the data required by its external auditors to sign on the TechOne take on balances as of the 8th of February 2021.
  - The previous finance providers 'Advanced' are now being used to deliver this data as there is not the expertise in-house.
  - The council will only "give" the 2020/21 accounts once the data take on balances have been agreed with the external auditors.
  - The 2021/22 accounts will be drawn up once 2020/21 accounts are handed

over.

- Progress on key financial and compliance indicators are reported monthly to CMT and to audit committee bi-monthly. These deliverables are also reported on a quarterly basis to the Cabinet.
- Delivery of financial training is taking place to move staff to right level of skills.
- TechOne was upgraded to the latest version 23A in July 2023.
- Quarterly combined financial and performance monitoring is taking place throughout the 23/24 financial year with Q1 reported in September and Q2 in November/December 2023.
- In Quarter 2, the budgets for the first time were delivered on TechOne and not spreadsheets. This, linked to the finance training, will lead to better ownership and greater accuracy of forecasts.
- The 2024/5 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) process has started. As part of this process the approach to consultation will be rethought as per the draft 2020/21 audit report recommendation.
- The MTFP will include scenario analysis given short term government guidance on central support.
- The audit task group recommendations have been integrated and endorsed by the Cabinet. As part of this, the audit committee agenda order has been changed to deal with risk earlier as per the recommendations of the audit task group.
- Risk workshops are still to be run to assess risk appetite of the Cabinet and audit committee. Strategic priority workshops have been run with the Cabinet in August and September 2023.
- Following the risk workshops the council will be able to implement Internal Audit Risk Review recommendations.
- The 2021/2 and 2022/3 value for money opinions was delivered to audit committee in November. This report set out how the council has progressed on the S24 issue and the 5 key recommendations.

Staffing numbers are back to close to establishment levels, although a number of these posts are covered by agency and fixed term contract staff. Financially, as at

Quarter 2 the Council is forecasting a revenue overspend for 2023/24 in the region of £39k, after the application of £557k from the Utilities Reserve as approved at Quarter 1. In the medium term the council is expecting to deliver balanced budgets over the next 2-3 years.

The peer team was pleased to note the council taking the right and necessary steps to address the S24 recommendations and appears to be on track to publish its accounts once Auditors have undertaken their reconciliation work on opening balances in January 2024. Following sign off of the opening balances by the Auditors the council can then supply the 2020/21 accounts for audit. The peer team would encourage the council to continue with this work to ensure that S24 as well as the audit committee recommendations are robustly addressed and improvements in the accounting processes sustained in the future.

## 4. Final thoughts and next steps

The LGA would like to thank Bromsgrove District Council for undertaking an LGA CPC progress review.

We appreciate that senior managerial and political leadership will want to reflect on these findings and suggestions in order to determine how the organisation wishes to take things forward.

Under the umbrella of LGA sector-led improvement, there is an on-going offer of support to councils. The LGA is well placed to provide additional support, advice and guidance on a number of the areas identified for development and improvement and we would be happy to discuss this. Helen Murray (Principal Adviser) is the main point of contact between the authority and the Local Government Association (LGA) and her e-mail address is [helen.murray@local.gov.uk](mailto:helen.murray@local.gov.uk)

### **Satvinder Rana**

Senior Regional Adviser, LGA  
(On behalf of the peer challenge team)

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### Bromsgrove District Council Planning Enforcement Policy

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor K. Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Head of Service		Ruth Bamford
Report Author	Job Title: Principal Officer Contact email:toni.ainscough@worcsregservices.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01562 738035	
Wards Affected		No specific ward relevance
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		No
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)		All strategic purposes apply
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

#### 1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Cabinet RECOMMEND to Council that:-**

- 1.1 The Council endorses the report (as attached at Appendix A).

#### 2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The attached report in Appendix 1 is a revision of the existing Planning Enforcement Policy dated January 2011. The current policy can be found here:

<https://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/media/905007/Bromsgrove-Enforcement-Policy-January-2011.pdf>

The revised and updated policy for consideration is attached in Appendix 1. It is recommended that the attached Planning Enforcement Policy replaces the existing policy in line with current practice.

#### 3. **OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- 3.1 There are no operational issues of note.

#### 4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None

**5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Council carries out enforcement activity under statutory powers. There are no direct legal implications arising from this Report

Whilst the Council has a range of powers to enforce against unauthorised development, the Government, through paragraph 59 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), states that enforcement action is discretionary and LPA's should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control. The NPPF (as augmented by the NPPG) also recommends that Local Planning Authorities publish a Local Enforcement Plan to manage enforcement proactively, in a way that is appropriate to their area. This should set out how they will monitor the implementation of planning permissions, investigate alleged cases of unauthorised development and take action where it is appropriate to do so. The Council has therefore updated its Enforcement Plan in accordance with national guidance, best enforcement practice and to provide greater clarity and transparency on expectations, process and limitations in relation to the Council's role.

**6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS****Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 6.1 The response to the Planning Enforcement Policy in itself does not have any direct implications on Bromsgrove District Council's strategic purposes. In reviewing this policy, consideration has been given to the Council's strategic purposes and it is considered that the revised policy supports these key purposes. T

**Climate Change Implications**

- 6.2 It is not considered that there are any specific climate change implications for Bromsgrove from the proposals in the Planning Enforcement Policy SSLP. Although it is recognised that the planning process must continue to address the wider climate change concerns.

**Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.3 The response has no Equality or Diversity implications, due regard has been given in the preparation of this policy.

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 The current planning enforcement policy does not reflect the current or aspired operational activities of its planning enforcement service.

**Cabinet**  
2024

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Therefore by not endorsing the attached reviewed policy, the Council is at risk of operating a service which is not in alignment with current policy.

- 7.2 The proposed enforcement policy sets out our approach to enforcement which is subject to budgets afforded such. Expectation of action and expediency will require managing with the above in mind.

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1 – Bromsgrove District Council Planning Enforcement Policy

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**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor K. Taylor	
Lead Director / Head of Service	Ruth Bamford	
Financial Services		
Legal Services	Amar Hussain	28/11/23
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	N/A	
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	N/A	

## **Bromsgrove District Council Planning Enforcement Policy**

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## **Introduction**

This Enforcement Plan ('The Plan') relates to Bromsgrove District Council's planning enforcement service and describes the purposes of the service and how it will be delivered.

Although planning enforcement is discretionary and not a mandatory function of Local Planning Authorities, it is recognised that the integrity of the Development Management process depends on the Council's commitment to take effective action against unauthorised development.

The Plan explains the Council's policy and procedure for dealing with reports of alleged breaches of planning control. It identifies local priorities to assist with case management. The Plan sets out the approach to planning enforcement and provides greater clarity for all parties engaged in the development process.

## **Purpose of planning enforcement**

The purpose of planning enforcement is to ensure that development and/or change of use of land and buildings, is undertaken in accordance with regulations and planning permissions and, where it is undertaken without permission, to ensure that harmful development is dealt with effectively.

A breach of planning control must occur for enforcement action to be considered. An assumption cannot be made on intent. Similarly disputes concerning boundaries, covenants, deeds, or civil issues are not relevant.

## **Legislation and policy**

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (The Act) as amended, provides the statutory basis for most planning enforcement matters. The statutory powers for Listed Building enforcement are provided principally by The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The Bromsgrove District Plan (BDP) was adopted by Bromsgrove District Council on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017. The plans set the vision and strategy for the sustainable growth of the area up to 2030. It is the Council's key statutory strategic planning document, guiding decisions on all development activity and is therefore fundamental in guiding decisions relating to breaches of planning control.

The BDP conforms to the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') which was first introduced in March 2012. The Framework states that: "Effective enforcement is important as a means of maintaining public confidence in the planning system. Enforcement action is discretionary, and local planning authorities should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control. Local planning authorities should consider publishing a local enforcement plan to manage enforcement proactively, in a way that is appropriate to their area. This should set out how they will monitor the implementation of planning permissions, investigate alleged cases of unauthorised development and take action where it is appropriate" (NPPF).

In addition to the Framework the Planning Practice Guidance document titled "Ensuring effective enforcement" provides national guidance in responding to suspected breaches of planning control. In preparing this Policy the Council has followed the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance.

## Principles

### What is a breach of planning control?

Planning enforcement aims to enforce against planning breaches, which is described in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (“the 1990 Act”) as;

- “carrying out development without the required planning permission; or failing to comply with any condition or limitation subject to which planning permission has been granted’(s.171A).

Section 55 of the 1990 Act defines development as;

- “the carrying out of building, mining, engineering or other operations in, on, or over land, or the making of any material change of use of any building or other land.”

A breach of planning control could involve such matters as the unauthorised erection of a building or an extension to a building, a material change of use of land or a building, or the display of unauthorised advertisements.

In certain circumstances, planning permission is not required, this is referred to as Permitted Development Rights, examples include, some extensions or structures, walls, and fences. Further information can be found in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government document published in September 2019 ‘Permitted development rights for householders.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/830643/190910\\_Tech\\_Guide\\_for\\_publishing.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/830643/190910_Tech_Guide_for_publishing.pdf)

Other breaches of planning control may consist of the following:

- Unauthorised works to Listed Buildings - most works to Listed Buildings require consent and it is a criminal offence to carry out works without such consent. Prosecution proceedings can be instigated under Section 9 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Alternatively, the Act also gives local planning authorities the power to serve Listed Building Enforcement Notices to which there is a right of appeal.
- Unauthorised works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or Conservation Area - It is an offence to carry out unauthorised work to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Where works are proposed to trees in a Conservation Area, the Local Planning Authority should be notified, and permission obtained in advance. In both instances the Council has the power to prosecute offenders and require the planting of replacement trees.
- Unauthorised demolition of a building which is located within a Conservation Area - It is a criminal offence to demolish a building, which is in a Conservation Area, without consent.
- Breaches of Planning Conditions - A breach of condition notice can be served where there is a failure to comply with any condition imposed on the grant of planning permission. There is no right of appeal against a breach of condition notice.
- Untidy land where it affects the amenity of the area - where land or premises have become an eyesore, the Local Planning Authority has the power to serve a notice under section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act, requiring steps to be taken to remedy the condition of land. There is a right of appeal to the Magistrates Court.
- Deliberate concealment of unauthorised building works or changes of use - where a person deliberately conceals unauthorised development, the deception may not come to light until

after the time limits for taking enforcement action (Section 171B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) have expired. A Planning Enforcement Order enables the council to act in relation to an apparent breach of planning control notwithstanding that the time limits may have expired.

- Not building in accordance with the approved plans that form part of a planning permission - In some cases this can result in the whole development being deemed as unauthorised.
- Unauthorised engineering operations, such as raising of ground levels or earth bunds - these matters may involve engagement with the Environment Agency.

## The principles of good enforcement

The integrity of the planning system depends on the Council's readiness to take enforcement action when it is appropriate to do so. Planning laws and policies are designed to control the development and use of land and buildings in the public interest; they are not meant to protect the private interests of one person against the activities of another.

The Council is committed to providing an effective planning enforcement service. To undertake effective investigations, it is essential that there is cooperation between Council departments and other agencies, such as the Police, Environment Agency, HMRC and the Health and Safety Executive. The Council will maintain and enhance these relationships to make best use of our available resources.

The Council will not condone breaches of planning control and will exercise its discretion to take enforcement action if it is considered expedient to do so. The Council will investigate all reports about alleged breaches of planning control, except those reported anonymously\*, to determine whether a breach has actually occurred, and if it has, will then determine the most appropriate course of action, mindful to the basic principles of enforcement:

- **Proportionality** - enforcement action will be proportionate to the risks and seriousness of any breach, including any actual or potential harm caused by the breach.
- **Helpfulness** - where it should be possible for breaches of control to be relatively quickly remedied, officers will give owners/developers a chance to quickly rectify matters. It needs to be recognised that this process will take some time due to matters of negotiation and realistic compliance periods to rectify building works for example. All correspondence will identify the officer dealing with the matter and give contact details. Officers will not tolerate abusive language or aggressive behaviour.
- **Targeting of enforcement action** - focusing enforcement action on the most serious risks and recognise that it is not possible to prioritise all issues of non-compliance or to act against breaches causing no significant harm.
- **Consistency of enforcement approach** - consistency does not mean uniformity, however a similar approach will be taken in similar circumstances with the appropriate exercise of individual discretion and professional judgement.
- **Transparency of how enforcement operates and what can be expected** - where non-compliance has been identified, officers will explain what must be done to remedy the breach, clearly explain the reasoning behind their decision, give reasonable timescales for compliance and provide clear instructions of what will happen if they do not comply. It must be realised that details of the investigation cannot be shared until the case has concluded.

- **Accountability for our actions** - members of the public and businesses will know what to expect when an officer visits and how to raise any allegations they may have, and the council will report on performance.

## Enforcement action is discretionary

Once a breach of planning control has been identified, the extent of the breach must be assessed to establish what, if any, action should be taken to remedy the breach and whether it is considered expedient to do so. It is at the Council's discretion to use enforcement powers.

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Section 171B establishes three different time limits for enforcement, after which the change is considered immune from enforcement:

- Four years for operational development [Section 171B(1)];
- Four years for change of use to a single dwellinghouse [Section 171B(2)];
- Ten years for any other breach such as a material change of use.

These time limits as set in legislation guide our approach to managing and prioritising our work.

If it is likely that the unauthorised development would have been approved if planning permission had been initially applied for, formal enforcement action will not be undertaken. Taking enforcement action must be in the public interest and consequently, it will not be taken simply because a breach has occurred.

## Expediency

In cases where it has been established that a breach of planning control has occurred at the initial stage, a Planning Officer will undertake an assessment of expediency to determine which next course of action should be taken. In accordance with section 172 of the 1990 Act 'expediency' is assessed with reference to national and local planning policies and to any other material considerations (e.g., amenity, design).

'Expediency' has no statutory definition but it has been interpreted in the High Court as:

'Expedience as a test suggests the balancing of the advantages and disadvantages of a course of action'.

The Practical Planning Guidance (PPG) issued by Government in 2019 provides examples where planning enforcement action may not be expedient at paragraph 011:

- *“there is a trivial or technical breach of control which causes no material harm or adverse impact on the amenity of the site or the surrounding area;*
- *development is acceptable on its planning merits and formal enforcement action would solely be to regularise the development;*
- *in their assessment, the local planning authority consider that an application is the appropriate way forward to regularise the situation, for example, where planning conditions may need to be imposed.”*

An expediency test will usually involve the Planning Officer assessing the following:

- Whether the breach is in accordance with the policies of the Local Plan.

- Whether action would be proportionate with the breach to which it relates.

And in relation to 'harm':

- Whether permission would likely to have been granted, had a planning application been submitted before the development occurred
- The breach against any other material planning considerations
- Whether the breach unacceptably affects public amenity.
- Whether the breach unacceptably affects any existing land, use or buildings which merit protection in the public interest.
- Whether any action would be in the public interest.

## What is harm?

Harm in this context relates only to planning harm. Harm that results from a breach in planning control could concern residential amenity or highway safety issues. Examples of harm could include noise nuisance, loss of daylight or privacy, or danger from increased traffic flows.

The following are NOT examples of harm:

- Loss of value to a neighbouring property.
- Competition to another business
- Loss of an individual's view or trespass onto someone else's land.

It may be possible to address issues such as these by way of civil action, although this is a matter for the individual to pursue and is not an area where the Council would be involved.

This means that the Council may not take formal enforcement action in all cases where a breach of planning control has been identified. It is part of the normal duties/responsibilities of the enforcement role for officers to ensure decisions not to pursue formal enforcement action can be properly justified having regard to this Enforcement Policy and the relevant Local Plan. There is no right to appeal the Council decision not to take enforcement action. However, if someone is dissatisfied with the decision-making process, they can follow the Council's Complaints Procedure.

## Using the Enforcement Policy and our enforcement powers

### Formal action

The Council has a range of formal powers and tools for use under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 that it can use to remedy breaches of planning control. The more commonly used are:

- The service of a Planning Contravention Notice (PCN) - Section 171(c) enables the service of a notice requiring persons to provide information in relation to land or activities on land where a breach of planning control is suspected. This is usually carried out very early in an investigation where further information is required. Failure to respond or provision of inaccurate information is a criminal offence.
- The service of a Request for Information (RFI) - Section 330 enables a notice to be served requesting details to be provided of any owners, occupiers or any other persons with an interest in the land. This is usually served prior to a formal enforcement action being taken.

- The service of an Enforcement Notice - Section 172 enables the service of a notice which requires specific steps to be undertaken to remedy the breach of planning control.
- The service of a Breach of Condition Notice (BCN) - Section 187(a) enables the service of a notice to secure compliance with conditions imposed on a planning permission.
- The service of a Section 215 Notice - Section 215 provides a local planning authority (LPA) with the power, in certain circumstances, to take steps requiring land to be cleaned up when its condition adversely affects the amenity of the area. LPAs also have powers under Section 219 to undertake the clean-up works themselves and to recover the costs from the landowner.
- The service of a Stop Notice (SN) or a Temporary Stop Notice (TSN) - Section 183 and Section 171(e), enables the service of a notice requiring the cessation of unauthorised activities. A Stop Notice may only be served in conjunction with an Enforcement Notice referred to above. SN and TSN action are reserved for much more serious breaches that are causing serious harm to amenity.
- In addition to the above further action is available by way of the service of Injunctions, which is where direct action is taken to remedy a breach or to instigate prosecution proceedings for non-compliance where it is deemed necessary to do so. As above, this action would only be taken in very severe cases.

The Council will look to recover costs from an offender where evidence suggests offenders have profited from the illegal works, as a deterrent and to remedy the breach. The council may place a charge on the land to aid future recovery or seek confiscation under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

## Power or entry onto land and buildings

Section 196(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 and Part 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Order Act 2003 gives Enforcement Officers the power to enter land and/or premises at all reasonable hours in order to undertake his/her official duties. Wilful obstruction of a person exercising a right of entry is an offence. The above does not allow the admission to any building used as a dwelling house to be demanded as a right by virtue of the legislations unless twenty-four hours prior notice of the intended entry has been given to the occupier of the building. Failure to comply with the Council's request can lead to a request to the Courts for a warrant to enter.

## What happens when we take formal enforcement action?

A formal Enforcement Notice will be served on the owner of the property along with any other party with a legal interest in the land or building in question. The Enforcement Notice will specify what action is required to remedy the breach and will give a period for compliance. The recipient of the Enforcement Notice has a minimum of 28 days to appeal against the notice to the Planning Inspectorate. Where an appeal is lodged, the council can take no further action in relation to that enforcement notice until the appeal has been decided. It is not unusual for the appeal process to take several months.

The council will defend any appeal but if it is allowed (i.e. if the appellant wins), the council can take no further action. If it is dismissed however, the Enforcement Notice will take effect, although the Inspector can amend its requirements, including the period for compliance, for example.

It is a criminal offence not to comply with an Enforcement Notice once the compliance period has passed. If the notice is not complied with the Council will consider prosecution. However, such action does require evidence to prove the offence is being committed by a named individual or

company 'beyond reasonable doubt'. Collecting this evidence can sometimes be a lengthy and time-consuming exercise and in some cases pre-trial delays may be unavoidable.

The Council will comply with the provisions of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 when interviewing persons suspected of a criminal offence and with the Criminal Procedures and Investigations Act 1996 and Section 222 of the Local Government Act 1972, when carrying out prosecutions.

## [How to report an alleged breach of planning control](#)

In order that your enquiry can be dealt with as soon as possible it is important that you provide us with as much information as you can.

You can submit your enquiry via: [Breach reporting Online form - bromsgrove.gov.uk](#)

Advertisements may be removed, without notice, under powers granted by the Highways Act 1980. Unauthorised advertisements placed on the public highway or on Bromsgrove District Council owned land are dealt with by the Environmental Services Support Unit. This team has instant powers of removal. This relates predominantly to advertisements attached to street furniture and highway features. It also includes A-boards on the public highway that are deemed to be causing a distraction or nuisance. Public highway is with reference to all public highway areas, including footways, verges, accesses and public areas that are on highway land.

## [You can report an unauthorised advertisement here](#)

For enquiries relating to trees, please visit; [Tree Works contact details - bromsgrove.gov.uk](#)

## [What can you expect if you report an alleged breach of planning control?](#)

### [Acknowledgement](#)

You will receive an acknowledgement following the registration of your allegation of breach of planning control. This provides you with the name and contact details of the Officer who will be assigned to your enquiry. We will always keep your personal details confidential, unless required to disclose as part of court proceedings.

### [Site Inspection](#)

In most cases the officer will visit the site following the dispatch of the acknowledgement, to obtain detailed factual information about the alleged breach and take photographs. Where a more serious breach has been alleged, such as works to Listed Buildings/buildings within a Conservation Area, the site will usually be visited as soon as possible.

### [How long is the process likely to take?](#)

Dealing with enforcement cases can be a lengthy and complex process. Different types of enforcement cases vary considerably as does the time taken for their resolution. It is for this reason that it is not possible to give a standard time for dealing with enforcement cases in full. The assigned Officer will endeavour to provide you with updates when key events take place in a case, such as the service of an Enforcement Notice or when an investigation is completed. In cases where there may be a technical breach of planning control, but the harm caused is not sufficient to warrant formal action, the Officer will notify you of the reason for not taking formal action and close the case.

### [Anonymous complaints](#)

Anonymous allegations of breaches of planning control will not usually be investigated. All informants are required to provide their full name, a postal address, telephone number and where

possible an email address. They are also required to provide the full address of the address where the allegation of a breach of planning control is occurring. Fundamentally this approach aims to ensure that public resources are not spent unnecessarily investigating hoax or malicious allegations. This information is also essential as the Council may need to contact the informant prior to any site inspection being carried out to seek further information or clarification regarding the details of the alleged breach and to obtain feedback from the informant as the case progresses. All details provided by an informant will remain confidential, unless the information is required for use as evidence in court. If this does happen, the Council will make all reasonable efforts to check with the informant before disclosing any information.

## What happens if an allegation is made against you?

If an allegation of breach of planning control is received that affects you, and we have your contact details, contact will be made to advise you of such. Typically, a site visit follows, and the purpose of this visit is to establish the facts of the case and whether there is any basis to the allegations made. The officer will, where necessary take measurements and photographs of the development or activity taking place. This site inspection may be undertaken without any prior notification.

If there is a breach of planning control you will be advised of the details of the breach and what steps need to be taken to either rectify the breach or regularise the situation. You may be served with a Planning Contravention Notice (PCN) which will ask further questions pertaining to the alleged unauthorised development. There is a legal requirement to respond to a PCN. You will be given a reasonable period of time (subject to the nature of the breach) to resolve any breach(es) of planning control. If compliance is not secured through negotiations or the submission of a retrospective planning application, formal action may be instigated.

If a formal notice is served and not complied with, the case may be pursued through to the Magistrates Court or higher court where necessary. Where prosecutions are pursued, in the more severe cases, the Council will consider the use of Confiscation Orders under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 to recoup the financial benefit gained from the breach of planning control.

## Negotiations take place to find a solution

In accordance with Government guidance the priority is to try and resolve any breaches of planning control through negotiation. Only when such negotiations fail to secure a solution should formal action be considered. The Council will however try to avoid negotiations becoming protracted where there is a need to make the development acceptable or where there is a requirement for a particular use to cease.

## Invite a retrospective application

The submission of a retrospective application may be appropriate where it is considered that there is a reasonable likelihood that planning permission may be granted in line with local and national planning policies or where a development may be made acceptable by way of the imposition of conditions. Minor or technical breaches of planning control may not be pursued if a retrospective application has been requested and not submitted or where it is not considered expedient to do so.

## How will we prioritise your allegation of a breach of planning control?

In order to make the best use of the resources available to the Council it is important to prioritise the allegations received in accordance with the seriousness (harm) of the alleged breach. This will initially be decided by the Council following receipt of the allegation but may be subject to change following a site inspection or when further information comes to light.

## Priority categories

To make the most effective use of resources, all incoming enforcement cases are prioritised when registered, based on information provided by the Informant, and an assessment of any planning history. This will determine the time frame for making an initial site visit and will be affected mainly by the assessment of the type and extent of the harm caused. During the investigation, the priority classification may alter due to the information gained. There are four enforcement priorities:

### Priority 1

Where irreversible harm is likely to be caused if the Council do not act immediately.

Example: Unauthorised works to Listed Buildings.

### Priority 2

Development in the green belt

### Priority 3

Where there is significant public concern or where there is (or is the potential for) significant harm to be caused to residential amenity in the surrounding area.

Example: Breaches of planning conditions specifically identified to meet expressed public concerns, such as hours of operation; unauthorised uses/activities which are causing significant harm.

### Priority 4

Smaller scale infringements which do not result in significant, immediate, or irreversible harm.

Example: Single storey rear extensions and rear dormer windows, unauthorised building of walls/fences.

## No further action will be taken for matters that do not constitute breaches of planning control:

This policy relates to planning enforcement only and as such, unless otherwise stated these matters are not within this policy or are not enforceable or are civil matters:

- Where there is a perceived intention to breach planning controls, but no breach has occurred
- Internal works to a non-Listed Building.
- Boundary/ownership disputes.
- Party Wall Act issues.
- Opposition to business competition.
- Non-material planning considerations such as loss of property value or loss of view.
- Obstruction of a highway or public right of way (PROW)/ Parking of vehicles on the highway or on grass verges. Report via: [Roads, pavements, verges and lighting | Worcestershire County Council](#)
- Parking caravans on residential driveways or within the curtilage of domestic properties if they are incidental to the enjoyment of the property.
- Running a business from home where the residential use remains the primary use and there is no adverse impact on residential amenity.

- Land ownership disputes or trespass issues.
- Covenants imposed on property deeds.
  - Any works that are deemed to be 'permitted development' under The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 and or subsequent orders.
  - Advertisements that are not subject to deemed or express consent requirements under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 and as such are excluded from direct control.
- Dangerous structures or other health and safety issues such as those that fall within the remit of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). [Further information - Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 Section 3: Enforcement \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)
- High hedge disputes (evergreen hedges)
- Dangerous and defective structures are dealt with under the Building Act by Building Control officers. [Building Control \(NWBC\) contact details - bromsgrove.gov.uk](#)
- Failure to comply with a Section 106 agreement.
- Derelict / Abandoned buildings and Fly posting are deal with here  
<https://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/my-place/street-cleaning/fly-posting.aspx>  
<https://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/my-place/empty-homes.aspx>

## Immunity from enforcement action and thus lawful

Section 171B of the 1990 Act restricts the Council's ability to take enforcement action after certain periods of time have elapsed. These time periods are dependent on the type of breach. In these instances, development without planning permission becomes immune from enforcement action.

- For building, engineering, mining or other operations, action cannot be taken after four years beginning with the date on which operations were substantially completed.
- For a change of use of a building to a single dwelling house, action cannot be taken after four years beginning with the date of the breach.
- For any other breach, action cannot be taken after ten years beginning with the date of the breach, including a continuous breach of planning conditions.
- It should be noted that there is no time limit in respect of Listed Buildings and in this regard enforcement action can be taken at any time.
- Time limits also do not apply when there is evidence of deliberate concealment.

## Complaints about the service

If you are unhappy about the level of service you have received from the Planning Enforcement Team or how the process has been managed then you may firstly discuss your concerns with the case officer. Additionally, you can take the matter further through the Councils Complaints Procedure via this link: [Compliments and Complaints - bromsgrove.gov.uk](#)

or, alternatively, you can call:

Bromsgrove: 01527 881288

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or write to Bromsgrove District Council, Parkside, Market Street, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 8DA. If you continue to be dissatisfied with the responses you have received to your complaint, you may wish to raise your concerns with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, who can be contacted via:

Local Government Ombudsman, PO Box 4771, Coventry, CV4 0EH.

