

# Public Document Pack



## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MEETING OF THE CABINET**

**WEDNESDAY 17TH JULY 2024**

**AT 3.00 P.M.**

**PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE**

MEMBERS: Councillors K.J. May (Leader), S. J. Baxter (Deputy Leader), S. R. Colella, B. McEldowney, K. Taylor, S. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

### **AGENDA**

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 Cabinet held on 13th March 2024 (Pages 7 - 18)**

4. **Leader's Announcements**

5. **Recommissioning of the Promoting Independent Living Service (Home Improvement Agency) (Pages 19 - 24)**

6. **The Bromsgrove District Council Plan (Pages 25 - 52)**

This report is due to be pre-scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Board at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024. Any recommendations relating to this item will be reported in a supplementary papers pack for Cabinet's consideration.

7. **Productivity Plans (Pages 53 - 60)**

8. **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**

9. **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>
10	3 & 4
11	3

10. **Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 11th March and 22nd April 2024 (Pages 61 - 106)**

- (a) To receive and note the minutes
- (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes

11. **Levelling Up Update on Windsor Street Contract and Market Hall (Pages 107 - 140)**

This report is due to be pre-scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Board at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024. Any recommendations relating to this item will be reported in a supplementary papers pack for Cabinet's consideration.

Sue Hanley  
Chief Executive

Parkside  
Market Street  
BROMSGROVE  
Worcestershire  
B61 8DA

9th July 2024

**If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact  
Jo Gresham**

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please do not hesitate to contact the officer named above.**

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#### **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.**



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## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MEETING OF THE CABINET**

**WEDNESDAY 13TH MARCH 2024, AT 6.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors K.J. May (Leader), S. J. Baxter (Deputy Leader), S. R. Colella, C.A. Hotham, K. Taylor, S. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

Observers: Councillor R. J. Hunter and Councillor P. M. McDonald

Officers: Mrs. S. Hanley, Mr P. Carpenter, Ms J. Willis, , Mrs L. Berry, Mr. M. Dunphy, Ms. M. Worsfold and Mrs J. Gresham

88/23 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

89/23 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor S. Webb declared an Other Disclosable Interest as a Trustee of the Citizen's Advice Bureau in relation to Agenda Item Number 7, Minute Number 94/23 – Cost of Living Funding Proposal.

Councillor Webb remained in the meeting for consideration of this item and took part in the vote thereon.

There were no further Declarations of Interest.

90/23 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 21ST FEBRUARY 2024**

The minutes from the Cabinet meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024 were submitted for Members' consideration.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes from the Cabinet meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024 be approved as a true and accurate record.

91/23

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 12TH FEBRUARY 2024**

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was present for consideration of this item. It was noted that there were no outstanding recommendations from the meeting of the Board held on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

There were however, two reports that had been pre-scrutinised at the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting which took place on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024. It was agreed that these recommendations would be considered by Cabinet during consideration of the specific reports at agenda items 5 and 6, Minute Numbers 92/23 and 93/23.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes from the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024 be noted.

92/23

## **BROMSGROVE CENTRES ACTION PLAN REVIEW 2024/25**

The Bromsgrove Centres Manager presented the Bromsgrove Centres Action Plan Review 2024/25 for Members' consideration.

In doing so, the following was highlighted:

- The Bromsgrove Centres Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2026 was approved by Members in January 2023.
- The Bromsgrove Centres Action Plan set out Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and success of the plan. These KPIs included budget monitoring, actions and response for certain projects. Outstanding actions from the previous action plan would be carried forward and continued in the 2024/25 municipal year.

Following the presentation of the report Members agreed that this was a positive and encouraging strategy for Bromsgrove Centres and were keen to implement it as soon as possible. Members felt that the events that had been organised were encouraging and had a positive impact on communities across the District and increased footfall within Town Centres across the District.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board presented the recommendation agreed by Members at the meeting of the Board on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024. The recommendation was as follows:



*'That the action plan be named 'Bromsgrove District Centres Action Plan' to emphasise that it is targeting centres in all wards of the District.'*

Cabinet considered the recommendation, and it was agreed that this change could be reflected.

Therefore, it was

**RESOLVED** that the Bromsgrove District Centres Action Plan 2024/25 be approved.

93/23

## **LOCAL HERITAGE LIST STRATEGY**

The Principal Conservation Officer presented the Local Heritage List Strategy report for the consideration of Cabinet. During the presentation it was highlighted that this report provided an update on progress of the Local Heritage List Strategy adopted in 2016. It was noted that there had been progress on the list, however there had been issues faced particularly in the public engagement element of the strategy.

Members' attention was drawn to the summary of the Local Heritage List Strategy contained within the report which included information regarding the value of heritage assets to local communities and that the Bromsgrove District Plan (2017) acknowledged the importance of adopting a Local List to formerly identify the locally important heritage assets within the District.

Officers reported that the criteria for inclusion on the Local Heritage List had been identified, and included the following:

1. Age
2. Authenticity and Rarity
3. Architectural interest
4. Historic interest
5. Townscape / Villagescape / Landscape interest.

It was stated that in order to be included on the List, candidates needed to satisfy the first criteria stated above and at least one other.

Cabinet was informed that Historic England provided the guidance in respect of Local Heritage Listings. Contained within this guidance was the importance of community engagement within the process.

It was explained that prior to the work on the Lists for Beoley and Dodford, public consultation events were held to gain public feedback on the draft conservation areas for both Beoley and Dodford Conservation Areas. At these events the opportunity was taken to publicise the Local Heritage Lists. It was noted by Officers that the public response had been limited and only a handful of nominations had been received from the public. Officers clarified that this represented around ten responses.

In the original Local Heritage List Strategy, nominations for inclusion on the list were to be considered by an assessment panel who considered the suitability of all the assets nominated against the selection criteria. However, since the original strategy was adopted there had been changes experienced in staffing levels of Conservation Officers working within the Council. Cabinet was informed that the conservation resources had now doubled and had allowed for internal benchmarking of the proposed list to take place. Therefore, the assessment panel's role had become less relevant compared to the public engagement element which was considered extremely important. A further change since the original strategy was adopted, was the increased use of the Council's website and social media resources. Officers explained that this extra resource would be utilised to increase public engagement as part of the proposed update to the process. In addition, there would also be opportunities to engage with the local Ward Councillors, Parish Councillors and building owners as part of the new process.

In terms of how the draft lists would be presented, Officers stated that there would be a half page summary of the heritage asset, which included a brief description, the assessment of criteria and a location map of the site.

Draft lists for Beoley, Alvechurch, Belbroughton and Dodford had now been prepared. These lists had resulted in 140 properties being added to the draft Local Heritage List. The sites comprised of a diverse range of properties including houses, schools, village halls, places of worship and canal infrastructure. Members were informed that work was underway on the preparation of the draft lists for Bromsgrove Town, Lickey and Blackwell and Wythall.

Going forward, it was proposed that further lists would be prepared for the remaining areas within the District in consultation with the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure. The final sections of the list would be presented to Cabinet for formal adoption as the Local Heritage List for Bromsgrove. It was envisaged that Officers would prepare a number of reports in tranches over the next twelve to eighteen months with each

one covering a number of parishes / areas so that Local Heritage List coverage could be achieved as soon as possible, rather than wait for the whole District to be assessed before the list was finalised.

Following the presentation of the report there was a detailed discussion regarding the updated process. This included the following areas:

- Appeal processes – there would be no appeal process as part of the newly proposed process. Comments would be sought from property owners as part of the consultation process. However, if an owner did not want their property to be included on the list, this would not be deemed a satisfactory reason for it not to appear on the list. This was the same in the statutory property listing process.
- Permitted Development Rights – these rights would still be recognised as these were made by Central Government. Inclusion on the Local Heritage List would be included as a material consideration as part of the planning process just as statutory listing was currently a material consideration.
- Areas of work already completed – it was raised that all of the work already undertaken had been in parished areas of the District. It was felt that work also needed to be undertaken in unparished areas. Officers confirmed that this would be done and that there had been no particular reason as to why work had been carried out in parished areas so far other than the link to the conservation area appraisals that had been completed in these areas. There would certainly be a mix of assessments carried out in both parished and unparished areas over the course of the work. It was noted that there were some areas located within the District that had more interest in the process for example Alvechurch was very engaged, in part because that area had its own neighbourhood plan.

There was a discussion regarding specific areas contained within the strategy, including in respect of non-designated Heritage Assets. It was noted that the ‘balanced judgement’ would be provided when an application was considered by the Planning Committee or in cases when the Committee did not consider an application, this judgement would be provided by the Planning Officers. These judgements would include consideration of the public benefit if a non-designated Heritage Asset were to be affected as part of a planning application. This was already in place as part of the statutory listing process.

Some Members queried the non-inclusion of heritage assets on the list and that non-inclusion did not necessarily mean that there was no heritage value of that property. Officers explained that the fact that the property was still a 'heritage asset' would still be a material consideration in the planning process. However, it provided flexibility in assessing future heritage assets as and when architectural interests inevitably changed over time resulting in properties that were not on the list being added to the list in the future.

Members asked what national intelligence was available in respect of planning applications that were refused by the Local Authority on the grounds of heritage value but were subsequently granted on appeal. Officers were unsure of the exact data in this area but undertook to look into this further.

It was requested that changes to the wording regarding the Chartist Settlement at Dodford be reworded within the strategy for clarity. Officers undertook to make these necessary changes.

The Chairman of the Overview and scrutiny Board presented the recommendations from the Board which were as follows:

- 1) That District Ward Councillors be directly involved in the consultation process for the Local Heritage List (LHL) in their respective ward areas.
- 2) That the final Local Heritage List (LHL) for Bromsgrove, covering the whole district, be completed and published within the next 18 months.

In presenting the recommendations the Chairman of the Board reiterated the need for Officers to consider unparished areas within the District as part of the work. It was also noted that there was a rich history in Rubery of local heritage properties such as Nailers' and Button Cottages and that local Ward Members could provide useful information in respect of the assets within their wards.

In respect of the second recommendation, Officers suggested that it seemed reasonable that the works would be completed within the eighteen months suggested. However, if there were any delays they would be reported accordingly. It was also confirmed that at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board it had been requested that Officers provided the Board with a quarterly update in respect of progress and

that a project plan would be provided at the Board meeting due to take place in April 2024.

**RESOLVED** that

- 1) Cabinet approve the revised Local Heritage List Strategy Document.
- 2) Cabinet delegate the authority to the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services to publish for consultation draft sections of the Local Heritage List.
- 3) District Ward Councillors be directly involved in the consultation process for the Local Heritage List (LHL) in their respective ward areas.
- 4) the final Local Heritage List (LHL) for Bromsgrove, covering the whole District, be completed and published within the next 18 months.

94/23

**COST OF LIVING FUNDING PROPOSAL**

The Head of Community and Housing Services presented the Cost of Living Funding proposal for Cabinet's consideration. In doing so, Members' attention was drawn to the following:

- In 2020-21 the Council allocated £50,000 to support the Community Hubs initiative. Further allocations were made in 2021-22 and 2022-23 equalling a total budget of £150,000. It was confirmed that this budget was currently sat in earmarked reserves.
- In February 2020 the budget was approved by Cabinet as a revenue bid to support the development of the Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Community Hubs in libraries initiative across the District.
- Following a new direction of travel by WCC, this budget was never provided to the County Council. Therefore, the £150,000 funding remained within reserves.
- Due to the Cost of Living crisis, it was agreed that the needs of local residents needed to be better understood. Therefore, a multi-agency Cost of Living Group was established with partners such as WCC, Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) and other partners. Following discussions at this group, two surveys were carried out, in order to better understand the specific needs

of local communities. The findings from the survey highlighted that the crisis was affecting a broad range of residents not just those on benefits or a lower income. It also established that financial management advice might ease the pressure on residents but that this could not be the only solution. It was suggested that there needed to be more information and support provided to mortgage holders who were struggling with their mortgages, those who had faced food insecurity in the last six months and those residents who had gone without essentials, such as shower or cleaning items including clothes.