Website [Home - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

Telephone: 0300 061 0614 (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm)

The Ombudsmen is unlikely to consider a complaint unless it has already been fully investigated by the Council and will only investigate to establish if the Council is guilty of maladministration. They do not have powers to force the Council to take formal enforcement action when it has previously decided not to.

## IMPORTANT

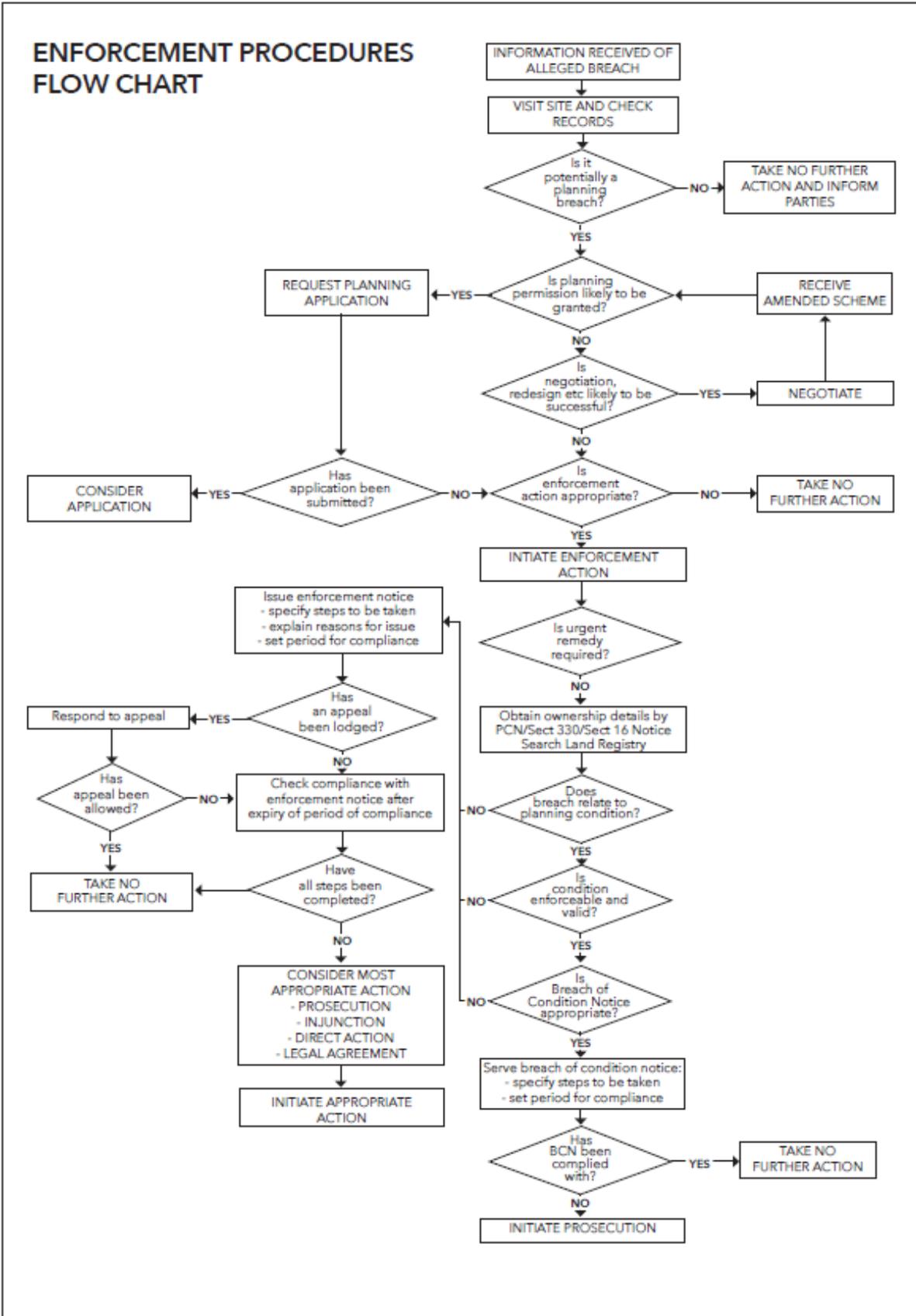
Planning permission and building regulations approval (building control) are different, being two separate areas of legislation of which both may be required, only one or none at all. This guide relates to planning legislation ONLY.

If you are unsure whether you require building regulations approval, then you should contact:

**North Worcestershire Building Control (NWBC)**, Parkside, Market Street, Bromsgrove, B61 8DA

[b.control@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:b.control@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01527 881402



## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### Cabinet

17<sup>th</sup> January 2024

#### DISCRETIONARY REDUCTION - COUNCIL TAX SECTION 13A1(C) POLICY

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Charles Hotham
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Head of Service		Bernard Ofori-Atta Head of Finance and Customer Services
Report Author	Job Title: Financial Support Manager Contact email: david.riley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 548 418	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		No
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)		Aspiration, Work and Financial Independence
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

#### 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet **RECOMMEND** that: -

- a) **The Section 13A(1)(C) policy be approved and adopted from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.**
- b) **The Council's scheme of delegation be amended to grant delegated authority to the Head of Finance and Customer Services, and the Financial Support Manager to reduce the Council Tax payable on a case by case basis, as provided by Section 13A 1 (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.**

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The council has the power under section 13A(1)(C) of The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (LGFA '92) to reduce the amount of council tax that a person is liable to pay. The section 13A(1)(C) power may be exercised on a case-by-case basis or by determining a class of case in which the liability will be reduced.
- 2.2 The council, under an agreement between district councils and the county council, exercises the discretionary power on a case-by-case basis to provide a discount to Worcestershire County Council care leavers resident within the district.
- 2.3 The 13A(1)(C) power is also used to provide council tax discounts where, following a severe weather event, Government has determined

### Cabinet

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that the flood recovery framework will be applied. Eligible residents impacted by flooding receive a 100% council tax discount for a minimum of three months and if they are unable to return to their home.

- 2.4 Government has allocated funding to councils to provide support to households using the 13A(1)(C) powers. In the 2020/21 tax year local authorities were provided with funding to administer the Covid-19 hardship fund. The hardship fund gave council tax discounts of up to £150 to residents who were in receipt of council tax support. The council tax support fund, during the 2022/23 tax year, has provided funding for a £25 reduction to council tax support recipients. In addition, councils were asked to use their discretionary council tax support powers to ensure that sponsor payments under the homes for Ukraine scheme did not affect a sponsor's local council tax support entitlement.
- 2.5 The council's policy for the award of section 13A(1)(C) reductions has not been reviewed for several years; amendments to the policy will ensure that the delegation to provide discounts in-line with any future national schemes are in place and enable support to be provided speedily to any qualifying households.
- 2.7 The refusal to provide support under 13A(1)(C) can be appealed to the Valuation Tribunal. The policy will provide officers with a framework for making decisions on a case-by-case basis from households requesting discretionary support.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The Collection Fund (Council Tax Reductions) (England) Directions 2013 require billing authorities to transfer the cost of 13A(1)(C) discounts from their general fund to the collection fund. The full costs of all 13A(1)(C) discounts are met by the billing authority.
- 3.2 An agreement with Worcestershire County Council is in place which ensures that the authority is reimbursed for the costs of care leaver reductions for WCC care leavers.
- 3.3 The costs of national schemes of support - such as the homes for Ukraine sponsor payment disregard, the flood recovery framework, and the hardship support fund – are met by central government through section 31 grants where the authority has administered support in accordance with Government guidance.
- 3.4 The policy will allow for better management of the costs of discretionary reductions by providing a structured basis for the assessment of applications.

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- 3.5 There is no current budget provision for the award of section 13A(1)(C) discounts, the costs of support excluding those schemes financed by central government or agreement with the county council has been minimal.

#### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The power to provided reductions to council tax is set out at section 13A(1)(C) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. There is no specific case law or legal implications relating to the use of the discretionary power.
- 4.2 The local government ombudsman – in relation to council tax recovery policies – decided that the absence of a policy was maladministration. Review and revision of the policy provides assurance in the event of any appeals to the LGO in the administration of the discretionary reductions.

#### **5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES – IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 5.1 The use of discretionary reductions to council tax support the council's strategic purpose of Aspiration, Work and Financial Independence by allowing officers to make decisions to provide discretionary support to households.

##### **Climate Change Implications**

- 5.2 None

#### **6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 None

##### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.2 None

##### **Operational Implications**

- 6.3 None

#### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 Please explain any risks and any mitigating action that will be taken to address those risks.

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Risk	Mitigations
Financial Risk. The cost of discretionary reduction is met by the billing authority	The costs of discretionary reductions will be monitored monthly and reported to Head of Finance and Customer services.
Reputational Risk. The absence of policy could result in finding of maladministration or limit the council's ability to defend valuation tribunal appeals.	Approval of the policy will mitigate the risks and provided clear framework for the assessment of applications for support.

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix A: Council Tax Section 13A(1)(C) policy.

Worcestershire County Council care leavers concordat between the county council and districts.

## **Council Tax**

### **Section 13A(1)(C) Discretionary Reduction Policy**

#### **Contents**

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#### **Introduction**

Section 13A(1)(C) of The Local Government Finance Act 1992 provides billing authorities with the power to reduce the amount of council tax which a person is liable to pay by such amount as it sees fit. The power can be exercised on a case-by case basis or by determining a class of case in which liability is to be reduced.

The 13A(1)(C) power allows the council the discretion to aid taxpayers where the existing legislation does not provide a discount, exemption, or reduction; or where the council feels the existing level of discount or reduction is insufficient given the liable person's circumstances. The power can also be used to implement government policy intended to provide targeted support to council taxpayers.

The policy sets out the process by which a person can apply for discretionary support and the method of administering and determining applications for support.

## **Policy Objectives**

The purpose of the policy is to set out how the council will use its discretionary power and to set out the factors that will be considered when making decisions.

The council will use the power to:

- Prevent homelessness.
- Support vulnerable residents to retain their place in the community.
- Help customers through personal crisis and difficult events.
- Improve financial independence through short-term relief.

## **Circumstances for award of relief**

### Worcestershire County Council Care Leavers

A discretionary reduction will be provided to care leavers under the age of 25 who were supported by Worcestershire County Council. The discount will be provided in-line with the care leavers concordant for the care leaver's sole or main residence.

The discretionary discount will be awarded where the care leaver is under the age of 25 and where Worcestershire County Council acted as corporate parent.

The care leaver will be required to claim local council tax support and the discretionary reduction will be considered after the award of LCTS and all other council tax discounts and reductions.

A qualifying care leaver who is the sole resident of a property will receive a 100% discount; where the care leaver is a joint-tenant or jointly liable for council tax they will receive a proportional discount, for example where there are two liable people the discount will be 50%.

Where a care leaver under the age of 25 takes residence with a parent or grandparent and there is a resultant loss of a single person discount then section 13A(1)(C) will be used to provide an equivalent discount.

The support for care leavers will be amended where there are changes to Worcestershire County Council care leavers concordant.

### Flood Recovery Framework

In a severe weather event with significant wide area impacts the Government may provide central support to help communities and businesses return to normal. A key element of the flood recovery framework is the council tax discount scheme which provides support to people whose homes have been flooded and become unliveable.

Where the flood recovery framework has been activated Section 13A(1)(C) powers will be used to provide support to qualifying households. The discount will be provided in accordance with the rules set by central government.

## Government Schemes of Support

The council will implement any Government funded discount schemes in-line with the guidance issued by central government. Where government schemes include an element of discretionary funding then the guidelines for allocation of discount to individual taxpayers will be determined by the Head of Finance and Customer Services in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.

## Other Cases

The council will consider a discretionary reduction where:

- The taxpayer has an outstanding council tax balance.
- There is evidence of extreme financial hardship.
- The other members of the household could not contribute towards the payment of the council tax.
- Action to recover the full council tax liability would result in extreme financial hardship.
- The taxpayer does not have access to assets or funds of any kind which could be used to meet their council tax liability.
- There are no alternative means of securing the payment of the council tax – either through securing the debt using methods such as a charging order; or reducing the balance through the application of discounts, exemptions, or other reductions.
- The taxpayer would be unable to make payments either through restructuring the payment of the council tax balance or restructuring their other debts.
- The taxpayer can demonstrate they have no available income to pay their council tax.

## **Relationship to Other Schemes of Relief**

Section 13A(1)(C) reductions will be considered after applications for:

- Local Council Tax Support
- Council Tax Discount and Reductions
- Discretionary Housing Payments
- Exceptional Hardship and Essential Living Funds
- Discretionary Council Tax Support provided under Government funded schemes.

## **Application and Evidence**

Taxpayers, or a person authorised to act on their behalf, will be required to apply for the discretionary reduction in writing and set out the circumstances on which the application is based. The application will be in addition to any application for local council tax support.

Where the initial application indicates that a discretionary reduction may be appropriate the council will request further evidence which may include, but is not limited to:

- Household composition and income and expenditure details for all members of the household.
- Evidence of all capital and assets of the taxpayer; to include evidence of mortgage balances and property value where property is owned by the applicant.
- Income and expenditure for the taxpayer for the period to which the application relates to the current date.
- Utility and household bills.

## **Amount of Award and Duration**

The amount of reduction and the duration of the award are determined at the discretion of the council and will be made based on the evidence supplied and the circumstances of the claim.

The reduction will be calculated as a daily amount and the taxpayer will be notified of the award on the basis that their circumstances and eligibility will remain the same for the remainder of the tax year.

Where the reduction is being made for a period that will end before the end of the tax year then we will notify the customer of the end date and the reduction will be apportioned at this date.

The reduction will end in the following circumstances:

- The end of the tax year for which the reduction was made.
- Where the liable person changes or an additional resident joins the household.
- The council taxpayer enters any form of insolvency process.
- The council taxpayer's financial circumstances significantly alter.
- The liability for council tax ends.

When the reduction ends the amount of the discretionary award will be apportioned accordingly.

## **Backdating**

Section 13A(1)(C) discount will, where applicable, be backdated to the start of the tax year in which the application is made.

Where a new liability has been created for a previous tax year then backdating will be considered if the application for discount is made within six-months of notification of liability being issued to the taxpayer.

Backdating for periods before the tax year in which the application is made, or for periods outside of the six-month window, will be considered where the taxpayer has demonstrated continual exceptional hardship from the period for which the application has been made to the date of application. Evidence will be required for the whole period.

## **Notification of Award**

The council will notify the outcome of each application in writing. The notification will include the reason for the decision and advise the applicant of the appeals process.

Where a reduction has been granted the notification will include the reasons for the award, the period of the award and the date on which it will end. The notification will advise the taxpayer that they must inform the council of any changes in their circumstances that are relevant to the award.

## **Appeals**

Appeals against the council's decision may be made in accordance with section 16 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

The taxpayer must first appeal in writing to the council outlining the reasons why they disagree with the decision to refuse relief. When the appeal has been received the council will reconsider the decision and notify the taxpayer in writing of the outcome of the appeal.

Where the taxpayer remains aggrieved then a further appeal can be made to the valuation tribunal. This appeal must be made within 2 months of the council's decision.

Where the council does not respond to an appeal within 2 months the taxpayer may appeal directly to the valuation tribunal.

## **Fraud**

The Council is committed to protecting public funds and ensuring funds are awarded to the people who are rightfully eligible to them.

An applicant who tries to fraudulently claim a reduction in liability by falsely declaring their circumstances, providing a false statement or evidence in support of their application, may have committed an offence under The Fraud Act 2006.

Where the Council suspects that such a fraud may have been committed, this matter will be investigated as appropriate and may lead to proceedings being instigated.

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### COUNCIL TAX EMPTY HOMES DISCOUNTS AND PREMIUMS

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Charles Hotham
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Bernard Ofori-Atta Head of Finance and Customer Services
Report Author	Job Title: Financial Support Manager Contact email: david.riley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 548 418
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	Finding Somewhere to Live
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

#### 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet **RECOMMEND** that: -

- 1) From 1st April 2024, under section 11B(1) of the local government finance act 1992, for long-term empty dwellings the discount under section 11(2)(a) will not apply and the additional council tax premium applied will be:
  - i) For a dwelling that has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for less than 5 years – 100% premium.
  - ii) For a dwelling that has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 5 years or more, but less than 10 years – 200% premium.
  - iii) For a dwelling that has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 10 years or more – 300% premium.
- 2) The Head of Financial and Customer Services on a case-by-case basis may consider a reduction to the long-term empty premium under section 13A(1)(C) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Council Tax was introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1993 and from this date until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 dwellings in England which were unoccupied were eligible for a council tax discount of 50%.

- 2.2 A series of amendments to council tax legislation, made since 2004, have given billing authorities the power to reduce or remove the discount for unoccupied dwellings and, in the case of long-term empty homes, to impose a council tax premium.
- 2.3 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 has introduced further changes to the discount and premiums for unoccupied homes.
- 2.4 Section 11B of the LGFA '92 has been amended to reduce, from 2 years to 1 year, the period for which a dwelling must be vacant before it is classed as a long-term empty dwelling, and to introduce a requirement to consider guidance issued by the secretary of state before deciding to apply premiums.
- 2.5 Section 11C and 11D have been inserted into the LGFA '92 and give the billing authority powers to apply a premium of up to 100% for any dwellings that are furnished and have no residents. These dwellings would usually be second homes where the owner lives elsewhere and uses the property as holiday or occasional accommodation.
- 2.6 The council currently applies the full premium to all long-term empty homes. The decision to apply premiums was made on the basis that a dwelling would be subject to the premium if vacant for 2 years or more. The amendment to section 11B will mean that, from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and the existing wording of the council's determination means that, the premium will be applied to all dwellings that have been vacant for 12 months or more.
- 2.7 Section 11B allows a determination to be made that:
- a) removes the unoccupied dwelling discount for long-term empty homes; and
  - b) specifies a premium by which the council tax will be increased.
- The premium can be set at up to the maximum level, but could be set at a lower level, or not applied.
- 2.8 The council needs to consider whether to apply the premium after a dwelling is vacant for 1 year, or to amend the determination to maintain the existing position and apply a premium after 2 years.
- 2.9 Long-Term Empty Premiums - Option 1
- To ensure that members have considered the effect of the change to the definition of long-term empty homes and that the application of a

premium for dwellings vacant for one year or longer is the intention of the council a new determination is made.

The new determination removes the discount under section 11(2)(a) and applies premiums to all dwellings that have been vacant for one year or more.

#### 2.10 Long-Term Empty Premiums Option 2

The council may, in order to retain the intention of the 2022 determination, decide that for long-term empty homes the discount under section 11(2)(a) will not apply and the following premiums will be applied:

- i) For dwellings vacant for 1 year or more, but for less than 2 years 0% premium.
- ii) For dwellings vacant for 2 years or more, but for less than 5 years 100% premium.
- iii) For dwellings vacant for 5 years or more, but for less than 10 years 200% premium.
- iv) For dwellings vacant for 10 years or more 300% premium.

2.11 The intention of the long-term empty home premium is to incentivise homeowners to bring properties back into use. The reduction in the time before which the premium can apply is intended to strengthen this incentive.

2.12 At the commencement of the 2022/23 tax year - the first year that the council applied the premium - 227 dwellings were subject to premium. The number of dwellings for which the premium is levied has now reduced to 98 dwellings.

2.13 The council is required to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state before deciding to apply premiums. The only guidance published to date is the May 2013 guidance on homes for sale or letting.

2.14 The council considered the 2013 guidance in full when the deciding to first apply premiums. There is no change to the view that the local housing market conditions indicate that there is no reason to exclude properties for sale or letting from the premium.

2.15 The Government has consulted on changes to secondary legislation which will exempt certain classes of dwelling from premiums. Properties on the market for sale or letting were included within the

consultation. If it is appropriate for these premises to sit outside of the premium, then Government will legislate to reflect that position.

- 2.16 The council will retain the discretionary power under section 13A1(C) to reduce the council tax on a case-by-case basis. This power would include the ability to reduce any premium.
- 2.17 Having regard to the local housing market, the Government's ability to take a national decision to exempt homes for sale or letting from the premium, and the council's ability to use discretionary powers to reduce the premium in exceptional cases it is not necessary to place all homes that are being marketed for sale or let outside of the scope of the premium.
- 2.18 The recommendation is that, in line with the changes to the act and the intention to provide a stronger incentive to bring empty homes into use, the council applies premiums to all dwellings that have been empty for 12 months or more.
- 2.19 The changes at 11C and 11D of the LGFA '92 introduce a 100% premium for furnished homes where there is no resident. The homes are usually described as second homes; however, they include any home which, on a particular day, is left furnished and has no residents for example furnished rented accommodation where the tenant has moved out and the property has not been re-let.
- 2.20 The intention of the second home premium is to provide local authorities with a tool that can be used where disproportionate numbers of second homes impact on the vitality and viability of local communities. An example of the impact of second homes is where a large concentration of second homes results in a reduction in demand for local services such as schools, or GP surgeries resulting in the loss of these services for the remaining permanent residents.
- 2.21 Council Tax data shows that 103 homes within the council's area are classified as second homes this is less than 0.25% of the overall dwellings.
- 2.22 Any determination to apply a second-home premium must be made at least 12 months before the financial year in which the premium will take effect. The earliest that a premium can be applied is 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025. The council needs to consider whether to apply the premium from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.
- 2.23 Second-Home Premiums – Option 1

Take no action and retain the existing position for second homes and apply zero discount. The application of premiums will be reviewed, and the council will retain the option to make a determination for years commencing on or after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.

#### 2.24 Second-Home Premiums – Option 2

The council determines that, under section 11C(1) the discount under section 11(2)(a) shall not apply and applies a premium of up to 100% to any furnished dwellings that have no residents.

2.25 There is no evidence that the existence of second homes is having a detrimental impact on the provision of facilities and services within the area.

2.26 The second home premium would be levied, during periods between occupation by tenants, that landlords are providing on a furnished basis. The application of second home premiums may disincentivise landlords from making such homes available.

2.27 In the absence of any evidence of a detrimental impact on the provision of services and having due to the potential impact on the availability of furnished rental homes, it is recommended that the second-home premium is not applied.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Applying long-term empty home premiums increases the amount of council tax collected, though taxpayers will take steps to minimise their liability. The reduction in time that a property must be vacant before the premium applies will increase the council tax income to the authority.

4.2 Council Tax data shows that there are 98 second homes within the area. The imposition of a second-home premium on these homes would raise an additional council tax of approximately £171,000 of which £22,000 would be retained by the council, however, this figure is likely to reduce when Government confirms the premises that will be exempt from premiums. Taking the decision not to apply second home premiums reduces potential council tax income.

### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The legislative framework for the application of council tax premiums is set out within the earlier sections of the report and the background papers listed.
- 4.2 The council is required by sections 11B(1D) and 11C(4) of the LGFA '92 to have regard to any guidance issued by the secretary of state before making a determination to apply a premium.
- 4.3 A determination to apply a premium can be challenged by judicial review under section 66 of the LGFA '92. In appeals to the Valuation Tribunal relating to the application of long-term empty premiums the president of the valuation tribunal. Professor Graham Zellick KC stated:

*“Whether the determinations are unlawful either because of a failure to give consideration to the Government’s Guidance or other relevant considerations or because an unqualified determination is one no reasonable billing authority could make are quintessentially judicial review questions (even apart from section 66)”*

- 4.4 The importance of considering Government guidance on the application of premiums should be noted and this report at 2.13 to 2.17 sets out why it is considered reasonable to apply premiums to all long-term empty homes.

## **5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES – IMPLICATIONS**

### **Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 5.1 The application of premiums will support the council’s strategic purpose “finding somewhere to live” by incentivising homeowners to bring empty homes back into use.

### **Climate Change Implications**

None

## **6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 None

### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.2 None

#### Operational Implications

6.3 None

#### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 Please explain any risks and any mitigating action that will be taken to address those risks.

Risk	Mitigations
Application of premiums to taxpayers who do not have sufficient income to meet their liability.	<p>The council's strategic housing team offers advice and support to residents on bringing empty homes back into use – returning a home to use places the dwelling outside of the premium.</p> <p>The council will consider the application of 13A (1) (C) reductions for taxpayers in-line with the relevant council policy.</p>
Taxpayers subject to premiums may be dissatisfied with the decision of the authority.	<p>Clear communications to be issued with Council Tax demand notices setting out the reasons for the changes.</p> <p>Establish links with internal Housing Strategy team to help to publicise methods by which empty homes can be brought back into use.</p>
Customer facing staff are not prepared for changes to empty-home premiums	<p>Full briefing to be provided to all Revenues and Customer Services Officers setting out details of changes and framework for levying premiums.</p> <p>Briefing note to internal departments detailing changes and impacts of premiums.</p>

Risk	Mitigations
Manipulation of council tax system to avoid empty home premium	<p>To avoid the premiums homeowners may provide false information. Procedure notes and guidance for decision makers will be updated to include information on the steps that should be taken to verify changes to liability for long-term empty homes.</p> <p>Inspections and compliance reviews for empty homes to ensure that premiums are levied correctly.</p>
Increase in appeals and liability disputes.	Guidance to be provided to decision makers and customer service advisors on the process for appeals and setting out appropriate responses to liability, discount and premium disputes.

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Report to Cabinet 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022 – Council Tax Empty Homes, Discounts and Premiums.

Additional Background Papers as listed within the 19<sup>th</sup> of January 2022 Report.

Council Tax Guidance for Properties for Sale or Letting  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/council-tax-empty-homes-premium>

Council Tax consultation – exemptions to empty home premiums  
[Consultation on proposals to exempt categories of dwellings from the council tax premiums in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/council-tax-empty-homes-premiums)

### COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2024-25

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Charles Hotham
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Head of Service		Bernard Ofori-Atta Head of Finance and Customer Services
Report Author	Job Title: Financial Support Manager Contact email: david.riley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 548 418	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		No
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)		Aspiration, Work and Financial Independence
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

#### 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet **RECOMMEND** that:-

- 1) **The council tax reduction scheme is retained for 2024-25 tax year, subject to uprating of income bands by 6.7% as set out in the table at appendix a.**

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The council is required by section 13A(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (LGFA '92) to make a council tax reduction (CTR) scheme specifying the reductions in council tax that will be provided to people who are in financial need, or to classes of people who are in general in financial need.
- 2.2 When a scheme has been made the council must, for each tax year, consider whether to revise or replace its scheme. If the council intends to revise or replace the scheme, then there is a requirement to undertake a formal consultation before making a new scheme.
- 2.3 The council introduced a new income banded scheme for working age applicants with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. The rationale for the new scheme was to ensure that it was future proofed, and it reduced the administrative burden placed on the council by the introduction of universal credit.

- 2.4 The council has amended the scheme in the years since April 2021 to adjust the level of support in-line with funding available; to amend income bands and tapers to adjust for the impact of inflation; and to aid administration by simplifying elements of the scheme.
- 2.5 The existing scheme includes a provision for the uprating of income bands by an inflation factor decided by the council. The scheme will usually be uprated by an inflation factor in-line with the increases to national welfare benefits announcing in the chancellor's autumn statement.
- 2.6 The autumn statement increased national welfare benefits by 6.7% and it is recommended that the income bands within the council's scheme are adjusted by this amount.

### **3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- 3.1 Retaining the existing scheme and uprating the income bands will have no additional operational implications.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Changes to the income bands will impact the amount of council tax reduction provided to claimants. The change may result in an increase in the total cost of council tax reduction.
- 4.2 The intention of uprating to income bands is to protect claimants from the impact of inflation and to ensure that inflationary increases to universal credit or wages do not remove their eligibility for CTR.
- 4.2 Uprating is essential in order to ensure that support is provided to residents in financial need, and that ordinary increases in national benefits and wages do not remove eligibility for support.

### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The council is required by paragraph 5 of Schedule 1A to the LGFA '92 to consider whether to revise or replace its CTR scheme. Where a council makes a revision or replacement there is a requirement to carry out a formal consultation which consists of three steps:
- a) consultation with major precepting authorities; and
  - b) publication of a draft scheme; and
  - c) consultation with persons who are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme.

- 5.2 Where a revised scheme reduces or removes a reduction the new scheme must include such transitional provision as the council sees fit.
- 5.3 The existing scheme includes a provision to uprate income bands by the appropriate level of inflation in each tax year; therefore, changes that increase the income bands in each tax year can be carried out without consultation.
- 5.4 Changes to the scheme which reduce the income bands are not provided for within the existing scheme. Any changes that reduce the % discount provided under the scheme would constitute a revision to the scheme and would require full consultation and approval of full council.

**6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS****Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 6.1 The council tax reduction scheme supports residents in financial need and it is a requirement that the design of the scheme incentivises work.
- 6.2 The scheme supports the strategic purpose of Aspiration, Work and Financial Independence through the provision of a council tax reduction to people on low income and people transitioning to work.
- 6.2 Uprating of income bands will ensure that low-income residents do not lose support through general inflationary increases to their income and will ensure that the scheme continue to incentivise employment.

**Climate Change Implications**

- 6.2 There are no climate change implications.

**Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.3 When the existing income band based CTR scheme was introduced a full equalities impact assessment was completed. The uprating of income bands has no further equalities and diversity implications.

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 Please explain any risks and any mitigating action that will be taken to address those risks.

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Risk	Mitigations
Loss of support for residents in financial need.	Revision of income bands as provided for within the council's scheme will ensure that low-income residents are not phased out of the existing scheme through general inflationary increases in their income.
Increased financial costs of CTR scheme	<p>The scheme reduces the council tax collected by the authority. Increases in the level of income-bands can increase the amount of support provided to residents and the costs of the CTR scheme.</p> <p>Options for revision of the scheme will be modelled so that the costs of the scheme can be considered when increases to the income bands are agreed.</p>

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Charles Hotham	
Lead Director / Head of Service	Bernard Ofori-Atta Head of Finance and Customer Services	
Financial Services	Bernard Ofori-Atta Head of Finance and Customer Services	

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<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Legal Services		
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Not Applicable	
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Not Applicable	

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## Annexe A – Discount Band Table

<b>Discount Band ▼</b>	<b>Discount</b>	<b>Single Person</b>	<b>Single Person with One Child</b>	<b>Single Person with two or more children</b>	<b>Couple</b>	<b>Couple with one child</b>	<b>Couple with two or more children</b>
Income Band 1	100%	£0 to £123.00	£0 to £192.00	£0 to £262.00	£0 to £176.00	£0 to £246	£0 to £315.00
Income Band 2	80%	£123.01 to £150.00	£192.01 to £230.00	£262.01 to £299.00	£176.01 to £203.00	£246.01 to £283.00	£315.01 to £352.00
Income Band 3	55%	£150.01 to £176.00	£230.01 to £267.00	£299.01 to £336.00	£203.01 to £230.00	£283.01 to £320.00	£352.01 to £390.00
Income Band 4	30%	£176.01 to £203.00	£267.01 to £304.00	£336.01 to £374.00	£230.01 to £256.00	£320.01 to £358.00	£390.01 to £427.00
Nil award	0%	Over £203.00	Over £304.00	Over £374.00	Over £256.00	Over £358.00	Over £427.00

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**Planning & Environmental Enforcement Business Case**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	S.J.Baxter, C.B.Taylor, P Whittaker
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Simon Wilkes, Guy Revans, Ruth Bamford
Report Author	Job Title: Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services Contact: Ruth Bamford email: r.bamford@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	Communities that 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.	
This report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended	

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Cabinet is asked to RECOMMEND that:-**

- 1) The Business case be pursued with the intention to bring together the enforcement functions within Environmental Services and Planning and associated current budget (as identified in Table 6 of Appendix 1) within the Shared Regulatory Service provided by WRS.**
- 2) That an additional £93,600 annually be agreed to fund the service to meet the level of demand in Planning Enforcement.**
- 3) That an additional £55,590 be agreed to fund 1.6 FTE additional (Grade 6) resource to support the work in tackling the backlog of Planning Enforcement cases for the next two years only.**

- 4) That an additional £7,537.50 be agreed to fund 0.25 FTE additional (Grade 4) resource for the customer service resource element of fly-tipping, littering and enviro-crime.
- 5) That an additional £21,650 be agreed to fund 0.5 FTE additional (Grade 6) resource to support the work on enforcement of fly-tipping, littering and enviro-crime.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 A business case [Appendix 1] was prepared to consider the benefit in bringing together enforcement functions from Bromsgrove and Redditch Council services with those already within WRS to deliver a quality service to all customers. The intention was to identify where service delivery could be improved through prioritisation, standardisation and resilience.
- 2.2 Weaknesses were identified in the current delivery model and the business case explores possible alternatives.
- 2.3 This report was previously listed for the October Cabinet and was deferred for an opportunity for liaison with Redditch Borough Council and to consider the budget implications alongside other demands.

## **3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- 3.1 The Business Case provides an overview of the enforcement activity across all services of Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils, including shared services. Planning, Environmental Services and Housing are the obvious areas with enforcement functions to consider. The difficulties in maintaining a viable enforcement service for each subject area is discussed and identifies that knowledge, skills and wider supporting mechanisms are in general difficult to provide for isolated teams or individuals.
- 3.2 With reference to the relevant priorities of the Councils, the objectives of the business case are to target enforcement using an intelligence led approach with proportionate use of resources and improved service standards. Recognising the risk to the authorities in getting enforcement wrong, both reputationally and financially the business case seeks to deliver a strong service with efficiencies.
- 3.3 Critical success factors have been developed from the objectives to encourage non-offending behaviours, delivery of successful enforcement, a consistent level of service, optimisation of resources and

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financial efficiency. Four plausible scenarios are considered further: continuing with the existing arrangements; grouping the enforcement roles into one team within the Councils; or alternatively grouping them within WRS; and a fourth scenario with associated call handling also grouped together in WRS. This last option would enable full triaging, together with the ability to resolve at 'first point of contact' and was identified as the best following the cost benefit assessment and risk analysis.

- 3.4 The commercial case goes on to identify how the mechanisms of governance could be delivered through the WRS Joint Board, service standards set out in the Statement of Partner Requirements and how the WRS performance indicators could be enhanced to include enforcement activity as a key component.
- 3.5 As this business case involves only two of the WRS partner authorities it is important to minimise cross subsidisation by the wider WRS budget and how that will be achieved is set out in the financial case which also sets out how the wider benefits of utilising WRS support structures could still be realised. It is important to recognise that the business case assumes that both Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils would endorse the approach.
- 3.6 The service areas of 'enviro-crime' and planning enforcement have also been considered in relation to resource allocation. There is a disparity between the current 'allocated' budget for planning enforcement compared with the actual spend on delivery of the service due to backlogs of case work and increased demand and public expectations. This is discussed further in the business case but represents an annual £93,600 shortfall in salary budget (for Bromsgrove) and is set out as an option to invest in the service to meet the current demand as recommendation 2.
- 3.7 Additionally in Environmental Services the customer service element of the service is split amongst numerous roles and cannot easily be extracted from the current service budget. An additional investment would be required to enable the key triaging element to be included in this business case.
- 3.8 The business case benefits as is presented assumes a level of resource to be transferred to WRS includes that required to meet the current level of Planning Enforcement demand (recommendation 2) and an investment in customer service resource (recommendation 4) which cannot easily be transferred to realise the benefits and level of service expected.

- 3.9 Also considered in detail within the business case, for planning enforcement there is a back log of cases which is causing additional delays. The backlog has been caused by barriers to investigation of cases during the last few years but also by the weaknesses identified. Currently there is a caseload of 254 open enforcement cases (across Redditch and Bromsgrove) with 24% waiting for the initial site visit. The combined Redditch and Bromsgrove budgeted resource of roughly 3 FTE would not be able to manage this case load, and the currently employed resource of 5.5 FTE is making progress with the cases but understandably there is frustration at the delays in the investigation process raised by residents. An additional resource option is provided as recommendation 3.
- 3.10 Recommendation 3 includes the annual costs associated with an additional 2 officers for a fixed term of two years to reduce the backlog and delays in investigation experienced by residents.
- 3.11 The 'enviro-crimes' of fly-tipping, littering and dog fouling are recognised as key concerns for the Council which are supported by the Strategic Purposes (Communities which are safe, well maintained and green) but also by the Council Priorities of reducing crime and disorder and high-quality services. As such, it is recognised that an emphasis on proactive engagement and promotion of responsible behaviours is essential to compliment the enforcement deterrent. Consequently, an option to provide additional resource to support this work is provided as recommendation 5.
- 3.12 For Enviro-crime work any increase in funding would enable an enhanced proactive approach to be taken to influence behaviour through targeted communication and publicity following tactical and strategic assessment to identify nominals, patterns and trends which would benefit from such an approach. This could be 'boots and posters on the ground' to provide a visual presence in an area with particular littering issues or a proactive digital monitoring campaign to identify possible offenders who are likely to be fly-tipping, as examples.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The business case considers the financial implications of the proposal and includes consideration to fund additional enhancements.
- 4.2 The current salary budget for the enforcement roles covered by the business case in Bromsgrove District Council is £147,750 including supporting costs (training and supplies) excluding call handling. This is included within recommendation 1.

- 4.3 The actual salary spend for the enforcement roles covered by the business case in Bromsgrove District Council is £248,889 plus supporting costs (training and supplies). The business case viability is based on this level of salary budget. Recommendation 2 if agreed would fund this level of service.
- 4.4 Recommendation 3 includes costs to fund 2 additional full-time equivalents to resolve the backlog of planning enforcement cases over a two-year period.
- 4.5 Recommendation 4 includes costs to fund an additional full-time equivalent to provide an increased level of activity on enviro-crime enforcement.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no significant legal implications other than the ability to provide a consistent and intelligence led approach to tackling enforcement matters by a dedicated trained team.

#### **6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 6.1 The proposed action supports the Council's strategic purpose of 'Communities which are safe, well-maintained and green' by providing a service that uses intelligence to prioritise proactive engagement and enforcement where the most significant harm is likely or has been identified in a proportionate and effective way. An effective enforcement function should act as a deterrent to reduce crime and disorder.

##### **Climate Change Implications**

- 6.2 The proposal doesn't have any specific climate change impact.

##### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.3 There are no anticipated equalities implications to the proposal.

#### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 Recognising the risk to the authority in getting enforcement wrong, both reputationally and financially the business case seeks to deliver a strong service with efficiencies and this report provides options to increase the

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budget to reduce the harm and reputational damage caused by delayed enforcement.

7.2 The Business case includes a risk assessment of the short-listed options in Table 4.

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1 – Explanation of financial implications

Appendix 2 – Strategic Outline Business Case: Shared Regulatory Enforcement Service [Exempt item]

**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Lead Director / Head of Service	Guy Revans, Ruth Bamford & Simon Wilkes	21.09.2023

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### Appendix 1

Status	Subject	Resource	Split	Total	Bromsgrove proportion
[1] Budget	Envirocrime	2 FTE Gr6	50:50	£86,600	£43,300
	Planning Enforcement	0.4 GR8 2GR6	80:20	£118,500	£94,800
	CPW/N	0.5 Gr5	50:50	£19,300	£9,650
	Call Handling	0.5 Gr4	50:50	£0*	£0*
	<b>TOTAL</b> (incl training & materials & excluding call handling at £14,674 in salary*)				<b>£224,400*</b>
[2] At planning demand [as per Business case]	Envirocrime	2 FTE Gr6	50:50	£86,600	£43,300
	Planning Enforcement	1GR9, 0.6 Gr8, 2xGr6, 2xGr5, 0.4Gr3	80:20	£235,500	£188,400
	CPW/N	0.5 Gr5	50:50	£19,300	£9,650
	Call Handling	0.5 Gr4	50:50	£15,075	£7,537.50
	<b>TOTAL</b> (salary plus on-costs)				<b>£356,475</b>
Difference between [1] and [2]	Element due to enhanced planning enforcement			£117,000	£93,600 <b>Recommendation 2</b>
	Element due to call handling			£15,075	£7,537.50 <b>Recommendation 4</b>
	<b>Shortfall</b>			<b>£132,075</b>	<b>£101,139</b>
[3] Enhanced	Envirocrime	2 FTE Gr6	50:50	£86,600	£43,300
	Envirocrime+	1 FTE Gr6	50:50	£43,300	£21,650
	Planning Enforcement	1GR9, 0.6 Gr8, 2xGr6, 2xGr5, 0.4 Gr3	80:20	£235,500	£188,400
	Planning Enforcement Backlog	2 Gr 6	80:20 (salary)	£70,850	£55,590
	CPW/N	0.5 Gr5	50:50	£19,300	£9,650
	Call Handling	0.5 Gr4	50:50	£15,075	£7,537.50
	<b>TOTAL (salary plus on-costs)</b>				<b>£470,625</b>
Difference	Element due to Envirocrime+			£43,300	£21,650 <b>Recommendation 5</b>
	Element due to Planning Enforcement Backlog			£70,850	£55,590 <b>Recommendation 3</b>

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	<b>Shortfall (between budget and enhanced service)</b>	£246,225	£178,379
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### MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2024/5 TO 2026/7 – Tranche 1

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr. Charlie Hotham, Finance and Enabling Portfolio Holder
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Bernard Ofori-Atta
Report Author	Job Title: Head of Finance & Customer Services email:Bernard.ofori-atta@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel:
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	All
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	
This report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended	

#### **1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 The Council will set its budget in two Tranches this year as it did in the 2023/4 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) process. The initial Tranche will be published in the Autumn with approval of options sought at Council in January, with a second Tranche to be considered in January once final settlement figures are known with final budget approval sought in February. As per advice from Overview and Scrutiny as part of the Tranche 1 process, parking cost increases have been removed and will be considered in Tranche 2 of the process.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **Cabinet are asked to Recommend to Council that:**

- 1 They endorse the inputs into the Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan as at the start of October, and the associated risks and opportunities.
- 2 These inputs have been used, along with the 2023/24-25/26 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) agreed by Council in February 2023, to project an initial “gap” to be closed.
- 3 An initial Tranche of savings proposals, as set out in Section 3.12 - 3.25 and the associated Savings Proposal Document in Appendix A, has been published on the 14<sup>th</sup> November and any feedback will be considered by Cabinet in January 2023 prior to seeking approval at Council on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024.
- 4 Fees and charges are increased by 7% as part of this process.
- 5 That Commercial fees and charges, as set out in Appendix G are approved.

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- 6 Tranche 2 of this process will add further information such as the Local Government Settlement to give a final financial position for the Council.

**Council have already approved in December that:**

1. That the Play capital works for 2023/4 as set out in 3.38 are approved and added to the Capital Programme.

**3. Background**

**Introduction**

- 3.1 The Council sets a 3-year Medium Term Financial Plan every year, with the final Council Tax Resolution being approved by Council in February. This year's process will be more difficult due to the following factors:

- Starting the process with a £637k overall deficit across the three years of the 2023/24 MTFP.
- The present cost of living crisis.
- The fact that the Council is still to close its 2020/21 financial year and the ongoing cross sector issues in relation to Audit which are set out in the wider Finance Report.
- The movement of the Government to funding projects for specific outcomes and the movement of this from a bidding process to an "allocations" process.
- The time limited nature of these funds and the pressure this puts on other deliverables.
- Loss of key personnel, present vacancies rates, and staff retention – linked to the Workforce Strategy.
- Business Rates and Council Tax Income – and associated collection rates and reliefs linked to the "cost of living" crisis and C-19 grants working their way through our system.
- Inflation still not reducing as quickly as Government and Financial Market predictions.

As such, it is prudent to split the budget process into two tranches,

- Having an initial Tranche which seeks to close as much of the deficit as possible using information known as at the end of October and seeking approval for those savings to be implemented at Council in January,
- Having a second Tranche after the Christmas break, for which approval will be sought in February, that takes account of the Local Government Settlement whose final detail will not be known until early January.

- 3.2 This report will set out:

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- The starting position for the 2024/25 MTFP.
- The emerging national picture including expected settlement dates.
- Council Priorities
- Strategic Approach
- The Council's Base Assumptions including Inflation and Grants
- Fees and Charges update.
- Impact on Reserves and Balances.
- Capital Programme.
- Robustness Statement
- Consultation Details.

### **The Starting Position for the 2024/25 MTFP**

- 3.3 The Council set a three year MTFP 2023/24 to 2025/26 in February 2023. The plan moved the Council to a sustainable budget position over the three year planning horizon with support from reserves to achieve this of £637k over the three year period.

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<b>Bromsgrove Position Statement</b>			
	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Base Budget Position 22/23 MTFP</b>			
Expenditure	11,948	12,077	12,347
Funding	-10,360	-10,864	-10,724
<b>Net</b>	<b>1,588</b>	<b>1,213</b>	<b>1,623</b>
<b>Revised Gap</b>			
	<b>1,588</b>	<b>1,213</b>	<b>1,623</b>
<b>Pressures</b>			
50% Funding for Climate Change Officer	30	30	30
<b>Savings Options</b>			
Environmental Services Partnership	0	-25	-50
Service Reviews	-140	-330	-405
Town Hall	-70	-70	-70
Finance Vacancies	-100	-100	-100
MRP	-100	-100	-100
Pension Fund	-663	-663	-663
Engage Capacity Grid (One Off)	-200	-200	0
10% Increase in Fees and Charges	-382	-389	-390
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>-1,625</b>	<b>-1,847</b>	<b>-1,748</b>
<b>Revised Position</b>			
	<b>-37</b>	<b>-634</b>	<b>-125</b>
<b>Pressures</b>			
Pay Pressure Year 1	718	718	718
Pay Pressure Future Years (1%)	0	0	155
Transport Pressure	32	33	34
Contracts Pressures	150	155	160
<b>Core Pressures</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>1,067</b>
<b>Updated Position</b>			
	<b>863</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>942</b>
Utilities Inflation	702	702	702
<b>Tranche 1 Final Draft Position</b>			
	<b>1,565</b>	<b>974</b>	<b>1,644</b>
<b>Draft Local Government Financial Settlement</b>			
New Homes Bonus	-127		
Services Grant	-68		
Funding Guarantee	-1027		
C Tax Base Reduction	24		
Business Rates/Investment Inc Rebaseline	-517	-200	-200
Future Years Settlements - assumption		-1000	-1000
<b>Settlement Draft Amounts</b>	<b>-1715</b>	<b>-1200</b>	<b>-1200</b>
Additional Pensions Savings	-356	-356	-356
Conversion of 50% of Utilities to a Reserve	-351	-351	-351
<b>Revised Deficit</b>			
	<b>-857</b>	<b>-933</b>	<b>-263</b>
<b>New Pressures (Known/Ongoing)</b>			
Fleet Refurbishment	129	258	258
SLM Contract Rebasing	400	341	275
Apprenticeship Scheme	50	50	50
Data Analyst	25	25	25
Planning Enforcement	25	25	25
WFS Increase	39	50	61
Cost of all out elections	167		
Under Recovery of 22/23 Council Tax	132		
Increased pay award - so 2%	140	140	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1107</b>	<b>889</b>	<b>694</b>
<b>Revised Draft Position</b>			
	<b>250</b>	<b>-44</b>	<b>431</b>

Table 1 – Opening MTFP Position

**The emerging national picture including expected Settlement Dates**

- 3.4 Local Government is in uncharted territory. C-19 has changed significantly the way Councils and the people they serve work, or expect to be served, and this needs to be reflected in Service Plans and associated budgets.
- 3.5 The War in Ukraine has still not been resolved. This has led to Inflationary increases that initially reached levels not seen since that late 1980's although they are now starting to reduce. This has however had a significant impact on our customers and stakeholders and is now labelled a "cost of living" crisis.
- 3.6 Councils have declared "Climate Emergencies" and have challenging carbon reduction targets to deliver by 2030, 2040 and 2050. At the moment plans are within existing budgets, but as we move through the next three-year period there will be the requirement for the prioritisation of resources and approval of

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additional funding on a scheme by scheme basis. These will need to be taken account of in future budgets, although a significant part of this budget spend will be Capital in nature.

- 3.7 As mentioned in the Risk section, the Government made 2 major announcements during the LGA Conference in July 2023, both of which will significantly affect budgeting.
- The first of these was the launch of the Office for Local Government. They will look at Council data to assess performance and try to predict if Councils are getting into difficulty.
  - The second was a movement from a bidding process for Funds to that of an allocation's method using data to inform those decisions (however there is no increase in the funds being allocated/bid for). No further guidance has been issued since the original guidance from DLUHC in July 2023. However, it is now key that all Council returns are made thinking about this point and our records that are accessed by the Government are as up to date as possible.
- 3.8 There are a number of other significant factors in looking at the 24/5 budget which are linked to the Local Government Finance Market. Presently:
- There are a number of Local Authorities who have now issued S114 Statements, including the largest Council in the Country Birmingham. Given the number of Council in financial distress there is a possibility that the Government might be far more prescriptive than in previous years in its funding allocations.
  - Bromsgrove still have accounts unaudited from 2020/21 and will not have the cash receipting backlogs cleared until the end of this calendar year (2023). As such, there is still a degree of uncertainty on the overall figures, until those years accounts have been finalised and audited.
  - That in the Local Government sector, there were still circa 900 Audits from 2015/16 that are still outstanding at the end of the summer. There is an issue with audit resources to deliver these audits, with generally only upper tier authorities being close to actual timescales due to the size of their budgets. In light of this, DLUHC are looking to implement deadlines for delivery which will possibly mean significant numbers of Councils, including possibly Bromsgrove, who due to time constraints have not had audits complete might end up with qualified accounts. The Council have written to DLUHC and the LGA over this issue.
- 3.9 It is understood that the Chancellors Autumn Statement will now not happen until the 22<sup>nd</sup> November. This means that it is likely the Provisional Local Government Settlement will not take place until the week before most Councils break up for Christmas 2023. It is expected that this year's Local Government Settlement will be multi-year but, would be no longer than 2 years given the impending National Elections. The final Local Government

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Settlement will be required halfway through January to enable all precepting authorities to deliver their budgets – using this gives the following timetable:

- Initial Tranche 1 Options published – 14<sup>th</sup> November
- Cabinet discuss initial options – 22<sup>nd</sup> November.
- Chancellors Statement – 22<sup>nd</sup> November
- Provisional Local Government Settlement – Late December
- Tranche 1 approved sought by Cabinet 17<sup>th</sup> January/Council 24<sup>th</sup> January
- Final Local Government Settlement – Mid January (at the earliest)
- Tranche 2 options ready – Late January
- Tranche 2 options presented to Cabinet – 14<sup>th</sup> February
- Full Budget approved by Council – 21<sup>st</sup> February

Timescales are estimated – however the issue is that there is little time for delivery of either Tranche 1 or Tranche 2.

### **Council Strategic Priorities**

- 3.10 The Leader and Portfolio Holders, with the support of the Corporate Management Team, will be reviewing current strategic priorities in the Autumn. Inputting into this process will be:
- Annual Community Survey 2022
  - Community Priorities Survey
  - Cost of Living survey
  - Census
  - [Office of National Statistics](#)
  - Current priorities
- 3.11 Bromsgrove District Council's current priorities are underpinned by a set of key themes. These are set out in the current Council Plan 2019 – 2023 and in the Council Plan Addendum 2022/23. The 5 themes are:
- Run & grow a successful business.
  - Finding somewhere to live.
  - Aspiration, work & financial independence.
  - Living independent, active & healthy lives.
  - Communities which are safe, well-maintained, and green.
- 3.12 The council's vision, priorities and themes are connected using a 'green' thread:
- “To enrich the lives and aspirations of all our residents, businesses and visitors through the provision of efficiently run and high-quality services, ensuring that all in need receive appropriate help, support and opportunities”.
- 3.13 The council cannot deliver all priorities on its own. In some cases it can support, influence, or work collaboratively with other partner agencies to persuade them

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to take a particular course of action/undertake a particular project. Considerable support and input from partner organisations will be needed for priorities to be successfully achieved.

### **Strategic Approach**

- 3.14 The Council has come into the 2023/24 budget process with a number of conflicting issues. These include:
- An ongoing deficit to close of £637k from the 2023/24 MTFS.
  - The requirement to fund the 23/4 pay award which is 5% higher than planned at an average value of 7%.
  - Increases in Council Tax are limited at 2% or £5, which is significantly lower than the present rates of inflation.
- 3.15 The Council must move to financial sustainability over the time scale of the next MTFS and indeed was on course for this before the agreement of the 2023/4 pay award. Given the magnitude of the savings due to this it is not prudent to expect the movement to sustainability to happen by 2024/5. However, the level of reserves and balances presently held suggest that moving to sustainability by 2025/26 would be deliverable without a strain on resources for any emergency situation.
- 3.16 As such, the strategy must be to move the Council to financial sustainability by the 2025/26 financial year. To get to this position there will be the need for investment, efficiencies and possibly the requirement to fund redundancy (both from reserves and balances). These requirements will be outputs from the Council having to implement changes to the way it operates to continue to become a viable entity going forward.
- 3.17 As set out later in the Robustness Statement, in compiling Tranche1 of the budget, assumptions have been made based on the best information held now. Issues the Council is facing are not unique, they are being faced by almost all Councils. Tranche 2 of the budget will adjust for any funding that the Government will provide and also look at other options to close any deficit should the Government settlement not bridge any resultant gap. Initiatives that will be assessed in Tranche 2 (as more time is required to analyse these individual options) include:
- Ensuring Grants are maximised.
  - Ensuring Agency work reflects the income provided for its delivery.
  - Reviewing the effectiveness of the Council's largest Contracts.
  - Maximising the effectiveness of our refuse fleet
  - Reviewing the location and effectiveness of our Depot
  - Assessing the Council's leisure and cultural strategy in terms of affordability
  - Reviewing recharging mechanisms between the Councils for appropriateness

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- Rationalisation of Back Office services as we embrace technology.

3.18 Many of these initiatives will require investment, for which the only present source of funding is reserves (General Fund and Earmarked Reserves). Key areas of investment will be:

- Documentation of Processes
- Investment in automation and robotic processes
- Possible redundancy – through restructures

3.19 However, in any situation, the Council must move to sustainability by the 2025/26 financial year.

### **The Council's Base Assumptions including Inflation and Grants**

3.20 It is important to set out the base assumptions under which the budget is constructed. These assumptions can then be stress tested for various scenarios to test the robustness of the overall budget.

3.21 Tax Base and Corporate Financing underlying assumptions are as follows:

- Council Tax – Figures assume the full 1.99% allowable increase over all years of the 3 year MTFP. The Local plan has housing increases of 363, 457 and 338 in the three years of the MTFP. For prudence, it is assumed that increases of 150, 200 and 150 over the three year period.
- Business Rates Increases – business rates assume no growth in the base.
- New Homes Bonus – It is assumed to be none in 24/5 onwards pending any change that might be announced in the Local Government settlement.
- Services Grant - It is assumed that Central Government Grants are at similar levels to previous years (as was the case in 2023/4)
- Pension Fund assumptions – takes account of the latest triennial valuation which was received in September 2022. A significant risk is that the next revaluation will be actioned in 2026 and as such the 2026/7 figure could well change pending the outcome of that exercise.

3.22 Grant support assumptions are as follows (Revenue and Capital). It should be noted that these are budgeted figures and final grant figures will not be confirmed until the time of the final Local Government Settlement.