In considering the outcomes of the survey, the Cost-of-Living Group determined that there was a need for additional debt advice workers to work across agencies and within local communities for a fourteen month trial period. The focus of the additional workers would be as follows:

- Specialist housing adviser who delivered housing advice directly.
- Voluntary sector money adviser to help residents improve their well-being when faced with financial difficulties.
- Enhancement of the support of the Financial Inclusion Team.

This trial period would also provide the opportunity to inform a lottery bid by the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) to continue this work in the future. It was clarified that if the lottery bid was successful any monies not spent on the trial project would be put back in to reserves and reallocated.

Following the presentation of the report Members discussed the allocation of funds to each new role and queried why the amount outlined in the report equated to only £126,000 rather than the full amount of £150,000. It was confirmed that the amounts contained within the report were per annum and as the trial period took place over fourteen months the outstanding amount of £24,000 would cover the final two months of the roles. There was a suggestion that the outstanding amount could potentially be utilised to support local food banks within the District.

Some Members felt that there was a risk that fourteen months might not be a long enough period of time to embed new roles and also complete a bid for lottery funding. However, Officers however confirmed although this would be a challenge,

discussions had already started with the VCS and therefore this piece of work had effectively already commenced providing the necessary time.

In terms of the Citizens Advice Bureau funding, it was reported that this would certainly help those residents who were struggling with the Child Benefit system which had recently changed and had caused confusion amongst residents.

Some Members felt that some of the allocation should be provided to outreach work to support young people in schools with financial management. However, it was confirmed that this initiative was already taking place in secondary schools across the District and had been for some time.

**RECOMMENDED** that

£150,000 contained within earmarked reserves be allocated as a one-off investment to support the estimated costs of the following Cost of Living initiatives:

- (a) Citizen's Advice specialist housing adviser - £52k
- (b) Voluntary sector money adviser - £32k
- (c) Enhancing the support of the Council's Financial Inclusion Team - £42k

95/23

## **FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE QUARTER 3 MONITORING REPORT 2023/24**

The Deputy Chief Executive presented the Finance and Performance Quarter 3 Monitoring Report 2023/24 to Cabinet. During the presentation the following was highlighted Members' attention:

- Included in the report was Capital Programme monitoring until the end of December 2023, updated Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) statutory increases in fees and charges for 2024/25, the list of contracts above £200,000 and the list of contracts between £50,000 and £200,000 and the Quarter Three Strategic and Operational Performance Measures.
- Currently, the Council was forecasting a revenue overspend for 2023/24 in the region of £572,000, before the application of £351,000 from the Utilities Reserve as approved at Quarter One. This application of the reserve would result in a forecast overspend of £221,000 for 2023/24. It was noted that the forecast

overspend was predominantly due to the implications of the 2023/24 pay award which had been paid to Officers in December 2023 and had been backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. Other impacts included:

- Increased costs in temporary and interim staff requirements.
  - The impact of homelessness and temporary accommodation costs.
  - Higher than expected ICT costs in the Business Transformation service area.
  - Costs of refurbishment of the Council's fleet.
- As detailed above, the overspend would be offset by a forecast underspend against the Utilities Budget provision due to Utilities inflation running at 70 per cent rather than at 100 per cent as assumed in the 2023/24 Budget. In addition, the overspend would be offset by the following:
    - additional grants receipts and income for Community and Housing.
    - lower than expected ICT purchases and additional grant income in Business Transformation and Organisational Development.
  - In terms of capital spend it was noted that at Quarter Three it was £3.207m (£1.654m at Quarter Two) against the overall 2023/24 capital budget totalling £10.851m.

In presenting the performance measures information, specific areas to note were as follows:

- Housing Growth – It was reported that 199 new homes had been built, 55 of which were affordable homes. The Local Housing Affordability rate was reportedly higher than the national rate at 11.17 percent versus the national rate of 9.05 per cent.
- SLM Leisure (Everyone Active) – there had been an increase in membership numbers from the previous years.
- Staff Turnover Rates – there had been a continued improvement in turnover rates of only 8.8 per cent, which meant that the authority was significantly under the national average rate of staff turnover (15.6 per cent). This would



hopefully continue to improve as a result of the implementation of the Workforce Strategy.

Officers reported that this report had been pre-scrutinised at the Finance and Budget Working Group (FBWG) on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024. During this meeting there had been a detailed discussion regarding fly-tipping. It had been agreed that the presentation previously given by the Environmental Services Manager in respect of this topic be provided for newer Members. It had also been requested that a piece of work regarding comparison of numbers of fly-tipping incidents in neighbouring, similar sized Councils be carried out. This was of particular interest to Members as it was felt that given the current situation of closure of refuse sites in neighbouring Authorities this could potentially cause an increase in incidents occurring within Bromsgrove District. Cabinet Members expressed that there needed to be more communications around the successful enforcement of fly-tipping incidents, including when Fixed Penalty Notices were issued.

Other areas of discussion at the meeting of the FBWG was the use of Street Pastors and how residents were referred to them, and the inclusion of crime statistics in the performance measures. A further request was made that the graphs included in the report were increased in size.

Cabinet discussed the relevance of some of the performance measures included within the report. It was felt that these needed to be updated as part of the update of priorities which was soon to take place. It was important that these new priorities reflected the needs of the Council and any measures linked to these not only measured data, but also impacts as a result of the measures.

**RECOMMENDED** that

- 1) The Updated WRS 2023/4 Charges be approved.

**RESOLVED** that

- 2) The current overspend position in relation to Revenue and Capital Budgets for the period April to September and the full year revenue overspend position of £221k after applying £351k from the Utilities Reserve as approved at Quarter 1 be noted.
- 3) The updated procurements position be noted and those items over £200,000 be included on the forward plan.

# Agenda Item 3

Cabinet  
13th March 2024

- 4) The Quarter Two Performance data for the Period April to December 2023 be noted.

96/23

**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**

There was no Urgent Business on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 7.21 p.m.

Chairman

**Cabinet**  
2024

17<sup>th</sup> July

**Recommissioning of the Promoting Independent Living Service (Home Improvement Agency)**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Shirley Webb
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Judith Willis – Head of Community & Housing Services
Report Author	Author: Matthew Bough Job Title: Strategic Housing & Business Support Manager Contact email: <a href="mailto:matthew.bough@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk">matthew.bough@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</a> Contact Tel: 01527 64252 Ext: 3120
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	Living independent, active & healthy lives
Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Cabinet RESOLVE that:-**

- 1) Approval is given to recommission the Promoting Independent Living Service;**
- 2) Authority is delegated to the Head of Community & Housing Services, in consultation with the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services and following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and Strategic Housing to agree the final process, timetable and evaluation model for the appointment of a new contractor to deliver the Home Improvement Agency service; AND**
- 3) To award the contract to the successful provider(s).**

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Home Improvement Agency, known as Promoting Independent Living (PIL) service works closely with the other 5 Local Housing Authorities and Worcestershire County Council to provide a range of services including Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) and discretionary grants for Home Repairs Assistance, Dementia Dwelling Grants, Minor Adaptations and Hospital Discharge Grants.

- 2.2 Since April 2020 the PIL service has been delivered by Millbrook Healthcare, following a successful procurement exercise and this contract will end in March 2025.
- 2.3 The service within Bromsgrove delivered 77 Disabled Facilities Grants and 46 discretionary grants in 2023/24.
- 2.4 The Council has a mandatory duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants to eligible residents and may provide other discretionary assistance through its Housing Assistance Policy.
- 2.5 Funding is received from the Government via the Better Care Fund (BCF), which is passported through to the Local Housing Authorities (LHA) from the County Council annually.
- 2.6 The current cost for the Council of delivering this service is £ £170,344 which includes a contribution to an Occupational Therapist, Housing Options and IT system within PIL.

### **3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- 3.1 The current revenue and capital funding for the PIL service comes from the Better Care Fund. All six Local Housing Authorities contribute to the service, with the revenue contribution apportioned based on capital spend.
- 3.2 The current service also includes the County Council who contribute to the costs of running PIL to deliver information and advice, minor adaptations and a handyman service. However the decision has been made by the County Council to no longer fund the information and advice and handyman element of the service.
- 3.3 A “Promoting Independent Living” project team of Officers from across the Local Housing Authorities and Adult Social Care has been established to agree what services are within scope of the recommissioning and to develop an appropriate specification. This has been supported by a wider partnership group including Occupational Therapists, Neighbourhood Team representatives, the Integrated Care Board, Health and Care Trust and the Adult Front Door.
- 3.4 The Promoting Independent Living project team are overseen by a Strategic Governance Board and this Board has links into many other partnerships to ensure appropriate governance and co-design of services happens.

- 3.5 The project group has engaged the services of Foundations to support the recommissioning process. Foundations is the national body for Home Improvement Agencies, funded by the Government to provide support to LHAs. South Worcestershire procurement have provided the lead procurement role, supported by the Legal services at Wychavon DC.
- 3.6 The evaluation criteria will be based on the following questions;
- **Service Implementation** - The bidder can demonstrate effective ability to implement and deliver the service set out the specification.
  - **Partnership and Engagement** - demonstrate effective ability to meet the requirements of Partnership and Engagement
  - **Continuous improvement and innovation** - The bidder can demonstrate effective ability to meet the requirements of continuous improvement and innovation.
  - **Staff Management** - The bidder can demonstrate effective ability to meet the requirements of Staff Management
  - **Customer Service** - The bidder can demonstrate effective ability to meet the requirements of customer service.
  - **Additional Social Value** - The bidder is expected to showcase Additional Social Value stemming from this procurement process, exceeding the direct outcomes of the contract itself.
- 3.7 The below is the procurement timeline for the Service
- Meet the Buyer Event - June 2024
  - Tender / ITT published – August 2024
  - Tender submission deadline – end of September 2024
  - Marking / interviews –October 2024
  - Shortlisting of tenders –October 2024
  - Preferred supplier selected – November 2024
  - Contract award – December 2024
  - Pre-contract negotiations – December 2024
  - Project end – December 2024

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

- 4.1 In 2024/25 the Council received £1,130,316 of BCF funding for the service and it is expected to be at least this amount for 25/26.
- 4.2 Approximately £930,000 per annum will be passported into the new PIL service contract and the rest is retained by the council towards staffing

costs, direct applications and the Occupational Therapist contract with the NHS Trust.

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

- 5.1 The Council has a statutory duty to provide DFGs and must have a Housing Assistance Policy in place to utilise the BCF funding flexibly.

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

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

- 6.1 Living independent, active & healthy lives - The Worcestershire PIL service provides a range of service options to support the improvement of the health and wellbeing of the local population with the aim of adaptations being used to restore the use of the home so that people can regain or retain their independence and carry on living in the community. This is achieved with service elements supporting people in a flexible way to provide positive outcomes for people.

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

- 6.2 The installation of more efficient equipment via DFG will reduce energy usage and provide higher levels of thermal comfort for dwellings benefitting from these measures thus reducing carbon emissions. The use of modern methods of construction will be considered for works where value for money can be demonstrated as well as carbon reduction.

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

- 6.3 A previous Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken and has been reviewed and updated.

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

- 7.1 It will be critical to identify an appropriate service provider to deliver this service at the same cost whilst still maintaining a high level of customer satisfaction. This risk will need to be managed through the specification and contract.

- 7.2 Not entering into a new contract would mean that the delivery of the statutory services would be at risk.