- The main Revenue Grants are
  - S31 Grant - £1.126m
  - Housing Benefit Administration Grant - £0.148m
  - Housing Benefit Grant - £11.0m
  - Revenue Cost of Collection Grant - £0.119m
- The Council has £14.492m of Levelling Up Grant to be spent by April 2025 which is match funded by £1.610m of Council funding.

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- The Council has £2.6m of UK Shared Prosperity Fund to spend by April 2025. This is both revenue and capital in nature.

3.23 There are significant pressures mounting on the Council (these are all reflected in **Appendix A**).

- The Q1 2023/4 monitoring sets out the issue on the pay award, which has been mitigated in part 2023/4 by the use of the Utilities Reserve. This still leave a £437k deficit for the year.
- However, the ongoing impact of the new pay award on our ongoing £15.4m employees budget at an average of 7% Increase is £1,078k a year. However, we have already accounted for a pay award of 2% (£308k) reduces this amount to an ongoing £770k a year to resolve.
- It is also prudent to increase the Councils 2024/5 pay award impact from 2% to 3% given the significant increases that have been offered by the Employers during 2022/3 and 2023/4. The 2025/6 and 2026/7 pay awards are assumed to be 2%.
- Although inflation is coming down, at this point of time it is also prudent to include a 5% budget for inflationary increases.
- However, we have the following budgets that were included in the 2023/4 budget but have not been called on yet that could partially mitigate these pressures which include:
  - We are only using 60% of the utilities budget increases this frees up £140k a year
  - We have not called on the circa £180k of inflationary increases to contracts which was added to the base budget.
- In addition, there is the £351k utilities reserve that will have no calls on it for 2024/5 and 2025/6.
- We have included as an appendix the impact of a 7% increase in fees and charges (non parking) – this amounts to an additional £273k. This increase is in line with the inflationary increases to salaries which are running at just over 7% and inflation which as of October 2023 was 6.8%. Looking at a sensitivity analysis around this figure (although the increases mean that the Council is just keeping pace with cost increases):
  - If this increase was below inflation at just to 4% this would lead to a savings/Income budget of £156k. However, at this level there would be an ongoing deficit of £117k that would never be recovered.
  - An 8% increase would lead to a savings/income budget of £312k.
  - It should be noted that another district in Worcestershire is looking to increase WRS fees and charges by just under 7%. Given that it is common practice to increase these fees and charges by the same across the County, the increases would be in line with these levels.

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- We have also assumed that inflation on fees and charges will be 2% in 2025/6. This amounts to an additional £101k in 2025/6 and £103k in 2026/7.
  - The 2023/4 MTFP made the prudent assumption that not all the 2023/4 local government settlement was included in 2024/5 and 2025/6. This amounted to £515k (a level of £1.2m was assumed not £1.7m). As part of the base 2024/5 MTFP the assumption will be made that the central Government funding levels will be at the same level as previous years. This has reflected the reality of recent funding settlements.
  - As part of the 23/4 MTFP, Departments had lists of possible savings areas. These are set out in Appendix B.
- 3.24 Given these changes, a surplus position of circa £182k is projected for 2024/5, reducing to £53k in 2025/6 and £78k in 2026/7. This is before departmental pressures.
- 3.25 Departmental pressures are summarised in the following table and amount to £353k in 2024/5 increasing to £378k in 2026/7.

<b>Service Adjustments</b>				
Reduction in Benefits Overpayments Target		200	200	200
Use of HVO Fuel by 100% of Fleet		30	30	30
Increase in HR Establishment		10	10	10
PRA Housing Licence Costs		15	15	15
NWWM Increased Charges		39	39	39
Interest Charges on Updated Capital Programme		35	36	36
MRP Increases on Capital Programme		24	46	48

Table 2 Departmental Pressures

- There is presently a target of £500k for the reclaiming of Benefit overpayments. We now have more accurate information and processes which mean that initial payments are more accurate and the need for recovery of overpayments has diminished. Over the past 2 years the Council has recovered under half of this amount (with many linked to Universal Credit payments) and so it is prudent to reduce this amount to £300k.
- The Government has still not provided guidance on Waste delivery. The Council has a diesel fleet which could use HVO fuel would reduced the Carbon footprint of the fleet and the Council significantly. With alternatives to Diesel (Electric and Hydrogen powered vehicles) being extremely expensive with vehicles 2 to 4 times more expensive than existing vehicles it would be prudent to ensure the fleet used HVO fuel, significantly reducing the Council's carbon footprint. However, HVO fuel at the moment is significantly more expensive than diesel and this would cost an additional £100k a year. The Councils Carbon pledge is to move to this position over time so a £30k increase in budget allows for, prices

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dependent a 30% use of this fuel and an estimated savings of 206 tonnes of greenhouse gases from the fleet.

- The HR structure reports into one post. This funding added a second senior post to relieve pressure in this service area. This is a shared service and so costs are split with Redditch.
- There is the new requirement for the monitoring of the Private Housing Sector. There is a capital bid of £30k for software to undertake this. The ongoing licensing costs are £15k a year as they will be shared with Redditch.
- The present pilot scheme on planning enforcement being delivered by Worcester Regulatory Services was in the Tranche1 options. This has been removed pending a far more detailed report on Enforcement in Tranche 2.
- The North Worcestershire Water Management Service Level Agreement with Redditch and Wyre Forest is being revised to reflect actual provision. The existing allocations are the existing proportion of costs are Wyre Forest 52% (£105k), Redditch 26% (£66k) and Bromsgrove 22%. (£61k). These will change to 43% Bromsgrove, 32% Wyre Forest and 25% Redditch. This would be a current year budget equivalent of Bromsgrove £100k, Redditch £67k and Wyre Forest £72k.
- The Capital section sets out new items and changes to the Capital programme. These will be addressed in that section. However, there are ongoing additional revenue costs of those schemes that amount to £35k for interest charges and £24k for Minimum Revenue Provision requirements.

The Service Level Agreement between the Council and Wychavon District Council for the management and enforcement of on and off street parking increases are being reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and will form part of the Tranche 2 proposals

- 3.26 These departmental changes result in an overall £172k pressure in the 2024/5 financial year reducing the overall position to a deficit of £323k and then £300k by 2026/7. The whole revenue budget is summarised in the table on the following page.
- 3.27 To meet strategic priorities, the Council requires more funding. In reviewing the possible areas of savings set out in Appendix A, it was agreed that all need to be assessed as part of the 2024/5 MTFP process although the following three should be prioritised so that their impact could be possibly included in Tranche 2 of the budget:
- Recharges
  - Debt costs – given the slippage in the Capital Programme.
  - Business Rates Re-baselining.

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**Table 3 Revised MTFP Position**

<b>Bromsgrove Base Position (Revised Tranche 1)</b>				
	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Base Budget Position 22/23 MTFP</b>				
Expenditure	11,948	12,077	12,347	12,347
Funding	-10,360	-10,864	-10,724	-10,724
<b>Net</b>	<b>1,588</b>	<b>1,213</b>	<b>1,623</b>	<b>1,623</b>
<b>Revised Gap 22/23 MTFP</b>	<b>1,588</b>	<b>1,213</b>	<b>1,623</b>	<b>1,623</b>
Phase 1 Savings 2023/24 MTFP	-1,625	-1,847	-1,748	-1,748
<b>Revised Position</b>	<b>-37</b>	<b>-634</b>	<b>-125</b>	<b>-125</b>
Phase 1 Pressures 2023/24 MTFP	1,602	1,608	1,769	1,769
<b>Phase 1 2023/24 MTFP Position</b>	<b>1,565</b>	<b>974</b>	<b>1,644</b>	<b>1,644</b>
Local Government Settlement	-1715	-1200	-1200	-1200
Additional Savings (Phase 2)	-707	-707	-707	-707
Additional Pressures - Phase 2	1107	889	694	694
<b>Final 2023/24 MTFP Position</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>-44</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>431</b>
<b>Known Changes</b>				
23/4 Pay Award - 4% More than planned		770	770	770
Utilities Increases running at 60% - 40% Savings		-140	-140	-140
Existing Inflation Budget (Unallocated)		-188	-194	-194
Inflation on Contracts - additional 5%		90	90	90
Additional 1% on 24/5 Pay Award - to 3%		154	154	154
7% Additional Fees and Charges Income		-273	-273	-273
Additional 2% Pay Award for 26/7				308
Quarter 1 23/4 Overspend position	<b>788</b>			
Use of 23/4 Utilities Reserve	<b>-351</b>			
2% Council Tax 2025/6			-191	-191
2% Council Tax 2026/7				-195
Year 2 Fees and Charges Income at 2%			-101	-101
Year 3 Fees and Charges Income at 2%				-101
Increase in number of Properties (Ctax Income)		-36	-84	-121
Government Grant at 23/4 Levels		-515	-515	-515
<b>Draft Opening Position</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>-182</b>	<b>-53</b>	<b>-78</b>
<b>Service Adjustments</b>				
Reduction in Benefits Overpayments Target		200	200	200
Use of HVO Fuel by 100% of Fleet		30	30	30
Increase in HR Establishment		10	10	10
PRA Housing Licence Costs		15	15	15
Nw/WM Increased Charges		39	39	39
Interest Charges on Updated Capital Programme		35	36	36
MRP Increases on Capital Programme		24	46	48
<b>Revised Opening Position</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>300</b>

**Fees and Charges update**

3.28 The section, looks at the impact of proposed Fees and Charges increases for the 2024/25 Financial year. These increases are shown in detail by service in the Fees and Charges Report which is shown as Appendix C. The table below highlights the possible increase of income if 7% was applied across the board. The 7% has been applied to Contributions and Fees and Charges (not parking) budgets and not on SLA Income or lifeline, where charges are set statutorily, and charges across more than one area.

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	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
<b>Existing Budget</b>	<b>-3,786,000</b>	<b>-3,791,000</b>	<b>-3,791,000</b>
<b>7% Increase 24/5</b>	<b>-273,000</b>	<b>-273,000</b>	<b>-273,000</b>
<b>2% Increase 25/6</b>		<b>-101,000</b>	<b>-101,000</b>
<b>2% Increase 26/7</b>			<b>-101,000</b>
<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>-4,059,000</b>	<b>-4,165,000</b>	<b>-4,266,000</b>

**Table 4 Fees and Charges Increases at 7%**

- 3.29 Also included at exempt Appendix G are the fees and charges for Commercial Activities. Given the commercial/competitive nature of these services, they are not circulated for consultation like the other Fees and Charges. These increases are built into the above numbers.
- 3.30 The overall impact on the Council’s position is set out in the following section. In setting the base budget levels to apply the increases an assessment has been made on deliverability.

**Impact on Reserves**

- 3.31 The existing 23/24 MTFP saw general fund balances reduce by £637k over the three year period as the original plan moved the Council towards sustainability. In the 2023/4 budget, the Council was prudent and reviewed all its earmarked Reserves and reallocated a substantial amount to the General Fund and also a newly formed Utilities Reserve due to the significant pressure on budgets in that area. As we have moved into 2023/4 there have been additional inflationary pressures, although they have been due to staffing and the 2023/4 allocation of the Utilities Reserve has been used to mitigate these. Years 2 and 3 of this reserve are not required and have been transferred to the General Fund to bolster its position.
- 3.32 The projected 2024/5 to 2026/7 position, at Tranche 1, has £795k of pressures to mitigate. If alternatives are not found in Tranche 2 then the General Fund will be required to support this deficit. Presently the general Fund sits at a value of £5.120m (assuming that it is required to fund this shortfall) at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027. This sum is approximately 10.5% of gross expenditure and above the 5% benchmark quoted by the Government a being a minimum requirement. If Housing benefit payments, which are passported through the Council are ignored than this percentage rises to 15.9% of gross expenditure.
- 3.33 The analysis in Table 5 sets out the effects on Council General Fund and Earmarked Reserves. Full detail is set out in Appendix D

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<b>Reserves Position</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
General Fund Opening Position	5,800	5,213	5,743	5,420
General Fund Changes	-587	530	-323	-300
General Fund Closing Position	5,213	5,743	5,420	5,120
Earmarked Reserves	6,329	5,502	5,502	5,502

**Table 5 Reserves Position**

- In 2023/4
  - We start with £5.800m in the General Fund Reserve.
    - £100k will be moved into the it from the Rates Reserve
    - £250k was already being used to subsidise the base budget
    - The overspend position is £437k
  - This results in a closing 23/4 position of £5.213m
- In 2024/5
  - We start with £5.213m
    - We propose to transfer years 2 and 3 of the utilities reserve in as the view is that this is now not required - £0.702m.
    - There is a £172k deficit figure that will need funding.
  - This results in a closing 24/5 position of £5.743m
- In 2025/6
  - the opening position is £5.743m
    - The present draft budget is a deficit of £323k which will require funding.
  - This results in a closing 25/6 position of £5.420m
- In 2026/7
  - the opening position is £5.420m
    - The present draft budget is a deficit of £300k which will require funding.
  - This results in a closing 26/7 position of £5.120m

### **Capital Programme**

- 3.34 The Council over the past number of years has not spent its capital programme allocations in year. A review has been carried out of
- All schemes that have not started (both from 22/23 and from previous years)
  - Schemes that have started
- To assess deliverability and links to revised strategic priorities.
- 3.35 Present rationale is for any scheme not yet started (unless grant or S106 funded) to rebid for funds as part of the 2024/25 budget process. There will be the need to add items to the capital programme to include sums for:
- ICT hardware (such as laptops, etc)
  - Property Maintenance budgets (as minimal and significant work is required to ensure energy efficiency compliance).

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3.36 The priority in capital terms is for the Council to spend its grant funding. It has the following:

- Levelling Up of £16.1m (£14.5m Grant, £1,6m Council)
- UK Shared Prosperity Funding of £2.8m

This funding is time limited and must all be spent by 2026 (with UKSPF being 2025). Therefore, there is a question over what resources would be available to manage any significant capital spend above these schemes.

3.37 Appendix E sets out the present capital programme as agreed at Council in February. It should be noted that in the original capital programme was in 2025/6 £1.597m of requirements for Barnt Green Millenium Park Toilets. This should have been removed as it was in-correct, and the works had been completed. Spend to date is £1.654m. Of this amount is £0.635m which relates to the Burcot development. This takes total Burcot development spend up to £11.2m of the total £11.6m budgeted costs.

3.38 The table below highlights additional Capital Programme bids, and incorporates bids approved in the Quarter 1 financial monitoring for approval. The revenue budget takes account of these additional costs. Full descriptions are set out in the Savings Proposal document.

	23/4	24/5	25/6	26/7	27/8
Q1 Approves Change - Fleet Replacement Costs	£9,400		£15,000		
Q1 Approved Change - Wheely Bin Increas	£85,000				
Q1 Approved Change - Wild Flowes Machinery	£62,000				
<b>Revised Total</b>	<b>£156,400</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£15,000</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>

**Table 6 – Capital Programme Changes**

3.39 The following table summarised the Play Area requirements known at the moment. As per Council on the 25<sup>th</sup> October, Members are feeding through further Parks and Open Spaces requirements.

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<b>Leisure Requirements</b>	<b>23/4</b>	<b>24/5</b>	<b>25/6</b>	<b>26/7</b>	<b>27/8</b>
Cotton Pool Sanders Park	£32,500				
Sanders Park Pavilion improvements		£10,000			
Sanders Park refurbishments to café building exterior		£10,000			
BDC Play areas	£35,000	£100,000			
Additional parking as per Engineering team plan Sanders Park		£215,000			
Pathway and parking areas repairs Sanders Park		£14,500			
ClIr request Install height restrictor and bollards / hoops to car park to prevent traveller access		£15,000			
MMP recommendation. Check that the access ramp from Leach Heath Lane is DDA compliant. St Chads	£20,000				
<b>Total</b>	<b>£87,500</b>	<b>£364,500</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>

**Table 7 Play Area Audit Requirements**

### **An Initial Risk Assessment**

- 3.40 As set out the Strategic Approach and Robustness Statement sections we are budgeting in a time of extreme uncertainty.
- 3.41 As per the Risk Reports that are reported to both Executive and Audit, Governance and Standards and Committees these are:
- Resolution of the approved budget position.
  - Financial process rectification.
  - Decisions made to address financial pressures and implementing new projects that are not informed by robust data and evidence.
  - Adequate workforce planning.
  - The next Pension fund re-valuation which will impact 2026/7 figures.
- 3.42 The core risks of implementation
- Any savings proposal must pass the S151 Officers tests for robustness and delivery. If items are not deliverable or amounts not obtainable, they cannot be included.
  - Implementation of savings to time and budget – there must be full implementation processes documented to ensure implementation within timescales.
  - Non delivery is a high risk - Savings tracking and ensuring implementation happens based on the plans and the assumptions will become part of the Council’s core processes
  - Loss of key personnel will be crucial in a number of proposals and mitigation plans will need to be drawn up
  - Change of corporate direction/priorities

### **Robustness Statement**

- 3.43 For Tranche 1, the opinion of the Interim Director of Finance is that the 2024/25 budget estimates contain considerable risk due to the level of

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uncertainty in the Council’s operating environment, making it problematic to develop meaningful assumptions.

3.44 The revenue budget and capital programme have been formulated having regard to several factors including:

- Funding Available.
- Inflation.
- Risks and Uncertainties.
- Priorities.
- Service Pressures.
- Commercial Opportunities.
- Operating in a Post C-19 environment.

3.45 The MTFP highlights that the current financial position is potentially untenable without some form of intervention or further substantial savings and this will become clearer with the Chancellors Statement in November. Whilst a balanced budget for 2023/24 was approved with the use of reserves and balances in February 2023, the Council is currently forecasting a £0.4m overspend in 2023/24 due to the additional demands placed on it due to the provisional pay award, which in turn is utilising reserves balances to fund these pressures.

3.46 Given all the uncertainty which encapsulates this MTFP, the assumptions have been based on the best available information to the Council at this time. Work will continue in validating all assumptions, robustly challenging estimates, ensuring the delivery of existing saving plans. Updates will be included in Tranche 2 of the MTFS and balanced budget setting process.

**Tranche 1 Feedback**

3.47 Tranche One is the first Phase of the 2024/25 budget process. The proposals are set out in the Savings Proposal Document. A feedback section is included at the end of that the document. To date there has been no feedback, which is to be expected as the Tranche1 options did not contain savings as the Council needs to know what is in the Local Government Settlement before deciding if reductions are necessary. The draft consultation timetable is in Table 5.

Savings Proposals and MTFP Published	14 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
Budget Scrutiny Committee	21 <sup>st</sup> November 2023
Cabinet	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2023
Feedback Closing Date	5 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
Cabinet	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
Council	24 <sup>th</sup> January 2024

**Table 8 Consultation Timetable**

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3.48 Hard copies of the Savings Proposal Document (Appendix A) can be available on request. The Savings Proposal Document will be published on the website and internal intranet (Orb) for residents, businesses and staff to view and provide responses via an online survey. The Council has raised awareness of the budget proposals via use of social media.

#### 4. IMPLICATIONS

##### Financial Implications

4.1 Financial implications are set out in section 3.

##### Legal Implications

4.2 A number of statutes governing the provision of services covered by this report contain express powers or duties to charge for services. Where an express power to charge does not exist the Council has the power under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 to charge where the activity is incidental or conducive to or calculated to facilitate the Council's statutory function.

##### Service / Operational Implications

4.3 Monitoring will be undertaken to ensure that income targets are achieved.

##### Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

4.4 The implementation of the revised fees and charges will be notified in advance to the customer to ensure that all users are aware of the new charges and any concessions available to them.

4.5 Initial Equalities Impact Assessments will be taken where required.

#### 5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 There is a risk that if fees and charges are not increased that income levels will not be achieved, and the cost of services will increase. This is mitigated by managers reviewing their fees and charges annually.

#### 6. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Savings Proposal Document

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Appendix B – Possible Savings Areas  
Appendix C – Fees and Charges by Service  
Appendix D - Reserves  
Appendix E – Existing Capital Programme  
Appendix F – Confidential Fees and Charges (Exempt Information)

**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

**7. KEY**

None

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**Appendix A**

**Bromsgrove District Council  
Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25  
Tranche One  
Savings Proposal Document**

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## Overview

Bromsgrove District Council provides district level local services, like housing, leisure and recreation, environmental health, waste collection, local strategic planning and planning applications, and local tax collection. Local Tax collection includes both Council Tax and Business Rates. The Council also collects Council Tax on behalf of County Council and the Fire and Police Authorities. The Council's proportion is just 12%. Business Rates are collected on behalf of the Council and the Government.

Bromsgrove is in the county of Worcestershire which operates a 2-tiered system of Local Government (as well as some parts of its area being covered by Parish Councils). The District Council provide the "district level" services (amongst others) described in the previous paragraph, whereas Worcestershire County Council provides county level local services like education, highways, transport planning, passenger transport, social care, libraries, waste disposal and strategic planning.

Parish Councils provide very local services like some parks, community centres, and war memorials.

### Bromsgrove

- Covers an area of 84 Square Miles
- Has 96,000 residents
- Has 45,000 Homes and Businesses
- Has 31 Councillors and 30 Wards

The district has an above-average number of over 60s, with concentrations of people in several smaller towns and villages. Many residents commute to Birmingham but despite that has the highest % of self-employed and business start-ups in England. It has isolated areas of deprivation, higher median income levels.

Elections are held once every 4 years. All seats are contested together. The next election is in 2027.

The council has a 'leader and cabinet' form of governance, which means the council delegates authority to decide some matters to a Hybrid system of Governance with a 'cabinet', which is chaired by the Leader of the Council. The cabinet handles much of the ordinary business of the council, with the full council having the final say on matters of strategic policy, budget and council tax.

The Council, along with Redditch Borough Council, were one of the first Councils in the country to form a shared service in 2008. This means we have a single team servicing both Councils. We also host services such as Worcestershire Regulatory Services which is pan Worcestershire.

The Council's vision is *"To enrich the lives and aspirations of all our residents, businesses and visitors through the provision of high-quality services that ensure those most need in need receive the appropriate help and support."*

The Council has delivered the following:

## Local services for you

The council provides many more services for your money than just emptying your bins. Here are some recent examples of what our services have done in your community, over one year:

 Emptied **2.3m** bins

Ran over **300** events for families & children

Supported **438** patients referred to our Social Prescribers

Updated **20,000** people's financial circumstances for benefits

Emptied **2,000** properties' cesspits & septic tanks 

Provided lots of **fun events** in the **school holidays** and more, plus celebrations for the **Queen's Platinum Jubilee** and **Commonwealth Games Baton Relay** 

Advised **9,000** people online just on the government's '£150 Council Tax rebate'

Awarded grants to **12** local community groups 

Made **800,000** garden waste collections 

Supported **230** people through local health programmes

Ran **10** consultation surveys, including with over **400** community panellists 

Answered **62,000** queries on bins & cleansing

Determined over **700** planning applications

Given **3,000** people telephone advice 

Given **23,000** people online advice on their Council Tax

Taken away **437** businesses' waste

Spent **£332k** on schemes to prevent, and support people facing homelessness

Welcomed **426** parents to Starting Well programmes

Key initiatives being delivered in 2023/24 include:

- Regeneration Investment of over £16m under the government's Levelling Up Programme. This includes the prospect of a new Community Hub and Commercial Space at the former Market Hall site, and clearance of the Windsor Street site all by the end of 2025.

Outcomes delivered include

- Implemented a 'redeployable' CCTV camera scheme enabling temporary camera deployment and saw CCTV services externally certified under the Surveillance Camera Commissioner's Code of Practice.
- Awarded the councils' biggest contract, the £5m 'minor civil engineering works' contract.
- Paid over £196k (in Redditch) and £138k (in Bromsgrove) to people in need via the government's cost of living-related Household Support Fund.

## Document references

Via [CPC website](#): Leisure Strategies

## Outcomes during Covid-19

As mentioned above, the pandemic had a significant impact on services delivered to residents. The councils swiftly implemented urgent crisis response and business continuity plans and played a pivotal role in leading both areas through an unprecedented national public health emergency.

The vast majority of services mostly continued throughout the pandemic, with changes, but broadly this meant:

- Immediate implementation of an enhanced Covid-19 governance structure, including a change to virtual committee meetings (and back to in-person again, with safety measures in step with the then-evolving restrictions).
- A series of vital short-term initiatives to protect the most vulnerable residents through local partnerships, and to protect staff continuing to work under difficult conditions.
- Large-scale operational changes so services could continue to be delivered to people safely.
- An immediate switch from office-based to remote working for most staff, changing fundamental working conditions in a very short space of time - a change that started the councils' continuing move to 'agile' working as policy (see Culture and elsewhere, below), and the major works to remodel premises.
- Significant new and enhanced partnership working (see 'Partnership working during Covid-19', below) including for incident management and health protection.
- Redeploying some staff into acutely critical areas to ensure service delivery in the face of significant sickness absence, particularly during the so-called 'pingdemic'.
- Managing much-needed financial help through to residents and businesses via a series of new schemes to get government and council funding out quickly to residents and businesses, through mandatory and discretionary business grants, Test and Trace self-isolation payments, and others - including building new audit and reconciliation processes to Government requirements and creating new local schemes for residents and businesses who fell outside the mandatory government grant schemes. See below for more detail.
- Running major new communications campaigns, supporting government guidelines and vaccinations, including a partnership with media outlets.
- Employing a team of 'Covid Advisors' to support businesses and the community with safety and compliance, including operational support for testing sites.



- Supporting the NHS and community response, including helping the NHS with test and trace and to set up testing centres and the area's mass vaccination facility on council property.
- Working to ensure that nobody had to sleep rough during the challenging lockdown periods, which restricted 'normal' access to temporary accommodation, which in Bromsgrove was done in partnership with housing provider bdht.

The Council sets a 3-year Medium Term Financial Plan every year, with the final Council Tax Resolution being approved by Council in February. This year's process will be more difficult due to the following factors:

- Starting the process with a £637k deficit from the 2023/24 MTFP.
- The present cost of living crisis.
- Changes to how the Government fund services.
- The number of S114 Statements at Councils, including our nearest neighbour Birmingham, and the impact this will have in funding of the sector.

As such, it is prudent to split the budget process into two tranches,

- Having an initial Tranche which seeks to close as much of the deficit as possible using information known as at the end of September and seeking approval for those savings to be implemented at Council in January
- Having a second Tranche after the Christmas break, which will be approved in February, that takes account of the Local Government Settlement whose final detail will not be known until early January.

This document sets out the present financial situation as well as Tranche 1 service pressures and savings proposals.

## 2024/25 Budget Process

The council is faced with a challenging financial position this year. The magnitude of the savings required has meant that we have had to consider significant changes to our operating model and redesign the way we deliver services.

Due to the nature and scale of this, developing the proposals has required additional time and resource to ensure the plans are robust, deliverable and collectively achieve financial sustainability.

As such, the budget will be delivered in two tranches, the first with proposals being approved on the 29th January and the second with proposals being approved on the 26th February.

Tranche 1	
Consultation Start Date	14 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
Budget Scrutiny Committee	21 <sup>st</sup> November 2023
Cabinet	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2023
Consultation Closing Date	5 <sup>h</sup> January 2024
Cabinet	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
Council	24 <sup>th</sup> January 2024

Tranche 2	
Consultation Start Date	6 <sup>th</sup> February 2024

Budget Scrutiny Committee	tbc February 2024
Cabinet	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2024
Consultation Closing Date	Tbc
Cabinet	21 <sup>st</sup> February 2024
Council	21 <sup>st</sup> February 2024

## **Bromsgrove has the following Strategic Purposes:**

Run and Grow a Successful Business

Finding Somewhere to Live

Aspiration, Work and Financial Independence

Living Independent, Active and Healthy Lives

Communities which are Safe, Well Maintained and Green

The Green Thread runs through the Council Plan

## **Council Service Areas**

### **Business Transformation & Organisational Development**

This service area covers the following Services:

**Human Resources and Organisational Development** - The Human Resources and Organisational Development primary function is to provide a HR advisory service, organisational development, training and health and safety, providing advice and support to the organisation in respect of; recruitment, employment issues, pay and grading, training, workforce planning and health and safety advice. HR focuses on the people within the business and on every aspect of the employment relationship.

**Information Communication and Technology** - The different areas of ICT include

- helpdesk support, technical project implementation, infrastructure and business
- application support, small systems development and automation, service requests,
- website design and support, graphical information systems support (including street naming and numbering) and information management.

**Business Improvement Team** - The Business Improvement team supports service areas to improve their delivery of our Strategic Purposes, through changing work practices, processes, and behaviours.

**Policy, Equalities and Performance Team** - The Policy Team supports elected members, CMT, managers and service areas with corporate planning (such as the development of the Council Plans), performance, data gathering and analysis, consultation and engagement and equalities.

## Chief Executive

The Chief Executive's Unit comprises Strategic Partnerships (facilitating partnership working across the Borough to ensure more effective outcomes for people), Communications and Print and PA / Directorate Support (which provides administrative support to the Leader, Corporate Management Team and Mayor (including post room)).

## Corporate Financing

Corporate financing sets out how the Council funds its revenue expenditure. The Council funds the majority of its activities from the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates. There are also Grants such as the Lower Tier Services Grant, and New Homes Bonus that makes up this figure.

Expenditure such as the Councils Minimum Revenue Position for borrowing and the net effect of investment income and payments also sit in this area.

## Community and Housing General Fund Services

This service area covers the following Services:

**Community Safety** ensures compliance of the Council's statutory duties under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 alongside providing co-ordination and support to the statutory Community Safety Partnership. Project activity improves community safety and reduces risk of crime & disorder with a focus on prevention. Examples include a youth work team, Safer Spaces Scheme, Nominated Neighbour Scheme, Respect Programme.

The **Housing Strategy** team comprises of the Housing Strategy & Enabling Service which is responsible for developing strategies and policies for all housing services and the effective management and delivery of Bromsgrove's housing development programmes. The private sector housing team are responsible for ensuring good housing standards by private sector landlords. Included in this service is the support for Disabled Facilities Grants. The Climate Change Officer provides advice to services across the Council with the aim of bringing about carbon reduction and efficiencies, including grant applications and the delivery of energy efficiency schemes.

A door-to-door **community transport scheme** called Dial A Ride provides a community transport for those who cannot access or use public or private transport.

**NEW Lifeline** is a telecare and assistive technology alarm service available 24 Hours per day, 365 days per year to any vulnerable person living within the District. Services include a pull cord/pendant to summon assistance, bed and fire alarm sensors, support for residents with dementia.

Bromsgrove and Redditch **Starting Well** is a commissioned service that works in partnership with Worcestershire Health & Care Trust. The focus is on improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities at the individual, family and community levels across Worcestershire. The service will contribute to ensuring every child has the best start in life, they are ready to learn at 2, ready for school at 5, thrive and develop well during their school years and into adult life.

## **Environmental Services**

This service area covers the following Services:

### **Environment**

Environmental services and operations, deliver a wide range of boroughwide and 'place based' services including weekly waste collections to nearly 80,000 households, and a paid for garden waste service to 22,000 households across the 2 Council areas (Bromsgrove and Redditch). The teams also deliver both a commercial waste and commercial recycling service, and a septic tank and cesspool emptying service to both households and commercial customers.

Grass cutting and street cleansing services are delivered via our 6 place teams and the core environmental team also undertakes Environmental Enforcement across the 2 Council areas.

The other key service areas include management of the Councils tree stock including Tree Preservation Orders and high hedges applications. Bereavement services, deliver both cremations and burial services.

Support services include management of the Council transport and vehicle fleets including the provision of workshops at the two depots, a Stores Service, Design and management of civil engineering projects and customer management via the Business Support Team.

Our on street enforcement and land drainage services across the 2 Council areas are delivered by a public sector contract/shared services with Wychavon and Wyre Forest respectively.

## **Financial and Customer Services**

This service area covers the following functions:

### **Finance**

**Corporate finance** set the Councils financial agenda. They are responsible for the Councils financial regulations/controls and compliance to them, Supporting Members, the Chief Executive and CMT, setting and delivering the budget, closing the Council's Accounts, in year monitoring of the Councils financial position to stakeholders.

**Management Accountancy is** the primary source of financial support to Budget managers and Heads of Service. They are responsible for the delivery of the

operational budget, the monthly/quarterly monitoring, and the closure of accounts in liaison with budget managers and other Council staff.

**Exchequer Services** delivers the Councils Payment and Income Services along with running the GPC Card (procurement Card) system and Insurance.

**Payroll Services** is a small team which work closely with HR and finance and run the monthly payrolls for Bromsgrove, Redditch, Rubicon and Wyre Forest Councils.

## **Revenues Services**

Revenue Services is responsible for the annual collection of £60m of non-domestic rates; £116m council tax, £27m in sundry income and is responsible for collection of £2.4m in overpaid housing benefit across both Redditch and Bromsgrove.

## **Benefit Services**

The principal functions of the Benefits Service are to maximise benefit awareness and take-up and to assess benefit claims promptly and accurately.

The service area is responsible for paying over £30 million of Housing Benefit and almost £10 million Council Tax Support to our residents across both Councils.

We also have £60k Essential Living Fund budget to administer alongside the £250k Discretionary Housing Payments. Our experienced Financial Independence Team deal with the applications for these schemes.

## **Customer Services**

Customer Services provided a comprehensive service to the council, mainly face-to-face enquiries on both reception and cashiers.

When the building was closed to the public during the C-19 pandemic, we quickly mobilised the Customer Service Officers to take council tax and business rates calls, as well as providing outbound calls for locality where tenants were in arrears. When the buildings were re-opened in July 2021, staff have maintained these functions, albeit with fewer numbers.

## **Legal, Democratic and Property Services**

This service area covers the following Services:

**Legal Services** - The shared legal service for Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils, is an in-house support service, providing legal advice and representation to the Council in its governance and decision-making role and to all departments of the Council in the delivery of their services to residents and in achieving their strategic objectives, including: Procurement, Contract negotiation, Litigation (both as Plaintiff and Defendant), Prosecutions, Planning Agreements, Property transactions

(acquisitions and disposals), Corporate governance and supporting corporate projects, Member support and the decision-making process.

As well as these operational services, we have an over-arching responsibility to ensure that the Council acts in a lawful manner, is compliant with the regulatory and statutory regimes within which it operates and to protect the council's standing with the courts and other external organisations, and its reputation generally.

The Local Land Charges service sits with the shared legal service though there is a separate budget for Land Charges.

Bromsgrove District Council is the 'host' authority to Worcestershire Regulatory Services [WRS], the shared environmental health and licensing service for Worcestershire. The Council act as legal advisor to meetings of its governing body, the WRS Joint Committee and provide advice and representation for BDC and RBC environmental health and licensing cases.

**Procurement** - Procurement is a support service which is at the core of both Councils and Rubicon Leisure. The Service strives to promote compliance with legal and corporate regulations and drives efficiencies and savings through a corporate wide approach to purchasing.

The Team provides support both for active procurements across the organisations at all stages of a procurement and additionally provides advice on procurement strategy more generally. The Team also provides support with contract management, assisting teams in ensuring that contractors deliver what has been procured to the correct standards, at the correct time and at the right price.

**Shared Electoral Services** - The Democratic Services team facilitates Committee meetings, manages the decision-making process, including the work programmes (Forward Plans) and provides a support service to elected Members and officers.

Electoral Services manage and deliver elections and electoral administration

**Property Services** - The Property Services Team manage the asset portfolio in line with the Asset Management Strategy and all associated repairs, cyclical maintenance and refurbishment of the portfolio of properties, owned by the Council.

## **Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services**

The Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Service is composed of the following teams: Building Control: Strategic Planning and Conservation: Development Management: Leisure and Cultural Services. NWEDR and Emergency Planning and Business Continuity are managed by WFDC in a three-way shared service arrangement and these teams link into the Service.

**Building Control** - The Building Control team ensures buildings are safely constructed with appropriate fire escapes.

**Strategic Planning and Conservation** - The team prepares local plans and supplementary planning and conservation documents and provides general policy, conservation, and listed building advice.

**Development Management** - This team is responsible for processing all types of applications under planning legislation and investigating breaches of planning control.

**Leisure and Cultural Services** - Leisure Services includes the strategy development and management of parks and events and the development of arts, sports and cultural services

**Economic Development and Regeneration** - The team leads on regeneration initiatives, supporting businesses, shaping the skills agenda, and generally making sure the issues locally are appreciated by all who make or shape decisions or release funding.

**Emergency Planning and Business Continuity** - This function ensures the councils, with its partners are prepared for a range of scenarios.

## **Regulatory Services**

Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) is the shared Environmental Health and Licensing service governed by a Joint Board, making it part of the six Worcestershire District Councils, with Bromsgrove District Council as the host authority. We provide all the traditional environmental health and licensing regulatory services for the six Worcestershire District Councils to include health & safety for commercial premises, food hygiene inspections, environmental protection (nuisance, contaminated land, air quality, private water supplies and industrial permitting) as well as administration of the licensing regime for taxi's, drivers, pubs, nightclubs, pet shops, animal boarding, stables, zoos and street trading. In addition we provide some environmental health and licensing services and associated services under contract or agreement for other local authorities in and outside Worcestershire.

## Overall Financial Position

<b>Bromsgrove Base Position (Revised Tranche 1)</b>					
	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>	
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Base Budget Position 22/23 MTFP</b>					
Expenditure	11,948	12,077	12,347	12,347	
Funding	-10,360	-10,864	-10,724	-10,724	
<b>Net</b>	<b>1,588</b>	<b>1,213</b>	<b>1,623</b>	<b>1,623</b>	
<b>Revised Gap 22/23 MTFP</b>					
	<b>1,588</b>	<b>1,213</b>	<b>1,623</b>	<b>1,623</b>	
Phase 1 Savings 2023/24 MTFP	-1,625	-1,847	-1,748	-1,748	
<b>Revised Position</b>	<b>-37</b>	<b>-634</b>	<b>-125</b>	<b>-125</b>	
<b>Phase 1 Pressures 2023/24 MTFP</b>					
	1,602	1,608	1,769	1,769	
<b>Phase 1 2023/24 MTFP Position</b>	<b>1,565</b>	<b>974</b>	<b>1,644</b>	<b>1,644</b>	
Local Government Settlement	-1715	-1200	-1200	-1200	
Additional Savings (Phase 2)	-707	-707	-707	-707	
Additional Pressures - Phase 2	1107	889	694	694	
<b>Final 2023/24 MTFP Position</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>-44</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>431</b>	
<b>Known Changes</b>					
23/4 Pay Award - 4% More than planned		770	770	770	
Utilities Increases running at 60% - 40% Savings		-140	-140	-140	
Existing Inflation Budget (Unallocated)		-188	-194	-194	
Inflation on Contracts - additional 5%		90	90	90	
Additional 1% on 24/5 Pay Award - to 3%		154	154	154	
7% Additional Fees and Charges Income		-273	-273	-273	
Additional 2% Pay Award for 26/7				308	
Quarter 1 23/4 Overspend position	<b>788</b>				
Use of 23/4 Utilities Reserve	<b>-351</b>				
2% Council Tax 2025/6			-191	-191	
2% Council Tax 2026/7				-195	
Year 2 Fees and Charges Income at 2%			-101	-101	
Year 3 Fees and Charges Income at 2%				-101	
Increase in number of Properties (Ctax Income)		-36	-84	-121	
Government Grant at 23/4 Levels		-515	-515	-515	
<b>Draft Opening Position</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>-182</b>	<b>-53</b>	<b>-78</b>	
<b>Service Adjustments</b>					
Reduction in Benefits Overpayments Target		200	200	200	
Use of HVD Fuel by 100% of Fleet		30	30	30	
Increase in HR Establishment		10	10	10	
PRA Housing Licence Costs		15	15	15	
Nw/wM Increased Charges		39	39	39	
Interest Charges on Updated Capital Programme		35	36	36	
MRP Increases on Capital Programme		24	46	48	
<b>Revised Opening Position</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>300</b>	

## Savings/Funding Proposals

### Use of the Utilities Budget

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Existing Budget	351,000	351,000	351,000
Savings Proposal	-140,000	-140,000	-140,000
Revised Budget	211,000	211,000	211,000

The utilities budget was increased by 100%, and an additional 100% put in reserves, to mitigate increased fuel charges due to the Ukraine crises. Costs are being monitored and they have only increased by 60%. The remaining 40% of the budget is therefore no longer required and is a savings.

### Use of Existing Inflation Budgets

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Existing Budget	188,000	194,000	194,000
Savings Proposal	-188,000	-188,000	-188,000
Revised Budget	0	0	0

Like the Utilities budget, due to increased prices, a budget was put in the 2023/4 MTFP for increased inflation. There has been no call on this budget to date this year and as such it is a savings.

### Increases to Fees and Charges

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Existing Budget	-3,786,000	-3,791,000	-3,791,000
7% Increase 24/5	-273,000	-273,000	-273,000
2% Increase 25/6		-101,000	-101,000
2% Increase 26/7			-101,000
Revised Budget	-4,059,000	-4,165,000	-4,266,000

It is proposed that fees and charges increase by 7% in 2024/5 – which in line with the 7% level of the pay award this year and Inflation which is presently 6.8%. Increases for future years have been assumed at 2%.

### Increases to the Council Tax Base

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Existing Budget	-9,545,000	-9,545,000	-9,545,000
2% Increase in 2025/6		-191,000	-191,000
2% Increase in 2026/7			-195,000
Increased Properties	-36,000	-84,000	-121,000
Revised Budget	-9,581,000	-9,820,000	-10,052,000

Figures assume the full 1.99% allowable increase over all years of the 3 year MTFP and no increase in numbers of properties. In reviewing base budgets, the full 1.99% was not applied to 2025/6 and it has also been applied to the new financial year on the MTFP. It is assumed that housing numbers will increase by 150, 200 and then 150 over the three years based on Local Plan data.

## Government Support Assumptions

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Existing Budget			
Savings Proposal	-515,000	-515,000	-515,000
Revised Budget			

Our assumption on the Local Government Settlement in the 2023/4 MTFP is £515k less than the Council received in 23/4. The Council took a prudent approach at that stage. On reviewing settlements however, since the removal of the RSG, they have been consistent and therefore this sum has been bought in line with 2023/4 settlement levels.

## Growth Proposals

### 2023/24 Pay Award

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Existing Budget	15,512,000	15,742,000	15,742,000
Growth Proposal	770,000	770,000	770,000
Revised Budget	16,282,000	16,512,000	16,512,000

The jointly negotiated employers pay award for 2023/4 is approximately 7% (slightly lower than last year). The Council budgeted for a 2% increase and therefore this growth bid ensures budget reflect the expected pay award.

### Future Pay Awards

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Existing Budget	16,282,000	16,512,000	16,512,000
1% on 24/5 pay budget	154,000	154,000	154,000
2% Pay Award in 2026/7	0	0	308,000
Revised Budget	16,436,000	16,666,000	16,974,000

As set out above, the Council budgets for a 2% Pay award. It is felt that it is prudent, given the large pay awards of the past 2 years, to increase this to 3% for 2024/5 before reducing the ongoing effect to 2% for future years.

## Contract Inflation

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
<b>Existing Budget</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Growth Proposal</b>	<b>90,000</b>	<b>90,000</b>	<b>90,000</b>
<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>90,000</b>	<b>90,000</b>	<b>90,000</b>

Although we have taken out the inflation budget, that has not been called on, from last years MTFP, we feel it is prudent to allow for inflationary increases in 2025/6.

## Benefits Overpayments

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
<b>Existing Budget</b>	<b>-500,000</b>	<b>-500,000</b>	<b>-500,000</b>
<b>Growth Proposal</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>
<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>-300,000</b>	<b>-300,000</b>	<b>-300,000</b>

There is presently a target of £500k for the reclaiming of Benefit overpayments. We now have more accurate information and processes which mean that initial payments are more accurate and the need for recovery of overpayments has diminished. Over the past 2 years the Council has recovered under half of this amount (with many linked to Universal Credit payments) and so it is prudent to reduce this amount to £300k.

## Use of HVO Fuel

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
<b>Existing Budget</b>	<b>262,000</b>	<b>262,000</b>	<b>262,000</b>
<b>Growth Proposal</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>
<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>292,000</b>	<b>292,000</b>	<b>292,000</b>

The Government has still not provided guidance on Waste delivery. The Council has a diesel fleet which could use HVO fuel would reduced the Carbon footprint of the fleet and the Council significantly. With alternatives to Diesel (Electric and Hydrogen powered vehicles) being extremely expensive with vehicles 2 to 4 times more expensive than existing vehicles it would be prudent to ensure the fleet used HVO fuel, significantly reducing the Council's carbon footprint. However, HVO fuel at the moment is significantly more expensive than diesel and this would cost an additional £100k a year. The Councils Carbon pledge is to move to this position over time so a £30k increase in budget allows for, prices dependent a 30% use of this fuel and an estimated savings of 206 tonnes of greenhouse gases from the fleet.

## Increase of Human Resources Establishment

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
<b>Existing Budget</b>	<b>525,339</b>	<b>537,126</b>	<b>537,126</b>
<b>Growth Proposal</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>
<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>535,339</b>	<b>547,127</b>	<b>547,126</b>

The HR structure reports into one post. This funding added a second senior post to relieve pressure in this service area. This is a shared service and so costs are split with Redditch

## Private Sector Housing – Monitoring Software

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
<b>Existing Budget</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Growth Proposal</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>
<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>

There is the new requirement for the monitoring of the Private Housing Sector. There is a capital bid of £30k for software to undertake this. The ongoing licensing costs are £15k a year as they will be shared with Redditch.

## On and Off Street Parking Management and Enforcement Contracts

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
<b>Existing Budget</b>	<b>242,000</b>	<b>242,000</b>	<b>242,000</b>
<b>Growth Proposal</b>	<b>93,000</b>	<b>93,000</b>	<b>93,000</b>
<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>335,000</b>	<b>335,000</b>	<b>335,000</b>

The Service Level Agreement between the Council and Wychavon District Council for the management and enforcement of on and off street parking increases from £242k to £335k a year, an increase of £93k a year. This is a new 5 year contract which will commence on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. Future years increases of this contract will increase with CPI.

## North Worcestershire Water Management Service Level Agreement

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
<b>Existing Budget</b>	<b>61,000</b>	<b>61,000</b>	<b>61,000</b>
<b>Growth Proposal</b>	<b>39,000</b>	<b>39,000</b>	<b>39,000</b>
<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>

The North Worcestershire Water Management Service Level Agreement with Redditch and Wyre Forest is being revised to reflect actual provision. The existing allocations are the existing proportion of costs are Wyre Forest 52% (£105k), Redditch 26% (£66k) and Bromsgrove 22%. (£61k). These will change to 43% Bromsgrove, 32% Wyre Forest and 25% Redditch. This would be a current year budget equivalent of Bromsgrove £100k, Redditch £67k and Wyre Forest £72k.

## Increased MRP Costs due to Changes to the Capital Programme

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
<b>Existing Budget</b>	<b>1,236,000</b>	<b>1,456,000</b>	<b>1,456,000</b>
<b>Growth Proposal</b>	<b>24,000</b>	<b>46,000</b>	<b>48,000</b>
<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>1,260,000</b>	<b>1,502,000</b>	<b>1,504,000</b>

The Capital section sets out changes to Capital Programme requirements. Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) is required to offset the cost of Capital. For the IT changes, the lifetime is 5 years, for the remainder it is assumed to be 10 years.

## Increased Interest Costs due to Changes to the Capital Programme

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
<b>Existing Budget</b>	<b>586,000</b>	<b>504,000</b>	<b>504,000</b>
<b>Growth Proposal</b>	<b>35,000</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>36,000</b>
<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>621,000</b>	<b>540,000</b>	<b>540,000</b>

The Capital section sets out changes to Capital Programme requirements. As this will be debt funded, the interest charges for that debt need to be accounted for. For the IT changes, the lifetime is 5 years and attracts an interest charge of 5.27%, for the remainder it is assumed to be 10 years and attracts an interest charge of 5.37%. Interest costs are as per Public Works Loan Board Rates as at the 11<sup>th</sup> October.

## Capital Programme Proposals

### Summary Position

	23/4	24/5	25/6	26/7	27/8
Q1 Approves Change - Fleet Replacement Costs	£9,400		£15,000		
Q1 Approved Change - Wheely Bin Increas	£85,000				
Q1 Approved Change - Wild Flowes Machinery	£62,000				
<b>Revised Total</b>	<b>£156,400</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£15,000</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>

### Narrative

The update of Fleet Replacement costs. This is an increase of 94k in 22/23 and £15k in 25/26. Over a 10 year period the cost of this is £10.9k MRP plus interest at 5.63% of £6.1k is an additional cost of £17.0k per year.

Increase in wheely bin budget. The estimated spend on wheeled bins is likely to be closer to £150k based on previous expenditure. We have recently changed to Plastic bins for commercial which should bring that down a bit, but the overspend is likely to be in the region of £85k. Over a 10 year period the cost of this is £8.5k MRP plus interest at 5.63% of £4.8k is an additional cost of £13.3k per year.

New Capital budget for wildflowers equipment is added - £62,100 in 23/24. If this capital cost is reduced over a 10 year period the additional MRP is £6.2k per year and interest costs are £3.5k giving a total additional cost of £9.7k per year.

**In addition to this there are also the following Leisure Proposals following the initial Play Audits. More are expected following consultation with Members:**

Leisure Requirements	23/4	24/5	25/6	26/7	27/8
Cotton Pool Sanders Park	£32,500				
Sanders Park Pavilion improvements		£10,000			
Sanders Park refurbishments to café building exterior		£10,000			
BDC Play areas	£35,000	£100,000			
Additional parking as per Engineering team plan Sanders Park		£215,000			
Pathway and parking areas repairs Sanders Park		£14,500			
ClIr request Install height restrictor and bollards / hoops to car park to prevent traveller access		£15,000			
MMP recommendation. Check that the access ramp from Leach Heath Lane is DDA compliant. St Chads	£20,000				
<b>Total</b>	<b>£87,500</b>	<b>£364,500</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>

## Consultation Feedback Form

### BUDGET CONSULTATION FORM

We want to hear the opinions of all residents, partner organisations, businesses and other interested parties as part of the budget setting process.

People will be able to give their opinions by completing an online survey on the council website by the 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

Hard copies can be requested by emailing the finance team at the Council

The consultation will close on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 5pm. Cabinet will consider comments on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and Full Council will debate the Tranche One proposals on Wednesday 24 January 2024.

The consultation will ask the following questions:

1. Do you have any comments to make about the phase one budget proposals?

2. Having read the phase one proposals document, how much do you now feel you understand about why the council must make total savings in Tranche 1 of the budget of almost £1,239million in 2024/25 made up of council tax and fees and charges increases, and reductions to the utilities and inflation budgets? Tick the answer you agree with.

- A great deal
- A fair amount
- Not very much
- Nothing at all

3. If you have any specific ideas about how the council can save money or generate additional income to protect services, please state these here:

So that we can check this survey is representative of Redditch overall, please complete the following questions.

Are you?

- Male
- Female

Please tick which of the following best describes who you are:

- Resident
- Business person
- Member of council staff
- Borough councillor
- Work, but don't live in Redditch
- Member of community or voluntary organisation
- Regular visitor
- Other (please state).....

Which of these age groups do you fall into?

- Under 16
- 16 to 24 years
- 25 to 34 years
- 35 to 44 years
- 45 to 54 years
- 55 to 64 years
- 65 to 74 years
- 75 years or over
- Prefer not to say

What is your ethnic group?

A White

English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British

Gypsy or Irish Traveller

Any other white background

B Mixed/ multiple ethnic groups

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any other mixed/ multiple ethnic background

C Asian/ Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Chinese

Any other Asian background, write in

D Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British

African

Caribbean

Any other Black/ African/ Caribbean background

E Other ethnic group

Any other ethnic group

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Yes.....

No .....

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey

## Appendix B – Possible Savings Areas

- Rationalisation of the Back Office (and associated recharges).
- Equalities Budgets – ensure both Councils are delivering to the same magnitude.
- Government Grant Maximisation.
- The Approach to Leisure.
- Agency work with the County Council.
- Review of the Location of the Councils Depots.
- Bed and Breakfast – Minimisation of these potential costs.
- The future Waste Operating model and implications for the Council.
- Ongoing Climate change issues.
- Service based changed led by legislation/demographics which will be discussed with relevant Heads of Service.
- Debt costs – given the slippage in the Capital Programme.
- Business Rates Re-baselining.

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL****Increases 24/5****7%****WRS Increase****7%****Parking Increases 24/5****0%****Business Transformation and Organisational Development**

Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.

Service Category	Charge 1st April 2021 £	% Change	Charge from April 2022 £	Charge Increase 23/24	Charge 1st April 2023 £	Charge Increase 24/25	Proposed Charge 24/5 £
<b><u>New &amp; Existing Properties</u></b>							
Naming a Street	554.10	5.00%	581.80	10%	639.98	7%	684.80
Additional charge for each new premise on a street	130.00	5.00%	136.50	10%	150.15	7%	160.70
Naming and numbering of an individual premise	274.00	5.00%	287.70	10%	316.47	7%	338.60
Additional charge for each adjoining premise (eg Blocks of flats)	77.00	5.06%	80.90	10%	88.99	7%	95.20
Confirmation of address to solicitor/conveyancer/ occupier or owner	53.60	5.04%	56.30	10%	61.93	7%	66.30
Additional charge including naming of building	138.00	5.00%	144.90	10%	159.39	7%	170.50

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Environmental Services**

Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.