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

**Cabinet**  
2024

17<sup>th</sup> July

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Background paper: Housing Assistance Policy

[Link to Housing Assistance Policy](#)

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**Cabinet**  
2024

17th July

### **Bromsgrove Council Plan**

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Karen May
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Head of Service		Peter Carpenter
Report Author	Job Title: Policy Manager Contact: Rebecca Green email: r.green@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881616	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)		All
Key Decision / 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 Plan attached at Appendix 1 be approved.**

### **2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 The development of the new Council Plan began with sessions supported by the LGA in 2023. The priority areas identified in these sessions were built upon in two workshops in Spring 2024, which brought together the Cabinet and Corporate Management Team to consolidate the learning and direction identified with the LGA, in combination with relevant data, into a new vision for the district, distinct priorities and key objectives for the next four years. These have been articulated in the plan as the overarching vision, which focuses on the quality of life of local communities, and four new priorities:

- Economic development
- Housing
- Environment
- Infrastructure (this priority underpins the ones above)

### **3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

3.1 Completion and adoption of a new Council Plan is essential to provide the strategic direction for service delivery for the next four years.

- 3.2 Operationally, the content of the Council Plan will inform the service business planning process, in order for services to deliver against the priorities and objectives identified.

**4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 As the key strategic document for the Council, the plan will steer the financial element of service business plans and will help to determine the Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- 4.2 In order to deliver against the priorities and objectives included in this plan there will need to be appropriate resources allocated.

**5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

**6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

**Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 6.1 The Council Plan articulates the new priorities for Bromsgrove District Council, which will replace the strategic purposes included in the previous plan.

**Climate Change Implications**

- 6.2 A green thread runs through the Council plan. Climate change and carbon reduction are key issues within the plan and the relevant measures identified to evaluate performance will help the Council to understand both activities and progress in this area.

**Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.3 There are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report; however, the focus on quality of life and wellbeing, articulated through the vision, is designed to empower officers to meet the needs of the district's diverse communities, which would include specific issues relating to equality and diversity. Specific projects and measures identified in the plan may need individual Equality Impact Assessments as they are developed in order to meet the requirements of the Equality Act.

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 By publishing a Council Plan the strategic direction of the Council will be clear to employees and Members and as such will support the management of risks identified around robust decision making and the accuracy/effectiveness of performance data.

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1- Council Plan 2024-2027

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# Bromsgrove District Council Council Plan 2024 - 2027



# Foreword from Council Leader Karen May

Our Council Plan helps us to set the strategic direction for this authority for the next three years. Our overarching vision prioritises the quality of life for our residents and businesses, creating an environment where both can belong and in which to flourish.

This plan helps us to spend our money in the areas which our customers have told us matter to them and to tailor our services to make biggest difference in our communities.

We want to provide more affordable houses, create a clean and green environment with an infrastructure to support the growing demand and to breathe life into our economy by focussing on our businesses and developing opportunities for investment across our District.

Of course there are challenges to do this, not least the financial ones, but prudent budgets mean we are in a stable position to explore and deliver our priorities and, in response to national issues, offer support to our more vulnerable residents.

But we are also fortunate to have a head start to realise our vision. We have wonderful green parks and open spaces, we have seen millions of pounds of investment in regeneration projects in our town and have played our part by building a development of 61 new properties, including 18 affordable homes, at the Burcot Lane site. We have the confidence to make bold and creative moves like this and will continue to do so.

To ensure continued resilience we have made sure that the green agenda is realised in this plan and indeed throughout all of our decision making.

Together we are building a Better Bromsgrove for everyone for a district to be proud of.



**Leader of Bromsgrove District Council**



## Foreword from Deputy Council Leader Sue Baxter

I am absolutely delighted to introduce this Council plan especially with my portfolio for town centre and regeneration in mind.

Economic Development is a priority in this Council Plan which means for the next four years we will be continuing to identify and seize opportunities to attract business and investment to the area to create jobs for our residents.

Already we have seen plans approved to create a new commercial and cultural hub in the space of the former market hall and contractors have been approved to start work in Windsor Street soon.

While change can be unsettling, it is vital that we make strides towards establishing a thriving and resilient economy now and for the future.

This plan focusses not just on big investment opportunities but also enabling and supporting our business starts ups and existing entrepreneurs in our eight town and village centres to establish themselves in the communities and beyond.

Exciting times lie ahead and this Council Plan which encompasses our vision and the priorities will help us to ensure our businesses thrive and people prosper now and in the future.

*Sue Baxter*

**Deputy Leader of Bromsgrove District Council**





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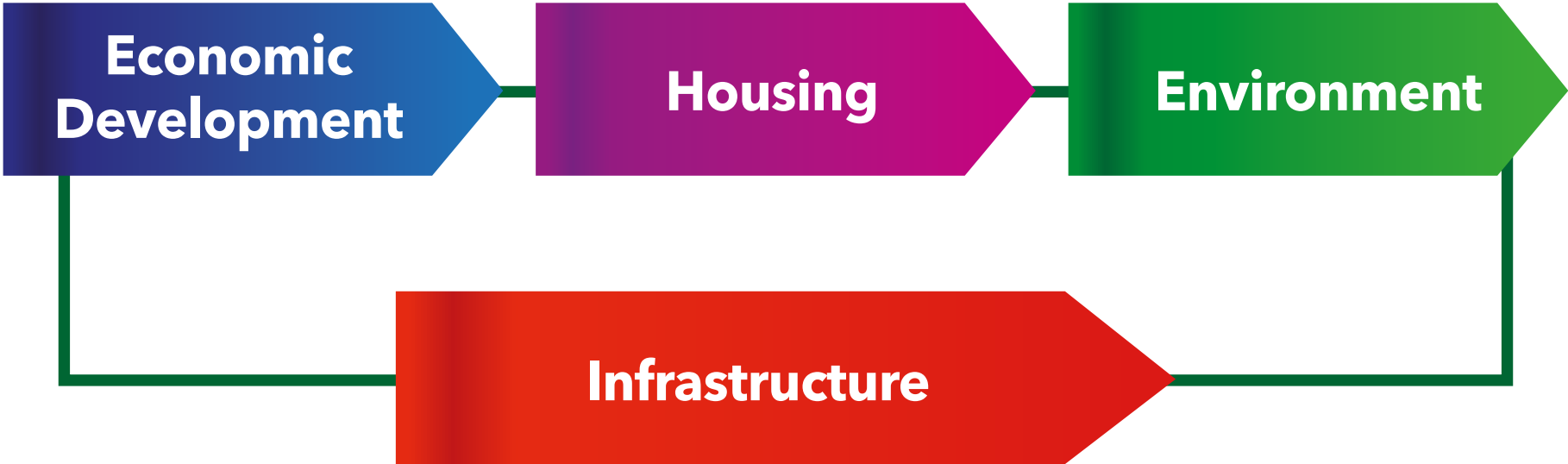
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# Our Vision & Priorities

'We aspire to create a welcoming environment that prioritises quality of life, where residents and businesses feel a deep sense of belonging and connection.'

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# Introduction

Delivering for our communities is the driving force of this plan, whether by supporting local businesses, understanding the housing needs across the district or preserving the beauty and biodiversity of the environment. A 'green thread', for how priorities relate to environmental and climate matters, also runs through the whole plan (**indicated in green**).

Our residents and the distinct neighbourhoods are what make Bromsgrove District such a wonderful place to live. The vision places quality of life for our residents at the centre of how we deliver services and plan for the district, creating a thread that relates to our communities and their wellbeing which is integral to all the priorities (**indicated in purple**). In addition to the specific priorities identified within this plan, the Council delivers other services that contribute to quality of life and wellbeing, from financial inclusion and benefits, to Lifeline, sports development and community safety. Safer Bromsgrove, part of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership, works to keep Bromsgrove a safer place to live, work and visit. The Partnership focuses on priorities including anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood crime and protecting vulnerable communities.

The Council Plan will inform annual service business planning and budget setting agreed by full council, ensuring that available resources (both financial & staffing) are used to deliver the council's priorities.

## Our Opportunities

The opportunities include:

- The location of Bromsgrove for business; with Worcestershire, regionally and beyond
- The entrepreneurial and community spirit within Bromsgrove District
- Keeping businesses in the district when they grow
- The amazing natural environment of the district
- The creative options provided through new technologies to enhance our services and our customers experiences

## Our Challenges

The challenges include:

- The ongoing financial challenge- to both the organisation but also our communities and residents through the real pressures presented by cost of living and the housing market
- Continuing to support those who are most vulnerable, and manage the increasing costs
- Keeping businesses in the District when they grow
- Understanding the different community needs across the district
- The need for enhanced digital and physical connectivity

# About Bromsgrove District

Bromsgrove District has an excellent geographic location in north Worcestershire, with excellent links to the rest of Worcestershire, the wider region and nationally. It is a predominantly rural district, with 89% of the land covering 20,000 hectares is designated as Green Belt, although the north of the district is part of the major urban conurbation linked to south Birmingham. The main centre of population is in Bromsgrove Town, with other large centres in Alvechurch, Aston Fields, Barnt Green, Catshill, Hagley, Rubery and Wythall. Around 61% of the district population live in 'urban' areas.

The district has rich biodiversity, geodiversity and attractive landscape, containing 13 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and 90 local sites (85 ecological and 5 geological).

The 2021 Census shows that Bromsgrove District had a resident population of 99,183 and Mid-Year Populations estimates suggest that the district population has increased to 100,076 in 2022. The population is forecast to reach 117,014 by 2043.

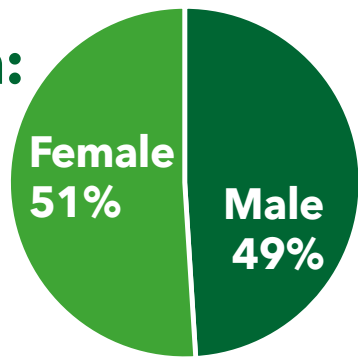
The population of the district is ethnically less diverse than the national picture and residents are typically older than the average for England. The district tends to be relatively affluent compared to the national and local context and Bromsgrove has levels of deprivation significantly below average. However, this can hide pockets of deprivation; there is one lower support output area (LSOA) in the most deprived 20% nationally and a further three LSOAs that are in the most deprived 30% and access to appropriate support can be a challenge for residents in these areas. The rural nature of much of the district can also present challenges, from accessing services to utilising public transport.



(Row by row, L to R)  
Row 1: Bromsgrove & Alvechurch  
Row 2: Aston Fields & Barnt Green  
Row 3: Catshill & Hagley  
Row 4: Rubery & Wythall  
Row 5: Rural Bromsgrove

# Total population: 100,076

Source - ONS 2022 Mid-year population estimates



## Profile:

- White British - **90.4%**
- White other - **1.7%**
- Mixed - **2.5%**
- Black - **0.8%**
- Asian - **3.2%**
- Other ethnic group - **0.4%**



Source - Census 2021

## Health:

Life expectancy

Male - **79.8**

Female - **83.8**



Describe health as bad or very bad - **3.9%**

Source - Census 2021

# significantly less active than recommended - **22,100**

Source- Sport England Active Lives 2023



## Deprivation:

The 326 local authority districts in England are ranked for each domain, with 1 indicating the most deprived and 326 the least deprived. Bromsgrove experiences below average levels of deprivation across all domains.