Service Category	Charge 1st April 2021 £	Charge from April 2022 £	Charge Increase 23/24	Charge 1st April 2023 £	Charge Increase 24/25	Proposed Charge 24/5 £
<b>CAR PARKS</b>						
<b>Churchfields Multi-storey</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.40	0.40	0%	0.40	0%	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	0.80	0.80	0%	0.80	0%	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	1.60	1.60	0%	1.60	0%	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	2.40	2.40	0%	2.40	0%	2.40
All day	3.00	3.00	0%	3.00	0%	3.00
<b>New Road</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.40	0.40	0%	0.40	0%	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	0.80	0.80	0%	0.80	0%	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	1.60	1.60	0%	1.60	0%	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	2.40	2.40	0%	2.40	0%	2.40
All day	5.00	5.00	0%	5.00	0%	5.00
<b>North Bromsgrove</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.40	0.40	0%	0.40	0%	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	0.80	0.80	0%	0.80	0%	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	1.60	1.60	0%	1.60	0%	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	2.40	2.40	0%	2.40	0%	2.40
All day	5.00	5.00	0%	5.00	0%	5.00
<b>Parkside</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.40	0.40	0%	0.40	0%	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	0.80	0.80	0%	0.80	0%	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	1.60	1.60	0%	1.60	0%	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	2.40	2.40	0%	2.40	0%	2.40
All day	5.00	5.00	0%	5.00	0%	5.00
<b>School Drive</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.40	0.40	0%	0.40	0%	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	0.80	0.80	0%	0.80	0%	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	1.60	1.60	0%	1.60	0%	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	2.40	2.40	0%	2.40	0%	2.40
All day	5.00	5.00	0%	5.00	0%	5.00
<b>Stourbridge Road</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.40	0.40	0%	0.40	0%	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	0.80	0.80	0%	0.80	0%	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	1.60	1.60	0%	1.60	0%	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	2.40	2.40	0%	2.40	0%	2.40
All day	5.00	5.00	0%	5.00	0%	5.00

Service Category	charge 1st April 2021	Proposed charge from 2022				
	£	£				
<b>Recreation Road South</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.40	0.40	0%	0.40	0%	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	0.80	0.80	0%	0.80	0%	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	1.60	1.60	0%	1.60	0%	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	2.40	2.40	0%	2.40	0%	2.40
Not exceeding four hours	3.20	3.20	0%	3.20	0%	3.20
Not exceeding five hours	4.00	4.00	0%	4.00	0%	4.00
Not exceeding Six hours	6.40	6.40	0%	6.40	0%	6.40
Not exceeding Seven hours	8.80	8.80	0%	8.80	0%	8.80
Not exceeding Eight hours	11.20	11.20	0%	11.20	0%	11.20
<b>Windsor Street</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.50	0.50	0%	0.50	0%	0.50
Not exceeding one hour	1.00	1.00	0%	1.00	0%	1.00
Not exceeding two hours	2.00	2.00	0%	2.00	0%	2.00
<b>St John Street</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.50	0.50	0%	0.50	0%	0.50
Not exceeding one hour	1.00	1.00	0%	1.00	0%	1.00
Not exceeding two hours	2.00	2.00	0%	2.00	0%	2.00
Not exceeding three hours	3.00	3.00	0%	3.00	0%	3.00
<b>Season Tickets (valid at long stay car parks only)</b>						
Annual	320.00	320.00	0%	320.00	0%	320.00
Quarterly	80.00	80.00	0%	80.00	0%	80.00
<b>Season Tickets (valid at Churchfields Road car park only)</b>						
Annual	215.00	215.00	0%	215.00	0%	215.00
Quarterly	53.75	53.75	0%	53.75	0%	53.80
<b>Season Tickets (valid at Alvechurch Sports and Social club car park only)</b>						
Annual	250.00	250.00	0%	250.00	0%	250.00
Quarterly	62.50	62.50	0%	62.50	0%	62.50
<b>Parking Fines PCN's On Street</b>						
Certain Contraventions	70.00	70.00	Stat	70.00	Stat	70.00
If paid within fourteen days	35.00	35.00	Stat	35.00	Stat	35.00
Other contraventions	50.00	50.00	Stat	50.00	Stat	50.00
If paid within fourteen days	25.00	25.00	Stat	25.00	Stat	25.00
<i>These charges will increase if the charge remains unpaid after the 28 days given on the NTO (Notice to Owner)</i>						
<b>Parking Fines PCN's Off Street</b>						
Certain Contraventions	70.00	70.00	Stat	70.00	Stat	70.00
If paid within fourteen days	35.00	35.00	Stat	35.00	Stat	35.00
Other contraventions	50.00	50.00	Stat	50.00	Stat	50.00
If paid within fourteen days	25.00	25.00	Stat	25.00	Stat	25.00
<i>These charges will increase if the charge remains unpaid after the 28 days given on the NTO (Notice to Owner)</i>						
<b>Car Park charges apply everyday</b>						

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Chief Executive**

Roundings to the nearest 10p.

Service Category	Charge 1st April 2021 £	Charge from April 2022 £	Charge Increase 23/24	Charge 1st April 2023 £	Charge Increase 24/25	Proposed Charge 24/5 £
<b><u>Venue hire additional services</u></b>						
Feature on official social media & website	Please contact us £30-£100	Request a quote	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Place your promotional material in reception	10.00	Request a quote	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Print your materials	Request a quote	Request a quote	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Full design &amp; print services:</b>						
Luxury roll-up banner - Flat rate	102.50	Request a quote	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
- any additional	51.30	Request a quote	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Vinyl banner	51.30	Request a quote	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
- any additional	25.60	Request a quote	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Posters (10)	25.60	Request a quote	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
- any additional	Request a quote	Request a quote	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Leaflets (500)	51.30	Request a quote	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
- any additional	Request a quote	Request a quote	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
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Your bespoke requirements	Request a quote	Request a quote	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery

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<b>BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>						
<b>Community &amp; Housing Services</b>						
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.						
Service Category	Charge 1st April 2020 £	Charge from April 2021 £	Charge Increase 23/24	Charge 1st April 2023 £	Charge Increase 24/25	Proposed Charge 24/5 £
<b>STRATEGIC HOUSING</b>						
<b>Bed and breakfast</b>						
- Single room	16.10	16.10	10%	17.71	7%	18.90
- Two single rooms	32.50	32.50	10%	35.75	7%	38.30
- Double room	16.10	16.10	10%	17.71	7%	18.90
- More than one double room per room	21.00	21.00	10%	23.10	7%	24.70
<b>- Breakfast</b>						
- adult	2.50	2.60	10%	2.86	7%	3.10
- child	2.10	2.20	10%	2.42	7%	2.60
- Storage of effects (per night)	2.60	2.70	10%	2.97	7%	3.20
- Right to Buy (RTB) Plan Preparation for BDHT	119.70	125.70	10%	138.27	7%	147.90
- Late Consents to transfer (shared ownership and low cost properties)	250.00	262.50	10%	288.75	7%	309.00
<b>Private Sector Housing</b>						
Housing Fitness Inspections	150.00	150.00	10%	165.00	7%	176.60
First Homes Application	0.00	0.00	New	150.00	7%	160.50
<b>Registration of housing in multiple occupation:</b>						
per occupant	122.00	128.10	10%	140.91	7%	150.80
Service and Administration of Improvement	34.00	35.70	10%	39.27	7%	42.00
Provision, Hazard Awareness or Emergency Measures Notices * under Housing Act 2004, per hour						
	Actual + 10% Admin fee	Actual + 10% Admin fee	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Enforcement of Statutory Notices, Supervision of Work in Default etc.						
Mobile Home Park Licencing - New Licence Application Fee						
		326.67	10%	359.34	7%	384.50
- Licence Amendment Application Fee						
		256.67	10%	282.34	7%	302.10
- Licence Transfer Application Fee						
		186.67	10%	205.34	7%	219.70
Mobile Home Park - Annual Site Inspection Charge -Band A (2-10 units)						
		256.67	10%	282.34	7%	302.10
-Band B (11-30 units )						
		274.17	10%	301.59	7%	322.70
- Band C ( 31-70 units)						
		385.00	10%	423.50	7%	453.10
- Band D ( 71 + units)						
		420.00	10%	462.00	7%	494.30
Mobile Home Park Statutory Registration or amendment of Park Home Rules						
		99.17	10%	109.09	7%	116.70
- Valuation Fee (relating to properties of 30% ownership)						
	225.00	300.00	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
<b>*Based on salary of employee</b>						
<b>LIFELINE</b>						
- Installation Fee	52.00	52.00	0%	52.00	7%	55.60
- Lifeline (per week)	4.25	4.50	5%	4.70	0%	0.00

	Cost of product + 17% admin fee	Cost of product + 17% admin fee	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
	Manufacturers cost + 17% admin fee	Manufacturers cost + 17% admin fee	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
- Replacement Pendant						
- Key Safe						
- GSM Alarm Hire	5.50	5.50	0%	5.50	0%	5.50
- GPS Tracker Hire	7.00	7.40	-25%	5.50	0%	5.50
- Daily Living Activity Equipment	7.00	7.40	0%	7.40	7%	7.90
<b>HIRE PRODUCTS</b>						
Hire of smoke alarm per week (hard wired, serviced smoke alarm)	1.40	1.50	0%	1.50	4%	1.55
CO2 Detector per week	1.40	1.50	0%	1.50	4%	1.55
Bogus Caller Panic Button	1.40	1.50	0%	1.50	4%	1.55
Flood Detector	1.40	1.50	0%	1.50	4%	1.55
Falls Detector	1.40	1.50	0%	1.50	4%	1.55
Additional pendant	1.40	1.50	0%	1.50	4%	1.55
Temperature extreme sensor	1.40	1.50	10%	1.65	4%	1.55

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Environmental Services**

Service Category	Charge 1st April 2021 £	Charge from April 2022 £	Charge Increase 23/24	Charge 1st April 2023 £	Charge Increase 24/25	Proposed Charge 24/5 £
<b>CEMETERY</b>						
The following charges would be subject to 25% plus or minus in year adjustment facility delegated to Bereavement Services Manager or Head of Service to allow for supplier increases such as utilities or memorial suppliers etc						
<b>Interments in a grave</b>						
- children aged under 1 year	No Charge	No Charge				
- children aged under 1 year (non resident)	114.00	119.70	10%	131.67	7%	140.90
- children aged 1 year - 17 years	No Charge	No Charge				
- children aged 1 year - 17 years (non resident)	166.00	174.30	10%	191.73	7%	205.20
- persons aged 18 and over	636.00	667.80	10%	734.58	7%	786.00
<b>Interment in a bricked grave</b>						
<b>Interment of cremated remains</b>	211.00	221.55	10%	243.71	7%	260.80
Interment of Cremated Remains (under 17 years non residents only)	78.00	81.90	10%	90.09	7%	96.40
<b>Scattering cremated remains in grave</b>	89.00	93.45	10%	102.80	7%	110.00
<b>Exclusive rights of burial (75-year grants)</b>						
- adult grave space	1,603.00	1,683.15	10%	1,851.47	7%	1,981.10
- child grave space	292.00	306.60	10%	337.26	7%	360.90
- cremated remains plot	612.00	642.60	10%	706.86	7%	756.30
<b>Renewal of expired deed (single fee charged in all cases)</b>						
Burial	457.00	479.85	10%	527.84	7%	564.80
Cremated remains	179.00	187.95	10%	206.75	7%	221.20
ashes grave purchased in reserve	733.00	769.65	10%	846.62	7%	905.90
- Full grave purchased in reserve	1,969.00	2,067.45	10%	2,274.20	7%	2,433.40
- Disinterment of Remains - Cremated Remains	557.00	584.85	10%	643.34	7%	688.40
- Wooden cremated remains casket	97.00	101.85	10%	112.04	7%	119.90
<b>Memorials</b>						
	104.00	109.20	10%	120.12	7%	128.50
Bench with 10 year lease & top rail engraving (max 40 letters) - £800.00	863.00	1,188.00	10%	1,306.80	7%	1,398.30
Bench with 10 year lease & standard silver plaque (max 60 letters) - £760.00	820.00	1,130.00	10%	1,243.00	7%	1,330.00
Bench replacement plaque - £110.00	118.00	163.40	10%	179.74	7%	192.30
-Assignment / Transfer of Exclusive Right of Burial	104.00	109.20	10%	120.12	7%	128.50
Exhumation Ground works	211.00	221.55	10%	243.71	7%	260.80
New Container	97.00	125.00	10%	137.50	7%	147.10
Officer time	216.00	226.80	10%	249.48	7%	266.90
Cremator usage	33.00	34.65	10%	38.12	7%	40.80
<b>Certified copy of entry</b>	23.00	24.15	10%	26.57	7%	28.40
<b>Bird bath memorial</b>						
<b>5 Year Lease</b>						
- size 1 (small)	210.00	222.60	10%	244.86	7%	262.00
- size 2	234.00	247.80	10%	272.58	7%	291.70
- size 3	258.00	273.00	10%	300.30	7%	321.30
- size 4	280.00	297.20	10%	326.92	7%	349.80
- size 5 (large)	304.00	322.40	10%	354.64	7%	379.50
<b>10 Year Lease</b>						
- size 1 (small)	327.00	346.50	10%	381.15	7%	407.80
- size 2	351.00	371.70	10%	408.87	7%	437.50
- size 3	373.00	396.90	10%	436.59	7%	467.20
- size 4	397.00	421.10	10%	463.21	7%	495.60

- size 5 (large)	421.00	444.20	10%	488.62	7%	522.80
<b>20 Year Lease</b>						
- size 1 (small)	444.00	470.40	10%	517.44	7%	553.70
- size 2	467.00	495.60	10%	545.16	7%	583.30
- size 3	490.00	520.80	10%	572.88	7%	613.00
- size 4	514.00	545.00	10%	599.50	7%	641.50
- size 5 (large)	538.00	570.20	10%	627.22	7%	671.10
<b>Motif</b>	117.00	124.00	10%	136.40	7%	145.90
<b>Memorial Vaults</b>						
Double unit - 20 year lease in first interment and casket	1,310.00	1,390.20	10%	1,529.22	7%	1,636.30
2nd interment of remains including casket	181.00	191.10	10%	210.21	7%	224.90
Inscribed tablet of upto 80 letters	147.00	155.40	10%	170.94	7%	182.90
Additional letters (per letter)	4.20	4.50	10%	4.95	7%	5.30
Standard Motif	105.00	111.30	10%	122.43	7%	131.00
Photo of 1 person	126.00	133.40	10%	146.74	7%	157.00
Photo of 2 people	199.00	211.10	10%	232.21	7%	248.50
Photo of 3 people	257.00	272.00	10%	299.20	7%	320.10
Other items are available but quoted individually	QUOTED INDIVIDUALLY	QUOTED INDIVIDUALLY		Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost
<b>Memorial Posts</b>						
Memorial plaque - 3 year lease	251.00	266.70	10%	293.37	7%	313.90
Motif	47.00	50.40	10%	55.44	7%	59.30
Replacement Plaque	126.00	133.40	10%	146.74	7%	157.00
<b>Private Memorial Garden</b>						
Including memorial - 20 year lease	1,678.00	1,778.70	10%	1,956.57	7%	2,093.50
<b>Additional Inscription on Plaque</b>	147.00	154.35	10%	169.79	7%	181.70
<b>REFUSE COLLECTION</b>						
<b>Bulky Household Waste</b>						
Proposed Charges						
The Bulky Service operates based on a standard unit price based on size and weight, with collection from the						
	9.00	9.50				
Bulky collection - single unit*				Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost
*Depending on size items maybe charged for as a multiple of units						
Items that are classed by WCC as non domestic waste	Quotation	Quotation		Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost
Items not on the boundary of the property	Quotation	Quotation		Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost
<b>Litter and Dog Bins (Yearly Charge)</b>						
High Usage Site First Bin	850.00	850.00	10%	935.00	7%	1,000.50
High Usage Site Additional Bins (each)	350.00	350.00	10%	385.00	7%	412.00
Medium Usage Site First Bin	425.00	425.00	10%	467.50	7%	500.20
Medium Usage Site Additional Bins (each)	175.00	175.00	10%	192.50	7%	206.00
Low Usage Site First Bin	210.00	210.00	10%	231.00	7%	247.20
Low Usage Site Additional Bins (each)	90.00	90.00	10%	99.00	7%	105.90
<b>Parish Lengthsman Work</b>						
Hourly Rate	15.75	15.75	10%	17.33	7%	18.50

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<b>High Hedge Complaints</b>	595.10	624.90	10%	687.39	7%	735.50
High Hedge Complaints - reduced for people on benefits	237.60	249.50	10%	274.45	7%	293.70
<b>Investigation of Abandoned Vehicles on Private Land</b>						
Per Vehicle	60.00	60.00	10%	66.00	7%	70.60
Mechanically Sweep Private Road / Car Park - Sweeper per Hour + disposal costs	50.00	50.00	10%	55.00	7%	58.90
<b>Garden Waste Collection Service (2021/23)</b>	46.00	46.00	10%	50.60	7%	54.10
Re-issue of service	40.00	40.00	10%	44.00	7%	47.10
<b>Road Closures</b>						
New Charge - £80 per Road closure plus VAT				80.00	7%	85.60

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Financial and Customer Service**

Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.

<b>SERVICE CATEGORY</b>	<b>Charge 1st April 2021</b>	<b>Charge from April 2022</b>	<b>Charge Increase 23/24</b>	<b>Charge 1st April 2023</b>	<b>Charge Increase 24/25</b>	<b>Proposed Charge 24/5</b>
	£	£		£		£
<b><u>LOCAL TAX COLLECTION</u></b>						
	67.50	67.50	10%	74.25	7%	79.40
- Council Tax Court Costs (includes Magistrates Court fee of 50p)	97.50	97.50	10%	107.25	7%	114.80
- NNDR Court Costs (includes Magistrates Court fee of 50p)	0.50	0.50	10%	0.55	7%	0.60
- Magistrates' court fee (added to both council tax and NNDR Summons)						

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Legal, Democratic and Property Services**

Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.

Service Category	Charge 1st April 2021	Charge from April 2022	Charge Increase 23/24	Charge 1st April 2023	Charge Increase 24/25	Proposed Charge 24/5
	£	£		£		£
<b>ELECTORAL REGISTRATION</b>						
<b>Register Sales*</b>						
<b>In data form</b>						
- basic fee	20.00	20.00	Stat	20.00	Stat	20.00
- for each 1,000 names or part thereof	1.50	20.00	Stat	20.00	Stat	20.00
<b>In printed form</b>						
- basic fee	10.00	10.00	Stat	10.00	Stat	10.00
- for each 1,000 names or part thereof	5.00	5.00	Stat	5.00	Stat	5.00
<b>Marked Election Register Sales*</b>						
<b>In data form</b>						
- basic fee	10.00	10.00	Stat	10.00	Stat	10.00
- for each 1,000 names or part thereof	1.00	1.00	Stat	1.00	Stat	1.00
<b>In printed form</b>						
- basic fee	10.00	10.00	Stat	10.00	Stat	10.00
- for each 1,000 names or part thereof	2.00	2.00	Stat	2.00	Stat	2.00
Copy of return of Election expenses plus 20p per sheet, per side.	5.00	5.00	Stat	5.00	Stat	5.00
<b>Miscellaneous Charges</b>						
* Address labels printed	13.50	13.50	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
* - for each 1,000 properties or part thereof	6.80	6.80	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
- street list	13.50	13.50	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
* - Data Property Addresses	24.50	13.50	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
* - Fee for each 1,000 properties or part thereof	1.90	1.90	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
<b>LEGAL</b>						
- Legal work (per hour)	146.80	155.60	10%	171.16	7%	183.10
- Legal Consent - Admin Fee	26.10	27.70	10%	30.47	7%	32.60
- RTB	205.10	217.40	10%	239.14	7%	255.90
- Consent for proposed works	161.20	170.90	10%	187.99	7%	201.10
- Retrospective Consent	169.60	179.80	10%	197.78	7%	211.60
Garden License	249.80	264.80	10%	291.28	7%	311.70
Wayleave Agreement	374.70	397.20	10%	436.92	7%	467.50
Deed of Grant or Easement	392.70	416.30	10%	457.93	7%	490.00
License to Assign	392.70	416.30	10%	457.93	7%	490.00
Rent Deposit Deed	392.70	416.30	10%	457.93	7%	490.00
Authorised Guarantee Agreement	392.70	416.30	10%	457.93	7%	490.00
License for Alterations	392.70	416.30	10%	457.93	7%	490.00
License to Sublet	392.70	416.30	10%	457.93	7%	490.00
Deed of Variation	392.70	416.30	10%	457.93	7%	490.00
Grant of Lease	531.10	563.00	10%	619.30	7%	662.70
Extended Lease	531.10	563.00	10%	619.30	7%	662.70
Deed of Surrender	392.70	416.30	10%	457.93	7%	490.00
Tenancy at Will	392.70	416.30	10%	457.93	7%	490.00
Renewal of Lease	392.70	416.30	10%	457.93	7%	490.00
<b>Section 106:</b>						
- Private Owner	548.70	581.60	10%	639.76	7%	684.50
- Each additional unit added (up to a maximum of £1,650)	73.50	77.90	10%	85.69	7%	91.70
- Affordable housing schemes	1,030.10	1,091.90	10%	1,201.09	7%	1,285.20
- Deed of Variation	391.50	415.00	10%	456.50	7%	488.50
- Fee for agreeing a unilateral undertaking	391.50	415.00	10%	456.50	7%	488.50

<b>Other Fees</b>						
- Fees for sale of property under Low Cost Housing Scheme	269.90	286.10	10%	314.71	7%	336.70
- Fees for purchase of additional 30% Share	176.10	186.70	10%	205.37	7%	219.70
- Fees for preparation of Deed of postponement	115.00	121.90	10%	134.09	7%	143.50
- Administration fee for the grant of licences for more than 12 months	64.60	68.50	10%	75.35	7%	80.60
- Issuing of consents (transfer of mortgage)	76.20	80.80	10%	88.88	7%	95.10
Minor land sales up to £10,000	515.70	546.60	10%	601.26	7%	643.30
Major Land sales £10,000+ <b>2.75% of purchase price with a minimum charge of £500</b>	Fixed Fee	Fixed Fee	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Major Land sales £50,000+ <b>2.75% of purchase price with a minimum charge of £750</b>	Fixed Fee	Fixed Fee	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Deed of Release of Covenant	392.70	416.30	10%	457.93	7%	490.00
- Footpath Diversion Orders	2,189.60	2,299.10	10%	2,529.01	7%	2,706.00
<b>LAND SEARCHES</b>						
<b>Single Con29 Question</b>						
Official Certificate of Search (LLC1) only	29.20	N/A				
CON29R Enquiries of Local Authority (2016)						
- Residential	111.60	111.60	10%	122.76	7%	131.40
- Commercial	156.30	156.30	10%	171.93	7%	184.00
Standard Search Fee: LLC1 and CON 29R combined						
- Residential	142.90	N/A				
- Commercial	188.90	N/A				
CON 29O Optional enquiries of Local Authority (2007)						
(Questions 5,6,8,9,11,15) per question	13.50	14.20	10%	15.62	7%	16.70
(Questions 7,10,12,13,14,16-21) per question	6.80	7.10	10%	7.81	7%	8.40
(Question 22)	30.00	30.00	10%	33.00	7%	35.30
Extra written enquiries (Refer to Worcestershire County Council for Highways enquiries)	52.70	55.30	10%	60.83	7%	65.10
Question 4	15.80	15.80	10%	17.38	7%	18.60
Each additional parcel of land (LLC1 and CON29R)	24.70	N/A				
Expedited (within 48 hrs)	33.70	35.40	10%	38.94	7%	41.70
<b>PARKSIDE SUITE</b>						
<b>Per Hour (Suggest min Hire of 2hrs)</b>						
<b>Main Room</b>						
Community Group	23.00	24.00	10%	26.40	7%	28.20
Regular Hire	35.00	36.50	10%	40.15	7%	43.00
Commercial Hire	46.00	48.00	10%	52.80	7%	56.50
<b>Committee Room</b>						
Community Group	13.00	13.60	10%	14.96	7%	16.00
Regular Hire	19.00	19.80	10%	21.78	7%	23.30
Commercial Hire	25.50	26.60	10%	29.26	7%	31.30
<b>Committee Room 2 – Full Day</b>						
Community Group	75.00	0.00				
Regular Hire	88.00	0.00				
Commercial Hire	106.00	0.00				
<b>Committee Room 2 – Half Day</b>						
Community Group	45.00	0.00				
Regular Hire	60.00	0.00				
Commercial Hire	72.00	0.00				
<b>Committee Room 2 – per hour (min 2Hours)</b>						
Community Group	17.00	17.00	10%	18.70	7%	20.00
Regular Hire	22.00	22.00	10%	24.20	7%	25.90
Commercial Hire	30.00	30.00	10%	33.00	7%	35.30
<b>Combined</b>						
Community Group	31.00	32.50	10%	35.75	7%	38.30
Regular Hire	49.00	51.00	10%	56.10	7%	60.00
Commercial Hire	67.50	70.50	10%	77.55	7%	83.00
<b>Half Day up to 5pm (max 4hrs)</b>						
<b>Main Room</b>						

Community Group	86.00	90.00	10%	99.00	7%	105.90
Regular Hire	105.00	110.00	10%	121.00	7%	129.50
Commercial Hire	172.50	180.00	10%	198.00	7%	211.90
<b>Committee Room</b>						
Community Group	38.00	39.60	10%	43.56	7%	46.60
Regular Hire	52.00	54.30	10%	59.73	7%	63.90
	65.00	68.00				
Commercial Hire			10%	74.80	7%	80.00
<b>Combined</b>						
Community Group	105.00	109.50	10%	120.45	7%	128.90
Regular Hire	150.00	156.50	10%	172.15	7%	184.20
	215.00	224.00				
Commercial Hire			10%	246.40	7%	263.60
<b>Full Day Up to 5pm</b>						
<b>Main Room</b>						
Community Group	160.00	167.00	10%	183.70	7%	196.60
Regular Hire	200.00	208.70	10%	229.57	7%	245.60
	280.00	292.00				
Commercial Hire			10%	321.20	7%	343.70
<b>Committee Room</b>						
Community Group	65.00	67.80	10%	74.58	7%	79.80
Regular Hire	78.00	81.50	10%	89.65	7%	95.90
	96.00	100.00				
Commercial Hire			10%	110.00	7%	117.70
<b>Combined</b>						
Community Group	205.00	214.00	10%	235.40	7%	251.90
Regular Hire	260.00	271.00	10%	298.10	7%	319.00
	345.00	360.00				
Commercial Hire			10%	396.00	7%	423.70
<b>Combined Evening Commercial Hire, Fridays and Saturday's, 5pm - Midnight</b>	345.00	360.00	10%	396.00	7%	423.70
Only half day and full day rates allowed for weekends. No hourly rates.						
All day rate for weddings £720** (day and evening to include kitchen and set up) 9am – 12 midnight						
Sunday hire rates by negotiation.						
Room 54(Training Room) - Any internal county organisations whom wish to use this room will be charged £25.00 per hour.						
<b>Customer Services</b>						
<b>Interview rooms (based at the service centre)</b>						
- Per Full day (9am - 5pm)	44.40	46.30	10%	50.93	7%	54.50
- Per Half day (9am-1pm/1pm-5pm)	27.80	29.00	10%	31.90	7%	34.10
	9.50	9.90				
- Per hour (1Full hour only)			10%	10.89	7%	11.70
<b>Bromsgrove Markets</b>						
<b>3 x 3 Market Stall (per day)</b>						
Tuesday Regular Trader	26.50	27.30	10%	30.03	7%	32.10
Tuesday Casual Trader	28.50	29.40	10%	32.34	7%	34.60
Each additional stall requested	11.50	11.85	10%	13.04	7%	13.90
Friday Regular Trader	30.50	31.40	10%	34.54	7%	37.00
Friday Casual Trader	32.50	33.50	10%	36.85	7%	39.40

Each additional stall requested	11.50	11.85	10%	13.04	7%	13.90
Saturday Regular Trader	32.50	33.50	10%	36.85	7%	39.40
Saturday Casual Trader	34.50	35.50	10%	39.05	7%	41.80
Each additional stall requested	12.00	12.35	10%	13.59	7%	14.50
<b>Catering Van</b>						
Tuesday Regular Trader	25.50	26.25	10%	28.88	7%	30.90
Tuesday Casual Trader	30.00	30.90	10%	33.99	7%	36.40
Friday Regular Trader	29.50	30.40	10%	33.44	7%	35.80
Friday Casual Trader	34.00	35.00	10%	38.50	7%	41.20
Saturday Regular Trader	31.50	32.45	10%	35.70	7%	38.20
Saturday Casual Trader	36.00	37.10	10%	40.81	7%	43.70
All 3 days (Annual booking per week) - <b>Charge to be deleted</b>	78.00	0.00	10%	0.00	7%	0.00
All 3 days (Casual booking per week) - <b>Charge to be deleted</b>	83.60	0.00	10%	0.00	7%	0.00
<b>Table only booking for Craft Markets (only available in good weather)</b>						
First two 5ft tables	15.00	15.45	10%	17.00	7%	18.20
each additional table	5.00	5.15	10%	5.67	7%	6.10
<b>Electric</b>						
Regular 3 day traders	9.20	9.50	10%	10.45	7%	11.20
Casual/Single day traders per day	5.00	5.15	10%	5.67	7%	6.10
<b>Trade Waste Collection</b>						
Regular 3 day traders	2.60	2.70	10%	2.97	7%	3.20
Casual/Single day traders	5.00	5.15	10%	5.67	7%	6.10
<b>Other Market Charges - New Charges</b>						
<b>Vintage, Craft and Food Markets</b>						
Single Stall	20.00	20.60	10%	22.66	7%	24.20
Additional stalls	10.00	10.30	10%	11.33	7%	12.10
Catering units/pitch	15.00	15.45	10%	17.00	7%	18.20
<b>Sunday Food Festival Markets</b>						
Price by negotiation to include staff on cost and overtime	price on negotiation	price on negotiation	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Seasonal Traders</b>						
Seasonal supplement per stall for seasonal adhoc traders in December	5.00	5.20	10%	5.72	7%	6.10
<b>Market Hire</b>						
Hiring cost of providing a market to Parish Councils or other organisations	700.00	721.00	10%	793.10	7%	848.60
<b>Trader Incentive Scheme</b>						
New traders attending the market on a Tuesday will be charged 50% rent fee for 4 weeks continuous weeks only (based on a 3m x 3m stall)	14.25	14.70	10%	16.17	7%	17.30
New traders attending the market on a Friday will be charged 50% rent fee for 4 weeks continuous weeks only (based on a 3m x 3m stall)	15.25	15.70	10%	17.27	7%	18.50
New traders attending the market on a Saturday will be charged 50% rent fee for 4 weeks continuous weeks only (based on a 3m x 3m stall)	17.25	17.80	10%	19.58	7%	21.00
<b>Property Services - New Charges</b>						
Minor Land Sales Request for Information	52.90	72.00	10%	79.20	7%	84.70
Minor Land Sales Full Application	387.35	492.00	10%	541.20	7%	579.10
Advertising - Estimated Fee	657.30	NIL				
Advertising - Estimated Fee per Advert (new charge based on cost per advert)	0.00	360.00	10%	396.00	7%	423.70
Surveyors Fees - Estimated Fee	528.25	NIL				
Surveyors Fees - Estimated Fee (new charge based on an hourly cost)	0.00	90.00	10%	99.00	7%	105.90

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services**

Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.

Service Category	Charge 1st April 2021 £	Charge from April 2022 £	Charge Increase 23/24	Charge 1st April 2023 £	Charge Increase 24/25	Proposed Charge 24/5 £
<b>Development Management</b>						
<b>Pre Application Fee</b>						
<b>Residential Development/ Development Site Area/Proposed Gross Floor Area</b>						
Householder Development	103.00	109.00				
1* Dwelling	222.00	234.00	10%	119.90	7%	128.29
2-4 Dwellings	333.00	350.00	10%	257.40	7%	275.42
5-9 Dwellings	666.00	700.00	10%	385.00	7%	411.95
10 - 49 Dwellings	1,333.00	1,400.00	10%	770.00	7%	823.90
50 - 99 Dwellings	2,443.00	2,566.00	10%	1,540.00	7%	1,647.80
100 - 199 Dwellings	3,333.00	3,500.00	10%	2,822.60	7%	3,020.18
200+ Dwellings	4,443.00	4,665.00	10%	3,850.00	7%	4,119.50
* includes one-for-one replacements				5,131.50	7%	5,490.71
<b>Non-residential development (floor space)</b>						
<b>Floor area is measured externally</b>						
Less than 500sqm	308.00	324.00	10%			
500 - 999sqm	556.00	584.00	10%	356.40	7%	381.35
1000 - 1999sqm	1,111.00	1,167.00	10%	642.40	7%	687.37
2000 - 4999sqm	2,221.00	2,332.00	10%	1,283.70	7%	1,373.56
5000 - 9999sqm	2,777.00	2,916.00	10%	2,565.20	7%	2,744.76
10,000sqm or greater	3,333.00	3,500.00	10%	3,207.60	7%	3,432.13
<b>Non-residential development (site area) where no building operations are proposed</b>						
Less than 0.5ha	334.00	351.00	10%			
0.5 - 0.99ha	666.00	700.00	10%	386.10	7%	413.13
1 - 1.25ha	1,111.00	1,167.00	10%	770.00	7%	823.90
1.26 - 2ha	2,221.00	2,332.00	10%	1,283.70	7%	1,373.56
2ha or greater	3,333.00	3,500.00	10%	2,565.20	7%	2,744.76
Variation/removal of conditions and engineering operations (flat fee)	205.00	216.00	10%	3,850.00	7%	4,119.50
Recovering Costs for seeking specialist advice in connection with Planning proposals	Full recovery cost	Full recovery cost	10%	0.00	7%	0.00
			10%	237.60	7%	254.23
<b>Monitoring Fees to be applied to Planning Obligations</b>						
<b>Obligations where the Council is the recipient</b>						
All contributions (financial or non-monetary) - PER OBLIGATION	298.00	313.00	10%			
Pre-commencement trigger - PER OBLIGATION	103.00	109.00	10%	344.30	7%	368.40
Other Triggers (Phased Payments/Provision of Infrastructure) - PER TRIGGER POINT	154.00	162.00	10%	119.90	7%	128.29
Other obligations (eg. Occupation restrictions or removal of Permitted Development rights) - PER CLAUSE	123.00	130.00	10%	178.20	7%	190.67
			10%	143.00	7%	153.01

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Agenda Item 13f

<b>Obligations for another signatory (eg. Worcestershire County Council)</b>						
All contributions (financial or non-monetary) - PER OBLIGATION	180.00	<b>189.00</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>207.90</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>222.45</b>
Pre-commencement trigger - PER OBLIGATION	62.00	<b>66.00</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>72.60</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>77.68</b>
Other Triggers (Phased Payments/Provision of Infrastructure) - PER TRIGGER POINT	92.00	<b>97.00</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>106.70</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>114.17</b>
Ongoing Monitoring of large sites	410.00	<b>431.00</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>474.10</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>507.29</b>

**Fee Concessions**

Some pre-application advice will still be provided free of charge. For example where the development is for the direct benefit of a disabled person (and as such there would be no fee incurred to make the planning application) or where works relate to a listed building.

Some advice is provided at a reduced or concessionary rate. If the proposal is being submitted by or is for the benefit of a Parish Council or other Local Authority, then the appropriate fee is reduced by 50%. In addition if the scheme relates to a solely affordable housing scheme, the Applicant is a Registered Social Landlord or Housing Association the fee for pre application advice would also be reduced by 50%.

**BUILDING CONTROL -2021 - VAT AT 20%**

**Explanatory notes**

**1** Before you build, extend or convert a building to which the building regulations apply, you or your agent must submit a Building regulations application. The charge you have to pay depends on the type of work, the number of separate properties, or the total floor area. You can use the following tables with the current charges regulations to work out the charges. If you have any difficulties, please do not hesitate to call us.

**2** The charges are as follows.

Category A: New domestic homes, flats or conversions etc.

Category B: Extending or altering existing homes

Category C: Any other project including commercial or industrial projects etc.

Individually determined fees are available for most projects. We would be happy to discuss these with you if you require.

In certain cases, we may agree that you can pay charges in instalments. Please contact us for further discussions.

**3** Exemptions and reductions in charges.

a If your plans have been approved or rejected, you won't have to pay again if you resubmit plans for the same work which has not started, provided you resubmit with 3 years of the original application date.

b You don't have to pay charges if the work will provide access to a building or is an extension to store medical equipment or provide medical treatment facilities for a disabled person. In order to claim exemption, an application must be supported by appropriate evidence as to the nature of the disabled persons disability. In these regulations, a 'disabled person' is a person who is described under section 29(1) of the National Assistance Act 1948 (as extended by section 8(2) Mental Health Act 1959).

**4** You have to pay VAT for all local authority Building Regulation charges, except for the regularisation charge. VAT is included in the attached fees.

**5.** Regularisation applications are available for cases where unauthorised building work was undertaken without an application. Such work can only be regularised where the work was undertaken after October 1985 and not within the last 6 months. The Authority is not obliged to accept Regularisation applications. Regularisation application fees are individually determined. Please contact us to discuss regularisation application fees.

**6.** Reversion applications. Where the control of a building project passes from a third party to the Council a reversion application will be required. Reversion application fees are individually determined.

**7.** The additional charge refers to electrical works undertaken by a non qualified person who is unable to certify their work to appropriate electrical regulations.

**Other information**

**1** These notes are for guidance only and do not replace Statutory Instrument 2010 number 0404 which contains the full statement of the law, and the Scheme of Recovery of Fees dated April 2014.

**2** These guidance notes refer to the charges that you have to pay for building control services within North Worcestershire.

Telephone payments are accepted. Please contact the relevant payment centre with your address and card details:

**Bromsgrove 01527 881402**

Service Category	charge 1st April 2020 £	Proposed charge from 2021 £				
<b>TABLE A: Standard Charges for the Creation or Conversion to New Housing</b>						
Application Charge	Please Ring for Quote	<b>Please Ring for Quote</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge	Please Ring for Quote	<b>Please Ring for Quote</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Additional Charge	Please Ring for Quote	<b>Please Ring for Quote</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
<b>TABLE B: Domestic Extensions and alterations to a Single Building (please contact us)</b>						

Application Charge - New	Please Ring for Quote	<b>Please Ring for Quote</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge - New	Please Ring for Quote	<b>Please Ring for Quote</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Additional Charge - New	Please Ring for Quote	<b>Please Ring for Quote</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Garage Conversion to habitable room</b>						
Application Charge	375.00	<b>375.00</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge	450.00	<b>450.00</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Additional Charge	Please contact us	<b>Please contact us</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Electrical works by non-qualified electrician</b>						
Application Charge	Please contact us	<b>Please contact us</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge	Please contact us	<b>Please contact us</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Additional Charge	N/A	<b>N/A</b>				
<b>Renovation of thermal element</b>						
Application Charge	231.00	<b>231.00</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge	275.00	<b>275.00</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Additional Charge	N/A	<b>N/A</b>				
<b>Installing steel beam(s) within an existing house</b>						
Application Charge	225.00	<b>225.00</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge	270.00	<b>270.00</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Additional Charge	N/A	<b>N/A</b>				
<b>Window replacement</b>						
Application Charge	225.00	<b>225.00</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge	270.00	<b>270.00</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Additional Charge	N/A	<b>N/A</b>				
<b>Installing a new boiler or wood burner etc.</b>						
Application Charge	440.00	<b>440.00</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge	530.00	<b>530.00</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Additional Charge	N/A	<b>N/A</b>				
<b>TABLE C: All Other works - Alterations and new build</b>						
Application Charge	Please Contact Us	<b>Please Contact Us</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge	Please Contact Us	<b>Please Contact Us</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery

**For Office or shop fit outs, installation of a mezzanine floor and all other work where the estimated cost exceeds £50,000, please contact the Building Control Office on 01527 881402 for a competitive quote**  
**These charges have been set on the following basis:**

1. That the building work does not consist of, or include innovative or high risk construction techniques and / or duration of the building work from commencement to completion does not exceed 12 months
2. That the design and building work is undertaken by a person or company that is competent to carry out the relevant design and building work. If they are not, the building control service may impose supplementary charges.

**Building Control – Supplementary Charges**

If you are selling a property that has been extended or altered, you need to provide evidence to prospective purchasers that any relevant building work has been inspected and approved by a Building Control Body. That evidence is in the form of a Building Regulations Completion / Final Certificate and / or an Approval or Initial Notice (called the 'authorised documents' in the Home Information Pack Regulations).  
 Legal entitlement to a Completion Certificate is subject to conditions. In cases where the Council is not told that building work is completed, or the building is occupied without addressing outstanding Building Regulation matters, a certificate is not issued. Despite the best efforts of the Council's Building Control Surveyors, many home owners who undertake building works fail to obtain a Completion Certificate and their application is archived. A fee is payable to re-open archived building regulations applications for the purposes of issuing a completion certificate.

Other charges are payable where we are asked to withdraw a Building Regulations application and refund fees, or asked to re-direct inspection fee invoices. Fees are payable in cleared funds before the release of any authorised documents or other actions listed below.

<b><u>ARCHIVED APPLICATIONS</u></b>							
Process request to re-open archived building control file, resolve case and issue completion certificate (Administration Fee)	55.40	<b>55.40</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery
Each visit to site in connection with resolving archived building control cases (Per Site Visit)	72.30	<b>72.30</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery
<b><u>WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS</u></b>							
Process request	55.40	<b>55.40</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery
With additional fees of:							
Withdraw Building Notice application where no inspections have taken place	refund submitted fee less admin fee	<b>refund submitted fee less admin fee</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery
Withdraw Building Notice application where inspections have taken place	refund submitted fee less admin fee, less £72.30 per site visit made	<b>refund submitted fee less admin fee, less £72.30 per site visit made</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery
Withdrawn Full Plans application without plans being checked or any site inspections being made	refund submitted fee less admin fee	<b>refund submitted fee less admin fee</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery
Withdraw Full Plans application after plan check but before any inspections on site	refund inspection fee (where paid up-front) less admin fee	<b>refund inspection fee (where paid up-front) less admin fee</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery
Withdraw Full Plans application after plan check and after site inspections made	refund any paid inspection fee less admin fee, less £72.30 per site inspection made	<b>refund any paid inspection fee less admin fee, less £72.30 per site inspection made</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery
<b><u>RE-DIRECT INSPECTION FEES / ISSUE COPY DOCUMENTS</u></b>							
Process request to re-invoice inspection fee to new addressee or issue copies of previously issued Completion Certificates, Plans Approval Notices or Building Notice acceptances.	55.40	<b>55.40</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery

Optional Consultancy Services	Please Contact Us	Please Contact Us	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
<b>*Charges Note*</b>						
Under the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010 local authority building control is not permitted to make a profit or loss. The service is to ensure full cost recovery and no more. Any surplus or loss made against expenditure budgets is to be offset against the following years fees and charges setting. In addition, the level of competition from the private sector needs to continually defended against therefore it is proposed to curtail both the extent of fee categories published and to make extensive use of the fact that legislation now allows local authorities to offer site specific quotations for building regulations applications. In addition expenditure of the service has reduced since the creation of a shared service resulting in a reduction in the hourly rate charged by the service. Inspection fees equate to 70% of the total fee payable for a project.						
<b>SPORTS DEVELOPMENT</b>						
Community exercise class	3.50	3.70	10%	4.07	7%	4.35
Specialised health class	3.50	3.70	10%	4.07	7%	4.35
Primary Sports Project (Standard Curriculum)	30.00	NIL				
Primary Sports Project (Specialist Curriculum)	35.00	NIL				
Inclusive activities (hourly rate)	3.30	3.50	10%	3.85	7%	4.12
Inclusive activities (90 minute rate)	3.80	4.00	10%	4.40	7%	4.71
Inclusive activities (2 hour rate)	4.40	NIL				
Multi Skills clubs	4.00	NIL				
Community Gymnastics	4.00	4.20	10%	4.62	7%	4.94
Couch 2 5k	1.00	1.00	10%	1.10	7%	1.18
PSI Falls Prevention	3.50	3.70	10%	4.07	7%	4.35
<b>SANDERS PARK</b>						
<b>Tennis Courts (per court per Hour)</b>						
- Adult	7.55	7.95	10%	8.75	7%	9.36
- Adult & Junior	6.60	6.95	10%	7.65	7%	8.18
- Junior/Senior Citizen	5.05	5.30	10%	5.83	7%	6.24
<b>Tennis Courts (per court per 1 and 1/2 Hour)</b>						
- Adult	11.00	11.50	10%	12.65	7%	13.54
- Adult & Junior	9.50	10.00	10%	11.00	7%	11.77
- Junior/Senior Citizen	8.50	8.80	10%	9.68	7%	10.36
<b>Bowls</b>						
- Adult (per hour)	8.00	8.40	10%	9.24	7%	9.89
- Junior (per hour)	4.20	4.40	10%	4.84	7%	5.18
- Senior Citizen (per hour)	5.50	5.80	10%	6.38	7%	6.83
- Adult (season ticket)	53.50	55.00	10%	60.50	7%	64.74
- Junior (season ticket)	29.00	30.00	10%	33.00	7%	35.31
- Senior Citizen (season ticket)	39.00	40.00	10%	44.00	7%	47.08
Hire of Bowls Green Pavillion - half day (4 hours) - new charge	NEW	60.00	10%	66.00	7%	70.62
Hire of Bowls Green Pavillion - full day - new charge	NEW	90.00	10%	99.00	7%	105.93
<b>OTHER RECREATION GROUNDS AND OPEN SPACES</b>						
<b>Football</b>						
<b>SENIOR 11 a side with changing</b>						
Match games	55.00	58.00	10%	63.80	7%	68.27
<b>SENIOR 11 a side without changing</b>						
Match games	40.00	42.50	10%	46.75	7%	50.02
<b>JUNIOR 9 or 11 a side with changing</b>						
Match games	30.00	32.00	10%	35.20	7%	37.66
per season ( x 12 games)	360.00	384.00	10%	422.40	7%	451.97
<b>JUNIOR 9 or 11 a side without changing</b>						
Match games	22.50	24.00	10%	26.40	7%	28.25
per season ( x 12 games)	270.00	288.00	10%	316.80	7%	338.98
<b>MINI FOOTBALL 5 or 7 a side</b>						
Match games	16.50	17.50	10%	19.25	7%	20.60
per season ( x 12 games)	198.00	210.00	10%	231.00	7%	247.17

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Agenda Item 13f

ALLOTMENTS						
- Rent per acre equivalent to 0.404685 hectares	1,173.10	NA				
- Rent per 3/4 acre equivalent to 0.303514 hectares	787.80	NA				
- Rent per 1/2 acre equivalent to 0.202342 hectares	467.50	NA				
- Rent per 1/4 acre equivalent to 0.101171 hectares	214.80	NA				
- Rent per 1/16 acre equivalent to 0.25529 hectares	49.40	68.60	10%	75.46	7%	80.74
- Rent per 1/32 acre equivalent to 0.01264 hectares	34.60	45.80	10%	50.38	7%	53.91
<b>Events, Open Spaces and Civic Spaces Hire</b>						
<b>£250 - £1500 Bond Payable</b>						
<b>Events</b>						
<b>Commercial Rates</b>						
<b>Small Attendance = 0 to 99</b>						
Per half day	155.00	160.00	10%	176.00	7%	188.32
Per Day	282.00	290.00	10%	319.00	7%	341.33
<b>Medium Attendance = 100 to 499</b>						
Per half day	220.00	225.00	10%	247.50	7%	264.83
Per Day	378.00	385.00	10%	423.50	7%	453.15
<b>Large Attendance = 500 to 1999</b>						
Per half day	280.00	290.00	10%	319.00	7%	341.33
Per Day	472.00	485.00	10%	533.50	7%	570.85
<b>Community Rates</b>						
<b>Small Attendance = 0 to 99</b>						
Per half day	65.00	66.00	10%	72.60	7%	77.68
Per Day	106.00	107.50	10%	118.25	7%	126.53
<b>Medium Attendance = 100 to 499</b>					7%	0.00
Per half day	80.00	81.00	10%	89.10	7%	95.34
Per Day	134.50	136.00	10%	149.60	7%	160.07
<b>Large Attendance = 500 to 1999</b>						
Per half day	95.00	96.00	10%	105.60	7%	112.99
Per Day	166.00	167.00	10%	183.70	7%	196.56
<b>Charities / Not For Profit Organisations</b>						
<b>Small Attendance = 0 to 99</b>						
Per half day	45.00	45.00	10%	49.50	7%	52.97
Per Day	74.00	74.00	10%	81.40	7%	87.10
<b>Medium Attendance = 100 to 499</b>						
Per half day	54.00	54.00	10%	59.40	7%	63.56
Per Day	89.50	89.50	10%	98.45	7%	105.34
<b>Large Attendance = 500 to 1999</b>						
Per half day	65.00	65.00	10%	71.50	7%	76.51
Per Day	118.30	118.30	10%	130.13	7%	139.24
<b>Fairs &amp; Circuses Min of 3 day Hire</b>						
Small Attendance = 0 to 99 Per Day	440.20	450.00	10%	495.00	7%	529.65
Medium and large attendance more than 99 per day (new Charge)	NEW	480.00	10%	528.00	7%	564.96

<b>Boleyn Road, Frankley</b> - fairs (per day) - deposit	473.80 2,166.70	473.80 2,166.70	10% 10% 10%	0.00 521.18 2,383.37	7% 7% 7%	0.00 557.66 2,550.21
<b>Market Street Recreation Ground</b> - fairs (per day) - deposit	477.35 2,187.75	477.35 2,187.75	10% 10%	525.09 2,406.53	7% 7%	561.84 2,574.98
<p>One free day is allowed for each of the above bookings by fairs/circuses.            Other hiring's – charge to be decided at the time of application.            Football pitches and parks are not available for any organised football activity during the period June 1st to July 15th. This is to allow the pitches a rest period and for maintenance work to take place.            After this date any organised football training must be paid for at a cost of £10 per session for one team and a negotiated price for more than one team. Please contact the Parks Team to book this, pitches will be allocated at our discretion.</p>						
Ø Set up and Clearance charged @ 50% of applicable rate Ø Any event in excess of 1999 attendees is STN Event - Officer Support for event (per hour)	NEW	£50.00 per hour	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Power and Water Supply Additional Charges	NEW	Negotiation	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Additional Costs for Outdoor Fitness Space:</b> Ø Set up and Clearance charged @ 50% of applicable rate						
<b>Outdoor Fitness Session</b> <b>Commercial Rates (Per Day)</b> Summer Fee (Apr to Sept) <b>One day maximum usage per week</b> Summer Fee (Apr to Sept) <b>Two days maximum usage per week</b> Summer Fee (Apr to Sept) <b>Three days maximum usage per week</b>	400.45 650.00 700.00	415.00 670.00 725.00	10% 10% 10%	456.50 737.00 797.50	7% 7% 7%	488.46 788.59 853.33
Winter Fee (Oct to Mar) <b>One day maximum usage per week</b> Winter Fee (Oct to Mar) <b>Two days maximum usage per week</b> Winter Fee (Oct to Mar) <b>Three days maximum usage per week</b>	200.00 400.00 600.00	207.00 415.00 620.00	10% 10% 10%	227.70 456.50 682.00	7% 7% 7%	243.64 488.46 729.74
Annual Fee <b>One day maximum usage per week</b> Annual Fee <b>Two days maximum usage per week</b> Annual Fee <b>Three days maximum usage per week</b>	520.00 850.00 1,000.00	540.00 880.00 1,050.00	10% 10% 10%	594.00 968.00 1,155.00	7% 7% 7%	635.58 1,035.76 1,235.85
<b>Community Rates (Per Day)</b> Summer Fee (Apr to Sept) <b>One day maximum usage per week</b> Summer Fee (Apr to Sept) <b>Two days maximum usage per week</b> Summer Fee (Apr to Sept) <b>Three days maximum usage per week</b>	200.00 300.00 350.00	205.00 307.00 360.00	10% 10% 10%	225.50 337.70 396.00	7% 7% 7%	241.29 361.34 423.72
Winter Fee (Oct to Mar) <b>One day maximum usage per week</b> Winter Fee (Oct to Mar) <b>Two days maximum usage per week</b> Winter Fee (Oct to Mar) <b>Three days maximum usage per week</b>	80.00 200.00 300.00	82.00 205.00 307.00	10% 10% 10%	90.20 225.50 337.70	7% 7% 7%	96.51 241.29 361.34
Annual Fee <b>One day maximum usage per week</b> Annual Fee <b>Two days maximum usage per week</b> Annual Fee <b>Three days maximum usage per week</b> Trial fee (1 day per week - MAX 4 week trial)	250.00 450.00 500.00 100.00	255.00 460.00 512.00 105.00	10% 10% 10% 10%	280.50 506.00 563.20 115.50	7% 7% 7% 7%	300.14 541.42 602.62 123.59
The Bird Box - <b>NEW CHARGE</b> Use of Power connection	1.60	1.70	10%	1.87	7%	2.00

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Regulatory Services**

Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.