Living environment - **271**

Crime - **160**

Barriers to housing & services - **204**

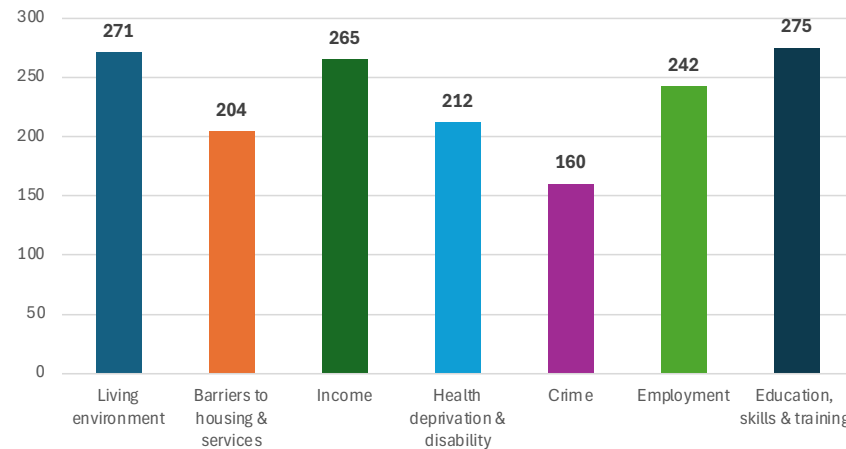
Employment - **242**

Income - **265**

Education, skills & training - **275**

Health deprivation & disability - **212**

Source - English indices of deprivation 2019 (ONS)



Economically active 16 - 64 year olds - **85.9%**

Above national average of **78.8%**

Source- NOMIS Employment & Unemployment (Jan 23 - Dec 23)



# Economic Development

Economic development is key for delivering our vision for the district, with the aim of cultivating a thriving and resilient local economy. We will focus on supporting businesses, **enabling individuals, and developing communities**.

By supporting businesses, we seek to create an environment conducive to growth and innovation, offering resources, incentives, and infrastructure to bolster entrepreneurship and job creation. Enabling businesses to grow in the district will help us to retain them, creating more high-quality local opportunities. We will also encourage and support new business start-ups to see Bromsgrove District as a natural place to locate and do business.

Enabling individuals and businesses involves providing opportunities for skills development, education, and employment in order to develop prosperous communities where businesses flourish, **people thrive**, and places prosper. We will support the take-up of apprenticeships both across the district and within our own organisation, developing skills whilst also bolstering the businesses that employ them.

The eight centres across the district need to meet the changing needs of shoppers, residents, and businesses. We will work to improve the vitality and viability of the various centres and to reduce the number of empty shops in the district.



The Bromsgrove Town Centre 2040 Vision focuses on developing an inclusive, vibrant, and resilient town centre which is adaptable and resilient to change.

It looks to provide opportunities for redevelopment and regeneration, whilst preserving and strengthening the town's vibrancy and historic significance. A new Car Parking Strategy will address current and future requirements in order to meet the needs of our residents, businesses, and visitors alike.

A dynamic new team in partnership with Redditch Borough Council will provide enhanced resources and a review of our Economic Development Strategy will help us to implement our priorities, optimise our assets and attract businesses, jobs and investment to the district. Engaging with businesses and the wider communities they are part of, will help the team to understand and respond to the changing needs of the district, its businesses and the communities they serve.

## Key objectives

- Supporting our businesses
- Upskilling the workforce
- Enabling growth & innovation
- Supporting entrepreneurship & job creation
- Vibrant town & district centres

## Key projects

- Centres Strategy - Implementation of the yearly Centres Strategy action plan across the 8 centres within the district.
- Regeneration Sites - delivery of projects within the £14.5m Levelling Up Fund including Windsor Street and the Market Hall Site.





# Housing

We want to address the diverse housing needs within our District, ensuring quality homes for our residents and families. The challenges, in particular affordability, presented by the housing market across all tenures, means we need to explore innovative solutions for housing provision. We will ensure that affordable options are available, while striving for a balanced mix of housing types to accommodate different demographics and stages of life.

The Bromsgrove 2040 Vision also includes residential opportunities as part of a town centre where people live, work and play.

Our Private Sector Housing Team **support vulnerable residents to live in safe, quality homes** and we will continue to work with Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) to support people at risk of homelessness. Prioritising energy-efficient homes will not only **reduce environmental impact** but also contribute to long-term sustainability and cost savings for residents. We aspire to create a **thriving and inclusive community** where everyone has access to safe, healthy, affordable, and environmentally responsible housing options.

We will explore alternative ways of delivering the housing the district needs, whether that is through planning, partnerships or investment. We will also work with our partners across the county to deliver the Worcestershire Housing Strategy 2023-2040 and how **affordable, warm, and healthy homes can contribute to a better quality of life**.

## Key objectives

- Affordable & balanced housing
- Energy efficient homes
- Innovative housing provision

## Key projects- TBC

- Former Dolphin Centre Car Park - continue to explore different options for housing provision on the Town Centre site.
- New Local Plan- identification of the numbers of new housing that should be provided and where.

# Environment

**We are committed to safeguarding the natural environment, addressing issues ranging from biodiversity conservation to climate change mitigation, supporting recycling to reducing waste production, all with the goal of enhancing the quality of life for current and future generations.**

Increased environmental enforcement will help to protect the beautiful environment of our district and minimise pollution. By maximising penalties, we will send a clear message that we will not tolerate environmental crimes such as fly-tipping and that we will work tirelessly to reduce the impact this has on our communities and businesses. We will work with partners at Worcestershire Regulatory Services, who measure the air quality across the district, to assess the impact of real-time air quality monitoring.

Delivery of the Environment Act signifies our dedication to comprehensive environmental policy and action, in particular how we can reduce waste, increase recycling and improve our waste management systems. We will work with residents, communities and businesses to provide education and awareness around any changes to recycling and the future introduction of food waste collection.

Efforts aimed at safeguarding ecosystems, green spaces, and wildlife habitats all contribute to not only carbon reduction but **improved wellbeing**.



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Through these initiatives, whether that is meadow planting or promoting the inclusion of green corridors into developments, the Council strives to foster sustainable practices, promote environmental stewardship, and create **resilient communities in harmony with nature**.

**Carbon reduction is essential in order to address the challenges faced by changes in our climate. With our partners, we will support residents and businesses to reduce their carbon emissions. We will review all aspects of our organisation; from the fuel our vehicles use to how energy efficient our buildings and facilities are, we will continue to work proactively towards our Carbon Reduction Strategy objectives.**

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## Key objectives

- Increased environmental enforcement
- Implementing the Environment Act 2021 (waste)
- Carbon reduction

## Key projects

- Low carbon fleet fuel options- continue with the fleet conversion and the electrification of smaller vehicles.
- Bromsgrove District Heat Network- work with partners to develop, design and build the network, reducing carbon emissions.



# Infrastructure

Prioritising infrastructure is paramount for our District, as it serves as the bedrock of not only our communities but also growth. This priority underpins the other three, as they can only be delivered with the right infrastructure in place. We will focus on delivering key infrastructure projects such as the new Local Plan, utilising our parks and open spaces, and initiatives promoting active travel.

Delivering a new Local Plan will help us to ensure that local infrastructure meets the needs of our residents, communities, businesses, and visitors alike. This key strategic document will detail the direction and ambition for the district and will set out the infrastructure requirements needed now and into the future, in order to support vibrant and resilient communities that can thrive.

Parks and open spaces link strongly with the Environment priority, **providing green spaces where people and nature can flourish**. But they also provide opportunities for communities to come together, people to get active and for local businesses and initiatives to deliver activities and events. By focusing on the implementation of our Parks and Open Space Strategy, we will seek to increase the investment in these resources and the number of people who can enjoy them.





Active travel is a key driver not only in **reducing carbon emissions** but also in **health and wellbeing**.

Working with Worcestershire County Council we will support the implementation of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and the development of Local Transport Plan 5, which will provide the strategic direction for future investment in active travel initiatives across the district.

By investing in these areas, we seek to **elevate the quality of life**, bolster economic development, and ensure the safety and **well-being of our residents**.



## Key objectives

- Delivering the new Local Plan
- Parks and open spaces
- Active travel

## Key projects

- Behaviour Change (air quality) - utilising real time information, a programme of encouraging community groups to lead on reducing polluting behaviour, which has active travel as a key component.
- Green Flag Awards- develop a rolling programme for achieving the national standard Green Flag Award for priority parks across the district.
- We will also continue to work in partnership on transport and environmental projects locally, regionally and nationally.

# Monitoring, Review & Reporting - Our Measures

The measures below, by which we will evaluate this Council Plan, will help us to understand how we are delivering against our priorities.

Progress will be monitored on a quarterly basis (where the data is available), allowing us to adjust, as needed, to keep the plan on track. Reports will be considered by the Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny and the Corporate Management Team, with the updates being available to the public on the website. The Council Plan will be reviewed annually to ensure that it addresses the key issues for the district and that the measures are telling us what we need to know.

- Monitor the number of jobs created by supported businesses (quarterly)
- Business births, deaths & survival rates (annual)
- Earnings (by residence & place of work) (annual)
- Track the delivery of the Centres Strategy action plan (quarterly)
- Community and business engagement (annual survey)
- Tracking affordability index - house prices, rental costs (quarterly)
- Monitor housing supply (annual)
- Number of private, affordable, and social houses delivered each year (annual)
- Number in temporary accommodation (quarterly)
- Number of homeless preventions (quarterly)
- Number of empty homes (quarterly)
- Grant funding for energy improvements of Private Housing (quarterly)
- Number of enforcement cases, planning and environment (number opened, number closed, number open for investigation) (quarterly)
- Time taken to remove Fly-tipping (quarterly)
- Track delivery of the actions in the Environment Act 2021 project (quarterly)

- Reduction in the amount of waste generated by households (quarterly)
- Percentage of household waste recycled or composted (quarterly)
- Track the delivery of the Carbon Reduction Strategy action plan (annual)
- Energy efficiency improvements in municipal buildings, facilities, and public infrastructure (biannual)
- Increase Community Engagement and Awareness around the environment (Quarters 2 & 4 Corporate Surveys and quarterly)
- Report on the stages of the new Local Plan development & adoption (biannual)
- Monitor the rate of planning approvals and appeals in alignment with the agreed policies and proposals (domestic & business) (quarterly inc by type)
- Track investment in infrastructure projects identified in the local plan (including section 106 monies spent) (annual)
- Track the delivery of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy action plan (quarterly)
- To Achieve the Green Flag Award for the following parks: Sanders Park, Lickey End LNR, St Chads Park, Rubery and King George Vth Park over the next 10 years (annual)
- Engagement with WCC on the implementation of the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and the development of the Local Transport Plan 5 (biannual)





# Organisational Priorities

## Financial Stability

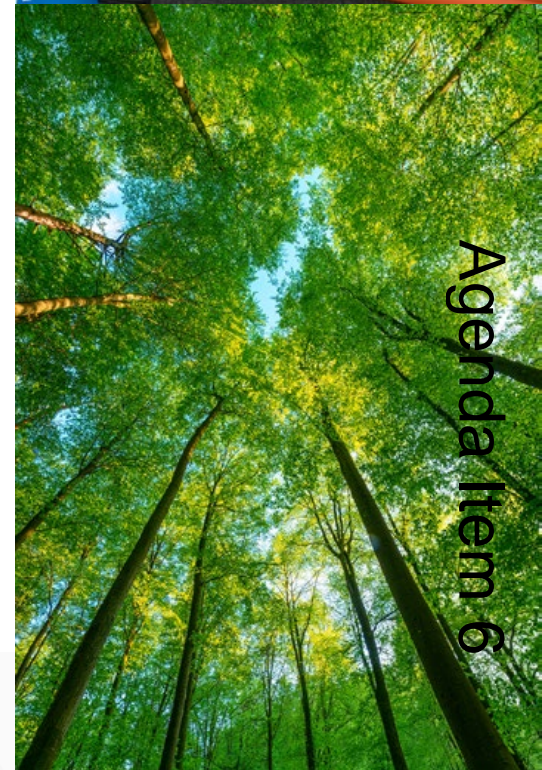
The primary organisational priority is financial stability, from ensuring prudent borrowing, undertaking effective contract management to managing our assets to get the best outcomes for our residents.