Service Category	charge 1st April 2021 £	Charge from April 2022 £	Proposed Charges Increase 23/24	New Charge 1st April 2023 £	Charge Increase 24/25	Proposed Charge 24/5
<b>TAXI LICENSING</b>						
- Hackney Carriage - excluding vehicle testing	248.00	248.00	5%	260.40	7%	278.60
- Hackney Carriage vehicle tests	66.00	66.00	5%	69.30	7%	74.20
- Private Hire - excludes vehicle testing	230.00	230.00	5%	241.50	7%	258.40
- Private Hire vehicle tests	56.00	56.00	5%	58.80	7%	62.90
- Private Hire Operator 1 year	296.00	296.00	5%	310.80	7%	332.60
- Private Hire Operator 5 year	1,124.00	1,124.00	5%	1,180.20	7%	1,262.80
- HC/PH Drivers Licence - 1 year	97.00	99.00	5%	103.95	7%	111.20
- HC/PH Drivers Licence - 3 year	233.00	238.00	5%	249.90	7%	267.40
- Meter Test	26.00	26.00	5%	27.30	7%	29.20
- Hackney Carriage mid-term vehicle test	65.00	65.00	5%	68.25	7%	73.00
- Private Hire mid-term vehicle test	56.00	56.00	5%	58.80	7%	62.90
- Re-Test Fee - Within 48 hours	29.00	29.00	5%	30.45	7%	32.60
- Knowledge test	23.00	23.00	5%	24.15	7%	25.80
- Administration charge - new applications	37.00	37.00	5%	38.85	7%	41.60
- Replacement vehicle plate	23.00	23.00	5%	24.15	7%	25.80
- Replacement Driver's Licence	21.00	21.00	5%	22.05	7%	23.60
- Transfer Test	21.00	21.00	5%	22.05	7%	23.60
- Transfer of ownership of licensed vehicle	38.00	38.00	5%	39.90	7%	42.70
- Criminal Bureau Check	56.00	#NAME?	5%	#NAME?	7%	#NAME?
- DVLA Check - Electronic	7.00	7.00	5%	7.35	7%	7.90
- DVLA Check	12.00	12.00	5%	12.60	7%	13.50
<b>GENERAL LICENSING</b>						
<b>Street Trading</b>						
- Annual Street Trading Consent - Food - Initial - per annum	1,447.00	1,447.00	5%	1,519.35	7%	1,625.70
- Annual Street Trading Consent - Food - Renewal - per annum	1,327.00	1,327.00	5%	1,393.35	7%	1,490.90
- Annual Street Trading Consent - Non Food - Initial - per annum	1,207.00	1,207.00	5%	1,267.35	7%	1,356.10
- Annual Street Trading Consent - Non Food - Renewal - per annum	1,086.00	1,086.00	5%	1,140.30	7%	1,220.10
<b>Animal Activity Licences</b>						
Hiring out horses, breeding of dogs, providing or arranging the provision of boarding for cats or dogs and selling animals as pets						
Application Fee	329.00	329.00	5%	345.45	7%	369.60
Application to vary a licence	240.00	240.00	5%	252.00	7%	269.60
Inspection Fee (on request of licence holder)	164.00	164.00	5%	172.20	7%	184.30
Licence Fee - 1 Year	184.00	184.00	5%	193.20	7%	206.70
Licence Fee - 2 Year	364.00	364.00	5%	382.20	7%	409.00
Licence Fee - 3 Year	546.00	546.00	5%	573.30	7%	613.40
Vet Fee Recharge - if applicable	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Keeping or training animals for exhibition (only)</b>						
Application Fee	219.00	219.00	5%	229.95	7%	246.00
Application to vary a licence	158.00	158.00	5%	165.90	7%	177.50
Inspection Fee	163.00	163.00	5%	171.15	7%	183.10
Licence Fee - 3 Years	300.00	300.00	5%	315.00	7%	337.10

Veterinary Fees - if applicable	Full Cost Recovery	<b>Full Cost Recovery</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Dangerous wild animals</b>						
Application for grant or renewal of a licence	235.00	<b>235.00</b>	5%	<b>246.75</b>	7%	<b>264.00</b>
Veterinary inspection fees	Full Cost Recovery	<b>Full Cost Recovery</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Sex Establishments</b>						
Application for grant or renewal of a licence	1,020.00	<b>1,020.00</b>	5%	<b>1,071.00</b>	7%	<b>1,146.00</b>
<b>Zoo Licences</b>						
Application for grant or renewal of a licence	113.00	<b>113.00</b>	5%	<b>118.65</b>	7%	<b>127.00</b>
Secretary of state inspector and veterinary fees	Full Cost Recovery	<b>Full Cost Recovery</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Acupuncture, Cosmetic Piercing, Semi-Permanent Skin Colouring, Tattooing, Electrolysis</b>						
Fee to register a premises	136.00	<b>136.00</b>	5%	<b>142.80</b>	7%	<b>152.80</b>
Fee to register a practitioner	89.00	<b>89.00</b>	5%	<b>93.45</b>	7%	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013</b>						
- Application for a new site licence	296.00	<b>296.00</b>	5%	<b>310.80</b>	7%	<b>332.60</b>
Fee per additional site	153.00	<b>153.00</b>	5%	<b>160.65</b>	7%	<b>171.90</b>
- Application for a new collectors licence	148.00	<b>148.00</b>	5%	<b>155.40</b>	7%	<b>166.30</b>
- Application for a renewal of a site licence	245.00	<b>245.00</b>	5%	<b>257.25</b>	7%	<b>275.30</b>
Fee per additional site	153.00	<b>153.00</b>	5%	<b>160.65</b>	7%	<b>171.90</b>
- Application for a renewal of a collectors licence	97.00	<b>97.00</b>	5%	<b>101.85</b>	7%	<b>109.00</b>
- Variation of licence	67.00	<b>67.00</b>	5%	<b>70.35</b>	7%	<b>75.30</b>
- Request for a copy of a licence (if lost or stolen)	26.00	<b>26.00</b>	5%	<b>27.30</b>	7%	<b>29.20</b>
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH</b>						
<b>Dog Warden</b>						
Penalty (statutory fee)	25.00	<b>25.00</b>	Stat	<b>25.00</b>		<b>25.00</b>
Kennelling Fee - £15 per day or part day	15.00	<b>17.00</b>	5%	<b>18.00</b>	7%	<b>20.00</b>
Kennelling Fee for dangerous dogs by breed or behaviour - £25 per day or part day	25.00	<b>25.00</b>	5%	<b>26.00</b>	7%	<b>28.00</b>
Admin charge	15.00	<b>15.00</b>	5%	<b>17.00</b>	7%	<b>18.00</b>
Treatment Costs (wormer, flea treatment etc)				<b>12.00</b>	7%	<b>13.00</b>
Out of hours fee	40.00	<b>45.00</b>	5%	<b>47.00</b>	7%	<b>50.00</b>
Repeat offenders fee	40.00	<b>40.00</b>	5%	<b>42.00</b>	7%	<b>45.00</b>
Treatment Costs (Wormer, Flea) - Per treatment	10.00	<b>10.00</b>	5%	<b>10.50</b>	7%	<b>11.20</b>
Penalty charge for non-compliance of Microchipping regulations (not microchipped or contact details out of date) or Control of Dogs Order 1992 (no owner contact details on collar or tag)				<b>New</b>		<b>15.00</b>
Veterinary Charges	Full Cost Recovery	<b>Full Cost Recovery</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Return Charge (New Charge)		<b>40.00</b>	5%	<b>42.00</b>	7%	<b>45.00</b>
<b>Private Water Supplies</b>						
Risk Assessment per hour (minimum 1 hour)	55.00	<b>56.00</b>	5%	<b>58.80</b>	7%	<b>62.90</b>
Investigation per hour (minimum 1 hour)	55.00	<b>56.00</b>	5%	<b>58.80</b>	7%	<b>62.90</b>
Granting an Authorisation per hour (minimum 1 hour)	55.00	<b>56.00</b>	5%	<b>58.80</b>	7%	<b>62.90</b>
Sampling Visit per hour (minimum 1 hour)	55.00	<b>56.00</b>	5%	<b>58.80</b>	7%	<b>62.90</b>
Sample analysis per sample taken	55.00	<b>56.00</b>	5%	<b>58.80</b>	7%	<b>62.90</b>
+ Laboratory Costs	Full Cost Recovery	<b>Full Cost Recovery</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Sample taken during check monitoring	55.00	<b>56.00</b>	5%	<b>58.80</b>	7%	<b>62.90</b>
+ Laboratory Costs	Full Cost Recovery	<b>Full Cost Recovery</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
Sample taken during audit monitoring	55.00	<b>56.00</b>	5%	<b>58.80</b>	7%	<b>62.90</b>
+ Laboratory Costs	Full Cost Recovery	<b>Full Cost Recovery</b>	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Other Environmental Health Fees</b>						

<b>Trading Certificates - WRS Income</b>					
Health/Export					
- Annual Specific export inspections	480.00	480.00	5%	504.00	7%
- Certificate	107.00	107.00	5%	112.35	7%
- Per Hour	47.00	47.00	5%	49.35	7%
FHRS re-rating - WRS Income	168.00	170.00	5%	178.50	7%
ISS Certs Condemned Food - WRS Income	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery
Food Hygiene Basic Course fee - WRS Income	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	Full cost	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery
Contaminated Land Enquiries - charge per hour - WRS Income	45.00	46.00	5%	48.30	7%
<b>Environmental Information Regulations request</b>					
Charge applied to locate and provide where request concerns 'environmental information' held by WRS (Worcestershire Regulatory Services)				46.00	7%
<b>Gambling Fees</b>					
<b>Premises Licence Fees - Discretionary</b>					
<b>Bingo Premises</b>					
Application to vary	1,059.00	1,059.00	5%	1,111.95	7%
Application to transfer	723.00	723.00	5%	759.15	7%
New applications	2,111.00	2,111.00	5%	2,216.55	7%
Annual fee	604.00	604.00	5%	634.20	7%
Copy of licence (Statutory Charge - cannot be above £25)	25.00	25.00	5%	26.25	7%
Notification of change (Statutory Charge - cannot be above £50)	50.00	50.00	5%	52.50	7%
Reinstatement of licence	704.00	704.00	5%	739.20	7%
Provisional statement	2,111.00	2,111.00	5%	2,216.55	7%
<b>Adult Gaming Centre</b>					
Application to vary	906.00	906.00	5%	951.30	7%
Application to transfer	722.00	722.00	5%	758.10	7%
New applications	1,206.00	1,206.00	5%	1,266.30	7%
Annual fee	604.00	604.00	5%	634.20	7%
Copy of licence (Statutory Charge - cannot be above £25)	25.00	25.00	5%	26.25	7%
Notification of change (Statutory Charge - cannot be above £50)	50.00	50.00	5%	52.50	7%
Reinstatement of licence	704.00	704.00	5%	739.20	7%
Provisional statement	1,206.00	1,206.00	5%	1,266.30	7%
<b>Family Entertainment Centre</b>					
Application to vary	700.00	700.00	5%	735.00	7%
Application to transfer	573.00	573.00	5%	601.65	7%
New applications	1,206.00	1,206.00	5%	1,266.30	7%
Annual fee	454.00	454.00	5%	476.70	7%
Copy of licence (Statutory Charge - cannot be above £25)	25.00	25.00	5%	26.25	7%
Notification of change (Statutory Charge - cannot be above £50)	50.00	50.00	5%	52.50	7%
Reinstatement of licence	562.00	562.00	5%	590.10	7%
Provisional statement	1,206.00	1,206.00	5%	1,266.30	7%
<b>Betting Premises (Excluding Track)</b>					
Application to vary	906.00	906.00	5%	951.30	7%
Application to transfer	722.00	722.00	5%	758.10	7%
New applications	1,761.00	1,761.00	5%	1,849.05	7%
Annual fee	363.00	363.00	5%	381.15	7%
Copy of licence (Statutory Charge - cannot be above £25)	25.00	25.00	5%	26.25	7%
Notification of change (Statutory Charge - cannot be above £50)	50.00	50.00	5%	52.50	7%
Reinstatement of licence	704.00	704.00	5%	739.20	7%
Provisional statement	1,761.00	1,761.00	5%	1,849.05	7%
<b>Track</b>					
Application to vary	754.00	754.00	5%	791.70	7%
Application to transfer	573.00	573.00	5%	601.65	7%
New applications	1,469.00	1,469.00	5%	1,542.45	7%
Annual fee	604.00	604.00	5%	634.20	7%

Copy of licence (Statutory Charge - cannot be above £25)	25.00	25.00	5%	26.25	7%	28.10
Notification of change (Statutory Charge - cannot be above £50)	50.00	50.00	5%	52.50	7%	56.20
Reinstatement of licence	562.00	562.00	5%	590.10	7%	631.40
Provisional statement	1,469.00	1,469.00	5%	1,542.45	7%	1,650.40
<b>Temporary use notices</b>						
Fee to serve a Temporary Use Notice	287.00	287.00	5%	301.35	7%	322.40
Request for a copy of a Temporary Use Notice	29.00	29.00	5%	30.45	7%	32.60
<b><u>Gambling Act Permit Fees - Statutory</u></b>						
<b>Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permit</b>						
Grant	150.00	150.00	5%	157.50	7%	168.50
Existing operator grant	100.00	100.00	5%	105.00	7%	112.40
Variation	100.00	100.00	5%	105.00	7%	112.40
Transfer	25.00	25.00	5%	26.25	7%	28.10
Annual Fee	50.00	50.00	5%	52.50	7%	56.20
Change of name	25.00	25.00	5%	26.25	7%	28.10
Copy of Permit	15.00	15.00	5%	15.75	7%	16.90
<b>Licensed Premises Automatic Notification Process</b>						
Grant	50.00	50.00	5%	52.50	7%	56.20
<b>Club Gaming Permits</b>						
Grant	200.00	200.00	5%	210.00	7%	224.70
Grant (Club Premises Certificate holder)	100.00	100.00	5%	105.00	7%	112.40
Existing operator grant	100.00	100.00	5%	105.00	7%	112.40
Variation	100.00	100.00	5%	105.00	7%	112.40
Renewal	200.00	200.00	5%	210.00	7%	224.70
Renewal (Club Premises Certificate holder)	100.00	100.00	5%	105.00	7%	112.40
Annual Fee	50.00	50.00	5%	52.50	7%	56.20
Change of name	100.00	100.00	5%	105.00	7%	112.40
Copy of Permit	15.00	15.00	5%	15.75	7%	16.90
<b>Club Machine Permits</b>						
Grant	200.00	200.00	5%	210.00	7%	224.70
Grant (Club Premises Certificate holder)	100.00	100.00	5%	105.00	7%	112.40
Existing operator grant	100.00	100.00	5%	105.00	7%	112.40
Variation	100.00	100.00	5%	105.00	7%	112.40
Renewal	200.00	200.00	5%	210.00	7%	224.70
Renewal (Club Premises Certificate holder)	100.00	100.00	5%	105.00	7%	112.40
Annual Fee	50.00	50.00	5%	52.50	7%	56.20
Copy of Permit	15.00	15.00	5%	15.75	7%	16.90
Change of Name	25.00	25.00	5%	26.25	7%	28.10
Transfer of Permit	25.00	25.00	5%	26.25	7%	28.10
<b>Family Entertainment Centre Gaming Machine Permit</b>						
Grant	300.00	300.00	5%	315.00	7%	337.10
Existing operator grant	100.00	100.00	5%	105.00	7%	112.40
Change of name	25.00	25.00	5%	26.25	7%	28.10
Renewal	300.00	300.00	5%	315.00	7%	337.10
Copy of Permit	15.00	15.00	5%	15.75	7%	16.90
<b>Prize Gaming Permits</b>						
Grant	300.00	300.00	5%	315.00	7%	337.10
Existing operator grant	100.00	100.00	5%	105.00	7%	112.40
Change of name	25.00	25.00	5%	26.25	7%	28.10
Renewal	300.00	300.00	5%	315.00	7%	337.10
Copy of Permit	15.00	15.00	5%	15.75	7%	16.90
Transitional Application Fee	100.00	100.00	5%	105.00	7%	112.40
<b>Small Lottery Registration (statutory)</b>						
Fee to register a small society lottery	40.00	40.00	5%	42.00	7%	44.90
Small society lottery annual maintenance fee	20.00	20.00	5%	21.00	7%	22.50
<b>Licensing Act - Statutory</b>						
Personal Licence	37.00	37.00	5%	38.85	7%	41.60
Pavement Licence - Every 6 months	600.00	600.00	5%	630.00	7%	674.10

**Premises Licence and Club Premises Certificate**

**Non- Domestic rateable value of premises**

- Band A 0 - 4,300
- Band B 4,301 - 33,000
- Band C 33,001 - 87,000
- Band D 87,001 - 125,000
- Band E 125,001 and over

**New applications and variations**

- Band A 0 - 4,300
- Band B 4,301 - 33,000
- Band C 33,001 - 87,000
- Band D 87,001 - 125,000
- Band E 125,001 and over

**Annual Fee**

- Band A 0 - 4,300
- Band B 4,301 - 33,000
- Band C 33,001 - 87,000
- Band D 87,001 - 125,000
- Band E 125,001 and over

Property not subject to non-domestic rates will fall into Band A. Properties, which have not yet been constructed will fall into band C.

Those premises which fall into Band 'D' will be subject to two times the amount of fee payable as outlined above, whilst those premises which fall into Band 'E' will be subject to three times the amount of fee payable, **if they are used exclusively or primarily for the carrying on of the retail of alcohol for consumption on the premises**, i.e. large public houses.

**Large Events**

An additional fee will be charged where the maximum number of persons exceeds 5000 at a licensable event. Please contact the Licensing Section for further details.

**Exemptions**

Church Halls, Community Halls, Village Halls, or other similar building etc. are exempt from paying any fees for a premises licence authorising **ONLY** the provision of regulated entertainment. If the retail of alcohol is to be included in the Premises Licence, the full fee will be payable as outlined above.

No fees are payable by an educational institution, such as a school or a college (whose pupils/students have not attained the age of 19) for a premises licence authorising **ONLY** the provision of regulated entertainment providing that is for and on behalf of the educational institution.

Application for copy of licence or summary on theft, loss etc.

Notification of change of name or address (holder of premises licence)

Application to vary the Designated Premises Supervisor

Application to transfer a premises licence

Interim authority notice following death, incapacity or insolvency of licence holder

Fee to notify licensing authority of a property interest in a premises

Application for grant of a provisional statement

Fee for a replacement premise, licence or club premise certificate (if lost or stolen)

Fee to change the name or address of a designated premises supervisor on a premises licence

Change of relevant registered address of club

Temporary Event Notices

Application for copy of licence on theft, loss etc. of temporary event notice

Application for copy of licence on theft, loss etc. of personal licence

100.00	<b>100.00</b>	5%	<b>105.00</b>	7%	<b>112.40</b>
190.00	<b>190.00</b>	5%	<b>199.50</b>	7%	<b>213.50</b>
315.00	<b>315.00</b>	5%	<b>330.75</b>	7%	<b>353.90</b>
450.00	<b>450.00</b>	5%	<b>472.50</b>	7%	<b>505.60</b>
635.00	<b>635.00</b>	5%	<b>666.75</b>	7%	<b>713.40</b>
70.00	<b>70.00</b>	5%	<b>73.50</b>	7%	<b>78.60</b>
180.00	<b>180.00</b>	5%	<b>189.00</b>	7%	<b>202.20</b>
295.00	<b>295.00</b>	5%	<b>309.75</b>	7%	<b>331.40</b>
320.00	<b>320.00</b>	5%	<b>336.00</b>	7%	<b>359.50</b>
350.00	<b>350.00</b>	5%	<b>367.50</b>	7%	<b>393.20</b>
10.50	<b>10.50</b>	5%	<b>11.03</b>	7%	<b>11.80</b>
10.50	<b>10.50</b>	5%	<b>11.03</b>	7%	<b>11.80</b>
23.00	<b>23.00</b>	5%	<b>24.15</b>	7%	<b>25.80</b>
23.00	<b>23.00</b>	5%	<b>24.15</b>	7%	<b>25.80</b>
23.00	<b>23.00</b>	5%	<b>24.15</b>	7%	<b>25.80</b>
21.00	<b>21.00</b>	5%	<b>22.05</b>	7%	<b>23.60</b>
315.00	<b>315.00</b>	5%	<b>330.75</b>	7%	<b>353.90</b>
10.50	<b>10.50</b>	5%	<b>11.03</b>	7%	<b>11.80</b>
10.50	<b>10.50</b>	5%	<b>11.03</b>	7%	<b>11.80</b>
10.50	<b>10.50</b>	5%	<b>11.03</b>	7%	<b>11.80</b>
21.00	<b>21.00</b>	5%	<b>22.05</b>	7%	<b>23.60</b>
10.50	<b>10.50</b>	5%	<b>11.03</b>	7%	<b>11.80</b>
10.50	<b>10.50</b>	5%	<b>11.03</b>	7%	<b>11.80</b>

Notification of change of name or address (Personal Licence)	10.50	<b>10.50</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>11.03</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>11.80</b>
Application for a minor variation of a premises licence or club premises certificate	89.00	<b>89.00</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>93.45</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Should you need assistance in determining which level of fee you are required to pay, please contact Worcestershire Regulatory Services Licensing Section on (01905) 822799 Alternatively email - <a href="mailto:wrsenquiries@worscsregservices.gov.uk">wrsenquiries@worscsregservices.gov.uk</a> In all cases, cheques must be made payable to 'Bromsgrove District Council'						

## Appendix D – Reserves Position

	Balance at 31/3/21	Transfers In 2021/22	Transfers out 2021/22	Balance at 31/3/22	Transfers In 2022/23	Transfers out 2022/23	Re-baseline 2022/23	Balance at 31/3/23	Transfers in 2023/24	Transfers out 2023/24	Balance at 31/3/24	Transfers in 2024/25	Transfers out 2024/25	Balance at 31/3/25	Transfers in 2025/26	Transfers out 2025/26	Balance at 31/3/26
	£000																
<b>General Fund Reserve</b>	<b>4,613</b>	367	(495)	<b>4,485</b>		(1,367)	2,682	<b>5,800</b>	100	(687)	<b>5,213</b>	702	(172)	<b>5,743</b>		(323)	<b>5,420</b>
<b>General Fund Earmarked Reserves:</b>																	
Building Control Other	7			7			(7)	0			0			0			0
Building Control Partnerships	82			82				82			82			82			82
Business Transformation	0			0				0			0			0			0
Commercialism	0			0				0			0			0			0
Community Safety	0			0				0			0			0			0
Community Services	271			271				271		(125)	146		(125)	21			21
Economic Regeneration	1,348		(350)	998			(600)	398			398			398			398
Election Services	51			51				51			51			51			51
Environmental Services	49			49				49			49			49			49
Financial Services	4,445		(100)	4,345		(150)	(1,000)	3,195	638		3,833			3,833			3,833
Housing Schemes	488		(142)	346				346			346			346			346
ICT/Systems	197			197				197			197			197			197
Leisure/Community Safety	330			330				330			330			330			330
Litigation Reserve	0			0				0			0			0			0
Local Development Framework	0			0				0			0			0			0
Local Neighbourhood Partnerships	16			16				16			16			16			16
Other	108		(44)	64			(64)	0			0			0			0
Planning & Regeneration	133			133				133			133			133			133
Regulatory Services (Partner Share)	46			46				46			46			46			46
Replacement Reserve (Inc. Recycling)	0			0				0			0			0			0
Shared Services (Severance Costs)	311			311			(311)	0			0			0			0
Utilities Reserve				0			1,053	1,053		(351)	702		(702)	0			0
Covid-19 (General Covid Grant)	766	411		1,177			(1,177)	0			0			0			0
Covid-19 Sales Fees and Charges	0	576		576			(576)	0			0			0			0
Covid-19 (Collection Fund)	4,641		(1,547)	3,094		(1,547)		1,547		(1,547)	0			0			0
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>13,289</b>	<b>987</b>	<b>(2,183)</b>	<b>12,093</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(1,697)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7,714</b>	<b>638</b>	<b>(2,023)</b>	<b>6,329</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(827)</b>	<b>5,502</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,502</b>

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## Appendix E – Existing Capital Programme

Cap Proj	Description	Approved budget date	Original approved Budget £	duration (years)	Department	Funding detail	21/22 Spend £	2022/23 Total £	22/23 Spend £	c/f	2023/24 Total £	23/24 Spend Q2 £	2024/25 Total £	2025/26 Total £
	<b>Large Schemes</b>													
	<b>Levelling Up Fund</b>													
	- Government Funded		14,492,401		Planning, Regeneration & Leisure	Grant Funding	1,600,000	5,329,041	126,902	5,202,139	7,563,360			
200072	Market Hall (LUF)	22/23			Planning, Regeneration & Leisure	Levelling Up Fund	0			0		51,079		
200073	Ef - Fire Station	22/23			Planning, Regeneration & Leisure	Levelling Up Fund						14,950		
	- Council Funded		1,610,266			Borrowing	281,000	420,133		420,133	805,133			
	UK Shared Prosperity Fund		2,825,702							0				
	- Capital Element				Planning, Regeneration & Leisure	Grant Funding		50,000		50,000				
	- Revenue Element				Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	Grant Funding		290,499		290,499				
	- Remainder (to be allocated)				Planning, Regeneration & Leisure	Grant Funding		20,000		20,000	680,988		1,784,215	
										0				
										0				
										0				
	<b>Schemes Agreed to Continue</b>													
200006	Burcot Lane	2019/20	10,275,000		Financial & Customer Services	Public works loan board and grant homes england	1,125,000	4,973,852	7,914,009	-2,940,157	0	634,536	0	0
200007	CCTV	2019/20	120,000		Community & Housing GF Services	Capital Receipts/Borrowi	28,000	0		0	0		0	0
200008	Funding for DFGs	2020/21	750,000		Community & Housing GF Services	Grant income WCC	620,000	913,000	969,792	-56,792	913,000	81,500	913,000	0
200009	Home Repairs Assistance	2018/19	50,000		Community & Housing GF Services	Long Term Debtors	-5,000	50,000	4,088	45,912	50,000	-19,890	50,000	50,000
200010	Energy Efficiency Installation	2018/19	110,000	2	Community & Housing GF Services	Capital Receipts/Borrowi	12,000	110,000	7,810	102,190	0		0	0
200011	Energy Efficiency	2017/18			Community & Housing GF Services	Grant finance	3,000	0		0	0		0	0
200015	Cemetery Extension infrastructure at at North Bromsgrove Cemetery Phase	2017/18			Environmental Services	Capital Receipts/Borrowi	0	6,500	15,576	-9,076	0		0	0
200016	New Finance Enterprise system	2019/20	455,000		Financial & Customer Services	Capital Receipts	1,000	0	13,680	-13,680	0		0	0
200017	OLEV ULEV Taxi infrastructure scheme	2019/20	300,000	1	Community & Housing GF Services	Grants & Contributions	296,000	0	700	-700	0		0	0
200019	Fleet Replacemnet new line	New				Borrowing	380,000	356,000	75,292	280,708	441,000	424,489	1,190,000	1,215,000
200022	Replacement Parking machines	2020/21	120,000		Environmental Services	Capital Receipts/Borrowi	196,000	253,000	123,985	129,015	96,000	203,984	421,000	0
200030	Wheelie Bin Purchase	2018/19	ongoing		Environmental Services	Capital Receipts/Borrowi	102,000	144,000	169,034	-25,034	55,000	136,546	60,000	60,000

Cap Proj	Description	Approved budget date	Original approved Budget £	duration (years)	Department	Funding detail	21/22 Spend £	2022/23 Total £	22/23 Spend £	c/f	2023/24 Total £	23/24 Spend Q2 £	2024/25 Total £	2025/26 Total £
New	Footpaths		ongoing		Environmental Services	Borrowing				0	75,000		75,000	75,000
New	Buildings		Ongoing		Legal and Property	Borrowing				0	100,000		100,000	100,000
200040	Bittell road recreation ground	2020/21	62,000		Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	S106 B/2011/0741 - Land at Fiery Hill, Barnt Green / 18k balances	17,000	0		0	0		0	0
200044	Salix	2020/21	615,000		Legal, Democratic and property services	Grants & Contributions	65,000	0	533,193	-533,193	0		0	0
200045	Greener Homes	2020/21	180,000	1	Community & Housing GF Services	Grants & Contributions	-227,000	0	192,053	-192,053	0	93,765	0	0
200057	Hagley Scouts				Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	Capital Receipts/Borrowi	35,000	0		0	0		0	0
200026	Rubery Redevelopment works										1,900			
200048	Bromsgrove Sporting					Loan	4,000		46,133	-46,133				
200061	Car Park Improvements - Woodrush High Schools refurb						8,000			0				
							134,000			0				
200026	Rubery Redevelopment Works				Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	Capital Receipts/Borrowi	0	0	9,550	-9,550	0		0	0
200029	Sanders Park dda play provision	2017/18	56,080		Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	S106 14/0755 Kidderminster Road and S106 13/0422 Meadows first school	0	0		0	0		0	0
200032	New Digital Service	2020/21	57,400	1	Community & Housing GF Services	Borrowing	0	33,668		33,668	33,668		0	0
200033	Bus Shelters	2020/21	18,000		Environmental Services	Borrowing	0	18,000		18,000	0		0	0
200034	Fleet Management Computer System	2020/21	17,000		Environmental Services	Borrowing	0	0		0	0		0	0
200035	Environmental Services Computer System	2020/21	38,200		Environmental Services	Borrowing	0	0		0	0		0	0
200069	Cisco Network Update	22/23		3	Business transformation & Organisational Development	Borrowing	0	5,717	18,573	-12,856	11,574		0	34,877
200070	Server Replacement Est(Exact known Q2 2022)	22/23		4	Business transformation & Organisational Development	Borrowing	0	83,250	0	83,250	2,000	78,451	177,500	18,500
200071	Laptop Refresh	22/23		4	Business transformation & Organisational Development	Borrowing	0	5,000	4,961	39	25,000	7,273	150,000	5,000

Cap Proj	Description	Approved budget date	Original approved Budget £	duration (years)	Department	Funding detail	21/22 Spend £	2022/23 Total £	22/23 Spend £	c/f	2023/24 Total £	23/24 Spend Q2 £	2024/25 Total £	2025/26 Total £
200074	Install Solar panel and Upgrade lighting	22/23	150,000	1	Legal, Democratic and property services	Borrowing	0	150,000			0	-55,014	0	0
200075	Sanders Park	22/23			Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	S106	0		24,511	-24,511				
200076	Play Area, POS and Sport improvements at Lickey End Recreation Ground in accordance with the S106 Agreement	22/23	37,956	1	Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	S106 19/0137/FUL	0	37,956	6,488	31,468	0		0	0
200002	BDC Combined F/Path & Cycle	2018/19	390,000		Environmental Services	Grants & Contributions	0	0		0	0		0	0
	Barnt Green Millenium Park - Toilet				Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	S106 B/2011/0741 - Land at Fiery Hill, Barnt Green / 18k balances	0	0		0	0		0	0
	<b>Total</b>		424,000				4,675,000	13,249,616	10,256,330	2,843,286	10,851,723	1,653,569	4,920,715	1,558,377

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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