Finances have been difficult over recent years, with inflation and interest rates, and the resulting impact to employee costs, combining to make financial planning challenging across all sectors. Responding to these challenges, the organisation is focused on making even better use of existing resources, embedding business improvement, and exploring alternative methods of delivery, available grant funding, or potential income generation. We will use data and intelligence to inform how we deliver and procure services, prioritising the needs of our local communities and customers so that our services continue to be accessible and responsive.

## Sustainability

Ensuring that a green thread runs through all the services we design and deliver is essential as we adapt to address the implications of climate change. From the buildings we work from to the vehicles we use, we will continue to review all our services to place sustainability, the environment, and the future generations of Bromsgrove District at the heart of all decision making.

We will also expand the use of digital technologies where appropriate, enabling more automation of services, freeing up capacity to deliver against the priorities of our communities. This will enable greater digital access to our services; allowing customers to book, pay and do things online when they want to 24/7.



## Partnerships

We will work closely with our partners in the public sector, such as Redditch Borough Council, Worcestershire County Council, West Mercia Police, and the NHS and parish councils. We will also continue to work with the voluntary and community sector across the district, including through our Employee Volunteering Scheme.

The Bromsgrove Partnership brings together different organisations from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors in its role as the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for the District of Bromsgrove. Instead of each organisation working separately in isolation, the Bromsgrove Partnership provides a forum for local organisations to come together and address issues that are important to those living, working, and visiting Bromsgrove District in a more effective and cohesive way.

Bromsgrove Partnership's vision is: **"We will make Bromsgrove District the place to live, do business and to visit."** Their three priority themes, which complement the purposes in this plan are: Economic Growth; Balanced Communities; Environment.

Partnership also extends to how we will work with our communities, whether engaging residents and businesses in how services are delivered, what our priorities should be or the wider decision-making processes. Corporate and service level engagement with the public will continue to inform how we design and deliver our services.



Parish  
Councils

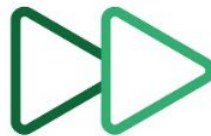
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## Organisational Culture - the 4P's

Through working closely with employees across the organisation, we have identified the '4P's' as a way of defining organisational culture and the aspirations of everyone who works for Bromsgrove District Council.

- **Purpose:** Aligns all actions and decisions with the council's overarching strategic goals, ensuring every task contributes to the collective vision and priorities, whether at a corporate, departmental, team or personal level. It provides a sense of direction, helping staff understand how their roles directly impact the community and reason for their work.
- **People:** This principle showcases the importance of 'our people' as our greatest asset, valuing and empowering staff, as well as recognising other important people or stakeholders that impact our work, from members to communities and partners. This principle aims to create a thriving working environment, supporting our people and offering wellbeing initiatives, development opportunities, flexibility, policies, and frameworks that ultimately enhance morale, productivity and the happiness of our staff.
- **Pride:** Taking pride in our work and our community is a key building block in maintaining high standards and a sense of achievement for our employees. By celebrating our successes and learning from challenges, pride encourages ownership, passion, and integrity in our day-to-day work life.
- **Performance:** By setting clear goals, measuring outcomes, and striving for excellence, we can drive continuous improvement and ensure that our work leads to tangible benefits for the community. This allows us to recognise our successes, set future objectives and identify areas for growth and improvement.

Whilst each principle has its own meaning, they are designed to work in a unified way to ensure a good culture where our staff are dedicated to delivering outstanding public services.



**Purpose**



**People**



**Pride**



**Performance**



## Budget & Resources

Ensuring that we make the best use of our resources, capital and assets is essential in order to balance the books and provide our residents with value for money and confidence in the Council's ability to manage the budget. The priorities detailed within this plan will underpin our medium-term financial planning and financial management expertise informs all of our strategic decision making.

The Council has set its 2024/5 to 2026/7 budget in two tranches, in January 2024, with the second Tranche considered following the release of the final Local Government Settlement figures and approved in February 2024. The position that was approved in February 2024 was an overall £42k surplus in the 2024/5, putting the finances in a position of sustainability.

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 Covid-19 environment



## Risk Management

The Council is committed to managing our risks effectively, efficiently, and proportionally, ensuring that risk management is fully embedded across the organisation. Corporate Risks are set out on a quarterly basis to the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee.

Mitigations for the risks identified are set out in Audit Reports as well as departmental risks that link to these Corporate Risks. An Officer Risk Board continues to take place quarterly to embed processes and validate risks on the register, with each department having a representative. The Corporate Management Team are updated on risk management issues in their monthly "assurance" meeting and a Member Risk Champion is appointed on an annual basis.





**Bromsgrove**  
District Council

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

If you need this information in another language/format please call  
01527 548284 or email [equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

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**Cabinet**

**17<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**Productivity Plans**

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor May – Leader of the Council Councillor Colella – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Head of Service		Sue Hanley – Chief Executive Pete Carpenter – Deputy Chief Executive
Report Author	Job Title: Business Improvement Manager Contact email: <a href="mailto:H.mole@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk">H.mole@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</a> Contact Tel:	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		No
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 Cabinet RECOMMEND that:**

- 1) The Productivity Plan, as set out in Appendix A, to be approved, the plan to be published on the Council’s Website and forwarded to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities before the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024.**

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 On the 16th April 2024, The Minister for Local Government Simon Hoare MP wrote to Chief Executives. In this letter he thanked Local Government for the huge amount that it had delivered in recent years to improve productivity and efficiency.
- 2.2 He also set out that Government was reviewing productivity across all public services, including local government, and they were now looking at new ways to go further. These new plans would help the Government understand what was already working well across the whole country, what the common themes are, whether there are any gaps and what more we can do to unlock future opportunities.
- 2.3 The purpose of these plans is to ensure we as a sector, and the Government overall provide value for money for Residents. These plans do not have a formal template to follow or criteria to meet but are limited to 3-4 pages in length. The plans must

- Set out what Councils have done in recent years, alongside current plans, to transform themselves and their services.
- The plans need to set out how Councils will monitor and assess themselves to assure delivery.
- Plans must be returned to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) by the 19<sup>th</sup> July.

2.4 The Government guidance suggested that the plans should consider the following themes and if possible should reference work the Council undertakes alongside other public services:

- How you have transformed the way you design and deliver services to make better use of resources.
- How you plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources.
- Your plans to reduce wasteful spend within your organisation and systems.
- The barriers preventing progress that the Government can help to reduce or remove.

2.5 Bromsgrove District Councils response, covering these themes, is set out in Appendix A which forms the Councils formal Productivity Plan.

2.6 The Key points of these plans are:

- We already undertake significant Shared Service work and have done so since 2008.
- We are leveraging Levelling Up Funding to regenerate the Town Centre.
- We are using ICT to drive service efficiencies.
- Partnerships drive our effective Service Delivery.
- We link finance and performance monitoring with regular reporting.
- We are using Benchmarking and data to drive service improvement.
- Staff, and their skills, are core to delivery.
- We listen to our communities' requirements.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 The initiatives set out in appendix A reflect where the Council is at the moment. Investment will be required, over and above what is in the Capital and Revenue Budgets, to drive transformation at the Council forward. This will be project specific and these requirements will have individual business cases.

### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**



- 4.1 There are no direct legal implications arising as a result of this report. The Productivity Plan has been requested by DLUHC, it is not a statutory requirement.

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

### **Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 5.1 The current Strategic purposes are included in the Council's Corporate Plan and guides the Council's approach to budget making ensuring we focus on the issues and what are most important for the borough and our communities.

### **Climate Change Implications**

- 5.2 The Climate Change green thread runs through the Council Plan. Any future options that relate to climate will be individually evaluated.

## **6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

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

### **Operational Implications**

- 6.2 Operational implications have been dealt with as part of the 2023/24 Budget process.

## **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 Non delivery of savings options (efficiencies as requested by the Minister), depending on their financial magnitude can have either a small or significant effect on the Council's finances. As such mitigations need to be in place to deal changes to what was agreed by Council in February 2024.

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

Appendix A – Productivity Plan

#### Appendix A – Bromsgrove Productivity Plan

##### 1. How have you transformed the way you design and deliver services to make better use of resources?

We are pleased to share our progress in transforming the way we design and deliver services, optimising the utilisation of resources effectively. Through analysis, strategic planning, and innovative approaches, we have embarked on a journey towards enhancing efficiency, transparency, and accessibility across all facets of service provision, namely.

- District Council & Borough Council with Shared Leadership team since 2008.
- Implemented Agile working. We have not imposed targets for being in the Office, work patterns based on business need. This has led to less travel (reduced Carbon footprint).
- Parkside Hub - Sharing of Workspace at Bromsgrove with Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP).
- Everyone Active (Linking to National Health Service (NHS) through development services) outsourced delivery of Leisure Services (except Parks & Green Spaces & Development Services).
- Implementation of an updated Workforce Strategy in the summer 2023 - including updated working culture (4Ps – Purpose, People, Pride & Performance).
- Housing and Community Services – links and partnerships with the NHS, Funding partnerships – homelessness, anti-social behaviour (ASB), community housing, Starting Well fund.
- Set up own housing company (Spadesbourne Housing) in 2023.
- Land and Building Asset Group (LBAG) - looking at the effective use of surplus assets across the Councils brownfield sites.
- Levelling Up (£16.1m) funding and the Bromsgrove 2040 Vision (bringing back 5 Town Centre sites into use) – for regeneration of Bromsgrove Town Centre.
- Selling Commercial Waste Service to other Councils, reducing overall Service costs.
- Data use includes National Fraud Initiative (NFI) and other sharing initiatives with Government Departments.

We measure productivity through: -

- Quarterly Finance and Performance Reporting to Cabinet, linked to Strategic Objectives.
- Members Corporate dashboard is available online.
- Line Management - one to ones - measuring outcomes Vs time.
- MTFP follows a two-tranche process and links finance to strategic direction.
- Services detail methods of operation i.e. Agile, timesheets, workstreams and KPI's are detailed in Service Business Plans (360 view with feedback).

To improve services, we have:

- Joined up/collaboration of enabling services (with Service Protocols for Support Service).
- Increased procurement protocols in around Officer Key Decision Notices, increasing the Key Decision Threshold to £200k, and a fully updated Contract Register.
- Updating of Members as part of the quarterly Finance and Performance Report on upcoming procurements over the next year.



Our plans for transformation over the next two year are:

- Data Prioritisation Programme- to establish clean data & make effective decisions using data (measure cleanliness pre and post) linking to the new Corporate Plan.
- Digital Improvements through Robotics, AI, and the Customer Portal.
- Progressing the ABCD Community Builder approach.
- Introduce updated Service Business Planning in 2024/5, using the Local Government Association (LGA) Transformation Tool to measure pre & post implementation.
- New Strategic Objectives are being formulated with Cabinet for implementation in 2024.
- Performance reporting review (linked to the above points)- summary sheet & detail behind (Power Bi) (measures) and linkages to how we compare to other Councils.
- Community Engagement Proposal – moving to quarterly targeted surveys & “You said we did” within Performance Quarterly reporting (from a yearly report).
- Full establishment review in May 2024 - with the aim to reduce consultants which the Council is currently reliant at circa 18% of the workforce and establish a workforce that reflects the Council’s needs.
- Monthly Officer Assurance meeting, reviewing Performance and learning from issues.

Looking ahead, our greatest potential for savings is:

- Use of LG Futures and Performance/Benchmarking Data to target high cost services.
- Reviewing housing structures and linking these to productivity gains from using new technology for service improvements.
- Review of the Waste Service considering the impending changes to regulations and use of technology to implement route optimisation / integration of street scene tasks.
- Review of right location for the remaining Leisure Services.
- Reviewing structures of enabling services to ensure cost effective and supporting front line services requirements.
- Reviewing Stores & Garage (workshop).
- Progress Workforce planning.

We have used capital spend to boost growth or improve services; examples are:

- Investing £6m in the Burcot Lane Housing development to kick start Housing development in Bromsgrove.
- Utilising regeneration & Levelling Up funds to regenerate towns and boost growth.
- Investment in the Waste Fleet - once Government requirements have been finalised.
- Use of more Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) Fuel in Waste Fleet, which although more expensive, significantly reduces Carbon emissions.

We have undertaken the following preventative approaches:

- No procurement No order initiative – implemented April 23 to control expenditure.
- Contracts are linked to finance system to monitor spend and only raise orders on approved contracts - April 2023.
- ICT Phishing tests - to increase staff awareness and reduce potential downtime.
- Investment in ICT Cyber Security to reduce downtime and risk of catastrophic failure.

Locally led reforms that help deliver high quality public services and improve the sustainability and resilience of your authority are:

- Joined-up working between District Councils and the County Council.
- Closer collaboration between Council and central government departments such as DWP and Health Services- as many services link closely to each other.
- Promotion of the One Public Estate (OPE) initiative - and ensuring the best decision is made - not requiring all parties to have savings.

### **2. How you plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources.**

We recognise data as an asset and are committed to implementing robust systems for collection, analysis, and interpretation. By leveraging advanced analytics and artificial intelligence, we aim to gain deeper insights into community needs, trends, and preferences. This proactive approach will enable us to make informed decisions, tailor services to meet evolving demands, and allocate resources more efficiently. We plan:

- A new Customer facing interface which ensures that data is input fewer times as possible, increasing efficiency and data quality at the Council and improving the Stakeholder Customer Experience. 20% efficiencies could be made in this area.
- Revised processes to ensure data is clean (single source) and links across the Council and we maximise the functionality of ICT System changes and upgrades.

Our existing plans are to improve the quality of the data we collect:

- The extensive data prioritisation project will identify data quality, programme validation, data cleansing and invest in customer portal to enable "one account."
- Continue with gold standard quality recognition Geographic Information System (GIS), achieved throughout 2023/24.

Barriers we experience from our legacy systems are:

- Configuration restrictions (which are historic but costly to change).
- Reporting - similar systems reporting on same customers in different ways.
- Lack of standardisation of data requirements.
- Updating and data progression is limited and not standardised across the Council.
- Limited budget to invest in quality systems with required capabilities to improve.

We regularly share data with our partners, DWP, HMRC, Police, Cabinet Office. This is useful as it enables collaborative decision making, improved service delivery, resource optimisation (avoiding duplication), enhanced problem solving and transparency and accountability (track progress, evaluate outcomes and hold each other accountable for their actions). Opportunities we are driving forward to use new technology are:

- Data Prioritisation/audit/standards to improve data quality and validity / importance of data, single source, sharing and reducing repetition and promote blended data for better insight and understanding across services and partners.
- Implementation of a new Customer Interface.
- Systems audit - targeted on systems where there are higher risks.
- GIS Gold Standard.
- Robotics and Artificial Intelligence (AI) work programme including:

Human Resources / Finance – Establishment accuracy & updating.

Housing – communications relating to:

- Aids & Adaptions, Disrepair Claims, Complaints, Councillor and General Enquiries.

Revs and Bens scoping out opportunities for:

- Council Tax Recovery, eBilling, the National Fraud Initiative.

### **3. Your plans to reduce wasteful spending within your organisation and systems. (You should set out your plans to reduce wasteful or "gold-plated" spending.)**

Our approach to identifying and reducing waste include:

- Performance Dashboard (real time) & Quarterly Performance reporting via Corporate Management Team (CMT) and then Cabinet.
- Updating Performance Indicators/Format reflecting new Corporate Strategy and Business Plans so Officers/Members can see if Services are not delivering and have comparisons to other Councils (Benchmarking/Sector Performance Indicators)
- Revised Strategic Priorities to focus on political necessities.
- Data - Single source data (across multiple systems)

Invest to save:

Only Levelling Up schemes can be seen as "Invest to save"; however, funding is from the Government with tight reporting requirements and a high bar to reach to obtain it.

We moved to Opus platform in May 2023 for hiring agency workers, spend to end March 2024 has been £3,203.453. The number of agency workers more than 12 months placement is 18.

To ensure we have accountability of spend, we have:

- A two Tranche Budget Process, challenged by the cross-party Budget Working Groups.
- Budget managers received training, and refresher training, on the financial systems.
- Formal finance reporting is undertaken quarterly through to Members.
- Full demarcation of duties in the finance system between budget managers, approvers and requisitioners. All transactions, including monitoring delivered online.

### **4. The barriers preventing progress that the Government can help to reduce or remove.**

Examples of service wide barriers preventing us from improving productivity further are:

- Recruitment difficult in some areas i.e.: ICT / Planning/ Housing.
- Silo working with other local authorities and government bodies.
- Lack of flexibility in recruiting competent workforce - consider market supplements etc.
- Limited investment in training & progression /potential incentive for growth and development.
- Capacity / resources (both at the Council and in Worcestershire)
- Capability issues, right people in right job at right time (especially current data skills)
- Compliance to process.
- Reduced funding (and ensuring investment is cost effective).

To remove these barriers, we will need to:

- Invest in recruiting the right people for the right jobs at the right time, including apprenticeships.
- Invest in opening career and development pathways and opportunities.
- Invest in staff & managerial training & progression training.
- Further embrace automation and AI.
- Ability to have autonomy to change.
- Reduce bureaucracy & some processes while still being compliant.
- Ensure ownership / accountability.
- Use of packages such as Modern.Gov to get members and officers to access data electronically.

To achieve transformation, we must enhance data quality, improve systems and processes, as well as invest in staff training, succession planning, recruitment, and automation, government funds are imperative. Additionally, allocating resources towards AI integration would significantly streamline and enhance processes and accuracy across various services.

## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

**11TH MARCH 2024, AT 6.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors P. M. McDonald (Chairman), S. T. Nock (Vice-Chairman), A. Bailes, R. Bailes, A. M. Dale, E. M. S. Gray, R. J. Hunter, B. Kumar, J. Robinson (Substitute), M. Marshall (Substitute) and D. J. A. Forsythe (Substitute)

Observers:

Councillor S. J. Baxter (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration),

Councillor C. A. Hotham (Cabinet Member for Finance and Enabling),

Councillor P. J. Whittaker (Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Community Safety (including Car Parking))

Officers: Mr. G. Revans, Ms J. Willis, Mrs. C. Felton (on Microsoft Teams), Mr. M. Dunphy (on Microsoft Teams), Mrs L. Berry (on Microsoft Teams), Ms. B. Houghton (on Microsoft Teams), Ms. M. Worsfold (on Microsoft Teams), and Mr. M. Sliwinski.

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#### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. D. Stanley, H. D. N. Rone-Clarke, and S. A. Robinson, who were substituted at the meeting by Councillors D. J. A. Forsythe, M. Marshall, and J. W. Robinson respectively.

85/23

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

There were no declarations of interest nor declarations of party whip.

86/23

#### **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 12TH FEBRUARY 2024**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024 were considered.

It was requested by a Member that, in relation to the minute record for item 72/23 – Libraries Unlocked – Worcestershire County Council Presentation, the following verbatim record of questions asked by Members and responses provided, be appended to the minutes record for the meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Board on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024:

**Question:** *“You talked about positive customer response [to Libraries Unlocked]. How did you go about getting that information? How many people were surveyed? I would also like to know how you are going to work through the detail of the future of the Libraries Unlocked as you will be aware that Alvechurch Library is under PFI arrangement and any change in the opening hours would be a cost to the County Council and [the Libraries Unlocked] will actually mean a decrease in some of the groups that are very successful and very well respected in the area”*

**Response:** *“You are absolutely right about Alvechurch and whilst I cannot provide a definitive yes or no in terms of Libraries Unlocked, bearing in mind the PFI limitations of what we can do, it feels it is more likely to be a no in terms of Libraries Unlocked perspective. As part of the business case that we did to identify the 12 potential libraries going forward (for implementation of phase two of Libraries Unlocked), there was a return on investment for each library where we introduce Libraries Unlocked as there is a capital investment to introduce the new technology. We have to assess the return based around staffing reductions, then obviously taking into account increasing revenue, costs, usage, etc. [The libraries are] examined in turn to make sure that return on investment is still valid. It may well be that at Alvechurch there is no return on investment because of the PFI aspects, but we have not finalised [return on investment assessment] yet.” [Response was also provided about customer satisfaction: that a survey of Libraries Unlocked customers was undertaken in October 2022. Officers undertook to provide a response to Members about the results of this survey in a separate communication once information were retrieved.]*

**Question:** *“...My concern at the moment through is the staff, because when they go to work, they are trying to be really positive. They are superb. They are not just librarians. They are knowledge managers. And what they are finding is they get into work, and they have builders or surveyors come in working around them. I mean, it is an appalling way to treat people.”*

**Response:** *“We have run staff engagement sessions, staff awareness sessions as part of implementing libraries unlocked and so staff are aware of the situation. We have also held on to so many vacancies. We are pleased that up to this point there have been no need for any staff redundancies or anybody losing their job and we would look to continue with that approach throughout any further implementation of Libraries Unlocked. We have run staff consultations and we have had some positive response to Libraries Unlocked from staff and they are formally consulted at each library if we think that Libraries Unlocked is going to be implemented at that library. The decision on whether Libraries Unlocked is to be implemented has not yet been made in Alvechurch, Wythall or Hagley, and it has for Rubery and Bromsgrove (Town) libraries where the scheme will be going ahead.*

**Question:** *“What does scale-up mean?”*

**Response:** *“It means we are able to keep libraries open if we need to make more efficiencies. It is a way of keeping libraries open but still delivering further efficiencies should we need to. There are no plans but if there is a requirement to deliver savings, then we have a way of doing it which protects libraries from closing.”*

**Question:** *“My next question is relating to free meeting room hire by partners. What does partners mean and why are you doing it for free?”*

**Response:** *“We have a wide range of partners that we work with across our library network from your local voluntary sector organisation that will run things for children, knit and natter group, through to formalised sessions with youth workers. So there is a full range and we have purposely offered free meeting space within libraries unlocked hours to encourage people to use the space. We can review that over time in terms of whether it is well used. We do charge for meeting rooms in libraries. We are proposing to not put a fee on meeting rooms’ hire during libraries unlocked hours. There would still be an expectation in terms of how the meeting rooms are used during those hours.”*

During the consideration of this item, the Board moved into exempt session to discuss specific points within the exempt minutes record of the meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting which took place on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024. It was thus:

**RESOLVED:** that under Section 100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the public be excluded from the meeting during the remainder of 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 scheme 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:-

Item No	Paragraph
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3	3 and 4
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Following discussion of the exempt matters, the Board moved to go back into the public session. It was then:

**RESOLVED** that, subject to the amendment in the pre-ambule above, the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024 be agreed as a true and correct record.

(During the consideration of this item, Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to move to exclude the press and public prior to any debate of exempt matters on the grounds that information would be revealed which related to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and which

related to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority).

87/23

## **GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS REVIEW - IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services provided an update on the work that was being undertaken to implement the recommendations arising from the Governance Systems Task Group review that was completed in September 2023. It was reported that since Council approved the group's recommendations on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023, the Constitution Review Working Group (CRWG) had already made a number of recommendations which were approved by Members at meetings of full Council. This included approval of Cabinet Advisory Group (CAG) terms of reference, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Cross Party Working, and certain amendments to the Committee Terms of Reference and Council Procedure Rules.

The next meeting of the CRWG was due to take place on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Any recommendations arising from that meeting which relate to the outcomes of the Governance Systems Task Group report would be reported for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Board at its April meeting.

Members queried when guidance would be released with respect of the Cabinet Advisory Group (CAG). It was noted that this would be released in advance of the new municipal year. A Member also requested that Terms of Reference for the CAG be provided. It was explained that this was previously provided and would be recirculated to Members.

**RESOLVED** that the update in respect of progress with the implementation of actions arising from the Governance Systems Task Group be noted.

88/23

## **LOCAL HERITAGE LIST STRATEGY - PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Principal Conservation Officer presented the Local Heritage List Strategy report. During the presentation it was highlighted that this report provided an update on progress of the Local Heritage List Strategy adopted in 2016. It was noted that there had been progress in compiling the list, however, there had been issues faced, particularly with the public engagement element of the Strategy. The report therefore asked for an updated version of the Strategy to be approved.

Members' attention was drawn to the summary of the Local Heritage List Strategy contained within the report which included information regarding the value of heritage assets to local communities. It was noted that Bromsgrove District Plan (2017) acknowledged the importance of



adopting a Local List to formally identify the locally important heritage assets within the District.

Officers reported that criteria for inclusion on the Local Heritage List had been identified, and included Age, Authenticity and Rarity, Architectural Interest, Historic Interest, and Townscape / Villagescape / Landscape Interest. Of these criteria, an asset needed to satisfy the first criterion (Age) and at least one of the other four criteria in order to be included on the List.

Historic England provided guidance in respect of Local Heritage Listings. This guidance underscored the importance of community engagement within local heritage listing process. It was explained that prior to the work on the Local Heritage lists for Beoley and Dodford, public consultation events were held to gain public feedback on the draft conservation areas for both Beoley and Dodford. At these events, the Local Heritage Lists were publicised. It was noted by Officers that public response had been limited, however, with only a handful of nominations received from the public. Officers clarified that there were around ten responses in total.

It was reported that in the original Local Heritage List Strategy, nominations for inclusion on the list were to be assessed by an assessment panel which would consider the suitability of the nominated asset against the selection criteria. However, since the original strategy had been adopted, the resource available to the Conservation Team had doubled. This enabled internal benchmarking of the proposed lists to take place. Therefore, the assessment panel's role had become less relevant compared to the public engagement element, which continued to be considered extremely important. Due to this, it was proposed that the assessment panel be discontinued in favour of a more detailed public engagement.

A further change since the original strategy was adopted in 2016 was the increased use of the Council's website and social media resources for promotion. Officers explained that this extra resource would be utilised to increase public engagement as part of the proposed update to the process. In addition, there would also be engagement opportunities for local Ward Councillors, Parish Councillors and building owners as part of the new process.

One area highlighted was that a degree of confusion might have been caused when the public was originally being asked to nominate buildings or structures for the Local Heritage List, possibly because there was insufficient explanation of the difference between national and local listing, and what might qualify a building for inclusion on the Local Heritage List. It was hoped that by producing draft lists, which will include details of how the criteria were being met for each proposed structure, residents would be encouraged to suggest other buildings or comment on those proposed for inclusion.

The Principal Conservation Officer stated that heritage assets identified on the local list would be recognised by the Authority as having heritage significance, and would therefore merit consideration in planning matters. When considering planning applications which impact on heritage assets on the local list, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) would be required to take a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset, in determining the application.

In terms of how the draft lists would be presented, Officers stated that there would be a half page summary of the heritage asset, which included a brief description, the assessment of criteria and a location map of the site.

It was noted that draft lists had been prepared in respect of Beoley, Alvechurch, Belbroughton and Dodford. These lists added 140 properties to the draft Local Heritage List, and covered a diverse range of properties including houses, schools, village halls, places of worship and canal infrastructure. Work was now underway to prepare draft lists on Bromsgrove, Lickey and Blackwell and Wythall.

Following the presentation of the report, detailed discussion took place on the following aspects:

- Advantages of having a local heritage list – Officers stated that a local heritage list was not compulsory and not all authorities had such a list. However, there were advantages to having the list in that local heritage could be formally identified and its significance taken into account in planning applications affecting the building or the site in question.
- Involvement of Ward Members in identification of local heritage assets – Members expressed disappointment that to date there had been no direct involvement of Ward Councillors in preparing the draft lists. It was argued that Councillors had direct knowledge of their areas and were able to suggest heritage assets to Officers. It was agreed as a recommendation to Cabinet that Ward Councillors be directly involved in the consultation process for the Local Heritage List (LHL) in their respective ward areas. This recommendation was put to the vote and carried.
- Timeframe for finalization of Bromsgrove's Local Heritage List (LHL) –Members were of the view that that a final and formalised Local Heritage List would provide an important tool when considering planning applications and would also be a way of promoting heritage assets and thereby attracting visitors to the area. It was agreed for recommendation that a suitable timescale for completing works on the final local heritage list was eighteen months. This recommendation was put to the vote and carried. The Board also agreed that Officers should provide the Board with a quarterly update in respect of progress in compiling the

final LHL. A project plan for delivering the final LHL would be provided at the next meeting of Overview and Scrutiny in April 2024.

- Heritage asset designations – It was explained that non-designated heritage assets (NDHA) were buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of their heritage interest but which did not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets listing (as defined in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)). As such the NDHA did not carry a heritage asset status in planning applications and was a lower-level recognition of a heritage asset than a Local Heritage List (LHL). In turn, locally listed buildings would include structures which would not quite meet the criteria for being nationally listed (and given legal protection), but which are still of architectural or historical importance in their local area.
- Heritage assets in unparished areas of the District – It was reiterated by Members that unparished areas within the District also needed to be given due consideration as part of the work on the Local Heritage List (LHL). The Chairman pointed to the example of Rubery ward, which had a rich history of local heritage properties such as Nailers' and Button Cottages. Members reiterated that local Ward Members could provide useful information in respect of the assets within their wards.

## **RECOMMENDED:**

- 1) That District Ward Councillors be directly involved in the consultation process for the Local Heritage List (LHL) in their respective ward areas.
- 2) That the final Local Heritage List (LHL) for Bromsgrove, covering the whole district, be completed and published within the next 18 months.

89/23

## **BROMSGROVE CENTRES ACTION PLAN REVIEW 2024-25 - PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Bromsgrove Centres Manager presented the Bromsgrove Centres Action Plan Review 2024/25 for Members' consideration. It was highlighted that the Bromsgrove Centres Strategy and Action Plan for 2023-2026 was approved by Members in January 2023. The Action Plan set out Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and success of the Strategy and Action Plan. These KPIs included budget monitoring, and actions, and responses in respect of certain projects. Outstanding actions from the previous action plan would be carried forward and continued in the 2024/25 municipal year.

Following the presentation of the report there was a detailed discussion regarding aspects of the Bromsgrove Centres Action Plan. This included the following areas:

- Village Centres outside of Bromsgrove Town – Members reiterated that wards such as Alvechurch, Barnt Green and Rubery also had vibrant high streets. Members asked questions with respect of what initiatives had been planned in those Village Centres. Officers confirmed that initiatives such as Shopwatch scheme could be replicated in the outlying Centres. It was further stated that the Action Plan included specific actions with respect of Village Centres including Rubery, Alvechurch, Aston Fields, Catshill, Hagley and Wythall.
- The Board agreed that it be recommended to Cabinet that the action plan be named as Bromsgrove District Centres Action Plan to emphasise that it was intended to target all wards in Bromsgrove. On being put to the vote this recommendation was carried.
- Shopwatch Scheme and reporting of shoplifting to the Police – It was reported that the Shopwatch scheme would be launched in March / April 2024. Collaboration with Redditch Business Improvement District was embedded within the Scheme to ensure a linked approach in deterring shoplifting and anti-social behaviour in retail outlets across Bromsgrove and Redditch. The Scheme was supported by the Police, Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils, and the Community Safety Team. Some Members raised concerns that the Scheme was unlikely to be effective unless the Police increased its level of support and responsiveness that it provided to retailers. Officers responded that the Shopwatch Scheme was being launched on request of the retailers in Bromsgrove Town Centre. The Scheme would provide businesses with access to the Disc Platform, a digital reporting platform which shops and businesses could use to report shoplifting incidents. This would be important as it would allow retailers to log evidence of the incident. It was hoped that this would contribute to better response and prosecution of shoplifting.
- Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in Bromsgrove Town Centre – Some Members expressed disappointment that despite a TRO being in force in the Town Centre, it was ineffective due to lack of bollards blocking the entrance to the Town Centre at Church Street. This meant vehicles were still able to access the pedestrian zone outside of loading hours. The Bromsgrove Centres Manager responded that feedback was being awaited from Worcestershire County Council. It was stated that amendments to TRO would require a consultation on delivery times and other requirements with businesses.

- Shop frontages enforcement – It was explained that the Council had taken steps to encourage businesses to improve the appearance of shop frontages. Through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), shop frontage improvement grants were provided to the Council. As part of this, an additional member of staff had been in place to support the Bromsgrove Centres Manager in writing to businesses advising them of the grants available to help with improving shop frontages. For premises, where a poor quality of appearance was identified and which had not responded to communications from the Council, there were further possible enforcement options, including powers available to issue Community Protection Warnings (CPW), which could be upgraded to Community Protection Notice (CPN), if no action was being taken by the premises. The use of powers under Section 215 (s215) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 were also available, which provided a local planning authority (LPA) with the power, in certain circumstances, to take steps to improve the condition of buildings.
- Implementation of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) public realm grant improvements – Members requested information on specific projects including timeframe within which repairs to flower baskets could be carried out in Rubery Centre. It was responded that approval would be required from Worcestershire County Council for this, however, the Officer undertook to provide information about the timeframe for this project.
- Bromsgrove Youth and Community Hub – It was noted that this initiative was operated by the voluntary sector. It was requested that Officers provide information on how much funding the Council provided to this initiative.
- Vacant Units on Bromsgrove High Street – It was reported that the number of vacant units were reported in November each year. The figure for Bromsgrove High Street was 15 vacant units as of November 2023. However, the more up-to-date figure was available for March 2024 which showed this decreased to 13 vacant units.
- Strategies to attract investment to Bromsgrove Centres – It was reported that Bromsgrove Centres Manager had been in direct contact with landlords and letting agents about opportunities to fill vacant units and attract business investment to Bromsgrove.

## **RECOMMENDED**

- 1) that the action plan be named 'Bromsgrove District Centres Action Plan' to emphasise that it is targeting centres in all wards of the District.

- 2) the Bromsgrove Centres Action Plan 2024/25 attached at Appendix 2 be approved.

90/23

## **REVIEW OF THE WORK OF NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP 2023-24**

The Community Safety Manager provided a detailed presentation updating Members on the work of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) in Bromsgrove District. It was highlighted that Bromsgrove Council's representation on the NWCSP consisted of the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Community Safety, the Council's Chief Executive as Chair of NWCSP, and the Head of Community and Housing Services who acts as the Responsible Authority representative on the Partnership. The Community Safety Manager provided co-ordination support to NWCSP and manages the Council's Community Safety Service

It was explained that local authorities had a statutory duty to scrutinise the work of its local Community Safety Partnership, under Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006. There was also a direct role for the Council in holding the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to account through the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel (PCP).

The following information were highlighted for Members' consideration in the presentation:

- The NWCSP had a duty to produce a three-year rolling plan outlining how the Partnership intends to address key crime and community safety priorities, as identified through an annual strategic assessment based on research, evidence and intelligence from national, regional and local sources.
- The current priorities of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership Plan 2021-24 were: Reducing Violence and Abuse, Reducing Theft and Acquisitive Crime, Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour, Damage and Nuisance, Protecting Vulnerable Communities. In addition, there were two cross cutting themes that the Partnership focused on across the four priorities, and these were Reducing the Harm caused by Drug and Alcohol Misuse and Reducing Re-Offending.
- The North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership Plan 2021-24 was currently being reviewed. A new community safety action plan for North Worcestershire CSP for 2024 to 2027 was being developed in draft and was to be agreed by NWCSP in April / May 2024.
- As part of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) CCTV Capital Fund, there had been significant funding allocated to develop and upgrade CCTV across the West Mercia force area. NWCSP first received an allocation of £195,000 for improvements to the area's CCTV scheme. This funding was used across the three Local Authorities (Bromsgrove, Redditch, Wyre Forest) to



modernise the CCTV infrastructure. As a result of this upgrade the whole CCTV scheme now had enhanced digital capability, improved image quality and a greater capacity to expand the scheme and/or link up to other digital systems across the region.

- Between 2020-22, the PCC allocated an additional £130,000 of capital funding towards CCTV that was used for continued enhancement of the capability and capacity of the CCTV scheme. The funding provided improvements to technological aspects of the Monitoring Centre. It also enabled recommendation from a Council Task and Finish Group to provide redeployable cameras to be funded and they are being used to respond to emerging areas of concern across the three areas in North Worcestershire. A further £20,000 funding was provided in 2022-23 but no further allocation for CCTV capital funding for 2023-24.
- Following a request by Overview and Scrutiny last year, an update on the use of anti-social behaviour tools and powers in the district was provided. It was reported that a total of 16 Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) were issued in the period 2023-24. The Community Safety Team issued 7 of these. The Police in conjunction with relevant Housing Associations issued 4 warnings and a Housing Association independently issued another 2 CPWs. Environmental Services issued 2 CPWs in relation to waste and unsightly property and Planning issued 1 CPW in relation to a derelict building.
- Only two formal Community Protection Notices followed the earlier issue of the CPWs and these were served by the Police during the same reporting period. This was reported as positive and mirrors the national experience that early use of CPW measures can deter escalation of ASB and prevent the need for more serious enforcement action.
- Details were provided of the various national and local campaigns which were supported by the Community Safety Team throughout 2023/24 to promote key safety messages and the work of NWCSP.
- Details of the NWCSP Core Funding spend for 2023-24, amounting to total of £139,250, were provided, in addition to Safer Bromsgrove – Tasking Fund 2023-24 which totaled £11,014.
- It was noted that the Community Safety Team within the Council had two College of Policing qualified Design Out Crime Officers (DOCO) who could review planning applications, making appropriate crime prevention and security recommendations with the aim of making future building developments less vulnerable to crime and disorder.

Following the presentation, a number of matters were discussed by Members.

Members enquired about the White Ribbon Domestic Abuse Campaign. It was explained that the Annual White Ribbon Domestic Abuse Campaign took place in the form of 16 days of action from 25<sup>th</sup>

November to 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023. During the 16 days, the Community Safety Team interacted directly with the public, hosting a Domestic Abuse Awareness stall on Bromsgrove High Street on 5<sup>th</sup> December and supporting various Domestic Abuse campaigns on social media sharing information and content from local and national support services and agencies. Officers were asked to explore the possibility of the Council signing up to the Women's Night Safety Charter.

Members highlighted that most of the community safety projects and initiatives set out in the report covered areas around Bromsgrove Town Centre and there were not many projects that operated in outlying wards. Questions were raised whether more community projects could be provided in outlying wards. Officers responded that efforts were being made to support local projects in the outermost areas; however, it often proved difficult to find suitable providers to undertake the projects in those areas. An example was provided of the Youth Services Funding which is commissioned by the Community Safety Team on behalf of Worcestershire County Council and through which £87,000 was provided to youth organisations in Bromsgrove. It was reported that in many areas of the district, no providers had submitted applications for this funding. Officers further explained that elected members had a significant role in raising awareness about the lack of specific provision in their communities. For example, in Hagley, a District Councillor raised a concern directly with the Community Safety Team about lack of youth club provision and in response to the publicity given to this issue a youth club provider was subsequently found.

Some Members raised concerns about lack of community safety outreach work in outlying wards in the district. It was responded by Officers that outreach work was undertaken by voluntary and community sector (VCS). Specific comments were made on the Asset Based Community Development in Rubery and a lack of suitably qualified youth outreach worker in the Rubery wards. Members were informed that elected Members were able to submit a request for outreach workers to the Community Safety Team.

Members raised concerns about pockets of anti-social behaviour (ASB) hotspots in Bromsgrove Town Centre, particularly around empty properties. A particular issue was highlighted with an empty property at Blackmore Lane which had been subject to arson. In this context, Members asked what the Council could do to encourage empty buildings back to life. The Officers commented that the Council had a role in identifying buildings causing risk to community safety and where this was identified the Council tried to work with the landowner(s) to bring properties back into use. The Council also had powers to intervene in limited circumstances where the properties were unsafe and adversely affected the community.

It was requested that ward Members be involved and notified by the Community Safety Team of actions taken in ASB hotspots such as the Nimmings Wood National Trust Car Park.

Questions were asked about the NWCSP funded knife arch. It was explained that this was a walkthrough metal detector which was placed at Bromsgrove Train Station to tackle potential knife crime including activity related to county lines. It was further explained that the knife arch use by NWCSP throughout 2023 with various operations and knife surrender campaigns. During the Knife Crime Awareness week in May 2023, members of the public were encouraged to hand-in unwanted knives to prevent them from getting into the wrong hands and being used in crime.

Members enquired about a Community Protection Notice (CPN) case study with respect of long-standing nuisance from off-road motorcycles. It was explained that this was an enforcement action which resulted in the issuance of CPN. Subsequently, substantial works to secure the land by the landowner were carried out, supported by the local authority and partners, which saw a dramatic reduction in the nuisance. However, there remained a few determined offenders who continued to gain access to the land creating nuisance to the residents living opposite. Due to the prior CPN process being largely successful in reducing the nuisance that residents experienced, they felt more confident to provide intelligence about the remaining offenders. As a result, the Council was able to issue seven Community Protection Warnings (CPW) to the registered keepers of vehicles transporting the off-road motorcycles to the site.

Some Members questioned what evidence there was of crime reduction that was a direct result of investment in CCTV through the CCTV Capital Fund. Some Members expressed the view that while CCTV was of sufficient quality to identify perpetrators, which was deemed to be of sufficient quality to identify perpetrators, there were issues with the agencies, including the Police, to use CCTV footage as evidence when prosecuting the perpetrators. Officers explained that there were strict Codes of Practice that public bodies needed to follow when utilising surveillance CCTV footage, including as evidence of crime. Members were invited to visit the CCTV Monitoring Centre located at Redditch Town Hall to observe the capability of the system. It was reiterated by a Member reiterated that not enough was done to ensure that CCTV was used to its full capability to prosecute offenders and felt disappointed that the Police was not invited to the meeting.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Community Safety was invited to speak. The Portfolio Holder thanked the Community Safety Manager for the detailed presentation on the NWCSP and thanked the Community Safety Team for their work. The Portfolio Holder highlighted the great range of initiatives that the NWCSP was involved in and the difference this was making to community safety in Bromsgrove.

**RESOLVED** that the Scrutiny of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership be noted.

91/23

## **COST OF LIVING FUNDING PROPOSAL - PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Head of Community and Housing Services presented the Cost of Living Funding proposal. In doing so, the following was highlighted:

- In 2020-21 the Council allocated £50,000 to support the Community Hubs initiative. Further allocations were made in 2021-22 and 2022-23 equalling a total budget of £150,000. It was confirmed that this budget was currently sat in earmarked reserves.
- In February 2020 the budget was approved by Cabinet as a revenue bid to support the development of Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Community Hubs in Libraries initiative across the District.
- Following a new direction of travel by WCC, this budget was never provided to the County Council. Therefore, the £150,000 funding remained within reserves.
- Due to the Cost of Living crisis, the report was asking for the funding to be directed to a Cost-of-Living initiative. This proposal followed a multi-agency Cost of Living Group was established with partners such as WCC, Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) and other partners. Following discussions at this group, two surveys were carried out, in order to better understand the specific needs of local communities.
- The findings from the surveys highlighted that the cost-of-living crisis was affecting a broad range of residents not just those who were in receipt of state benefits or on lower income. The surveys also established that financial management advice might ease pressure on residents but that this could not be the only solution. It was suggested that more information was needed to provide support to mortgage holders who were struggling with their mortgages, those who had faced food insecurity in the last six months, and those residents who had gone without essentials, such as shower or cleaning items including clothes.
- Section 3.7 of the report included a proposal for allocating £150,000 earmarked reserve for one-off investments of a Citizen's Advice specialist housing adviser at £52,000, voluntary sector money adviser at £32,000, and enhancing the support of the Council's Financial Inclusion at £42,000. This would be for a 14-month period.

Following the presentation of the report, Members asked questions and discussed matters as set out below:

- It was queried why the amount outlined in the report equated to only £126,000 rather than the full amount of £150,000. It was confirmed that the amounts contained within the report were per annum and as the trial period took place over fourteen months the

outstanding amount of £24,000 would cover the final two months of the roles.

- Members commented that there were a number of voluntary and community organisations in the district, for example foodbanks, which were already providing budgetary advice to those residents accessing their provision. This was often done alongside the main work of those voluntary organisations. Officers responded that feedback received from the Bromsgrove's voluntary and community sector (VCS) was that a voluntary sector money adviser would greatly assist these organisations in providing budgetary advice to those residents who access these community services. The voluntary sector money adviser would be able to attend community support settings to provide specialist advice on aspects such as debt management, budgeting, benefits and entitlements, crisis intervention, emotional support and referrals. The voluntary organisations would be able to put forward proposals if they feel they and their users would benefit from this support.
- Members highlighted that there was a need for specialist housing advisers in many wards and queried how one specialist housing adviser would be able to cover all the wards in the district. It was responded that the specialist housing adviser would sit within Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) and the post holder would be expected to engage with voluntary sector organisations to identify residents in need of support. It was highlighted that the post holder would be in addition to the existing voluntary sector provision already available across the district.
- Members were informed that the emphasis of the roles would be on providing outreach services such as at libraries and in community settings. This would include liaison with the Parish Councils. As part of the Cost-of-Living Group, the posts were expected to join up across agencies and with all partners. The proposal in the report would be a trial for 14 months with a view to it informing a lottery bid by the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) to further sustain the work. If the lottery bid was successful any monies not spent on the project would be put back in to reserves.
- It was hoped the investments outlined in the report would help with timely processing of Household Support Fund (HSF) applications by the Citizen's Advice Bureau and the Council.
- It was clarified that the agreement in respect of the £71,000 for the housing strategy monitoring implementation of the renter reform requirements, agreed at the full Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024 as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan (Tranche 2) report, concerned an increase from 1.4 to 2.5 FTE Private Sector Housing Officers. This was to account for the increased statutory duties that are being placed on Private Sector Housing Teams considering recent damp and mould issues raised nationally.

- Funding proposed as part of this report was for a different type of housing support officer who would work within CAB and provide specialist housing advice to residents.

**RECOMMENDED** that:

£150,000 contained within earmarked reserves be allocated as a one-off investment to support the estimated costs of the following cost of living initiatives as set in section 3.7:

- (a) Citizen's Advice specialist housing adviser - £52k
- (b) Voluntary sector money adviser - £32k
- (c) Enhancing the support of the Council's Financial Inclusion Team - £42k

92/23

**IMPACT OF HEATWAVES SHORT SHARP REVIEW - MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

The membership of the short, sharp review was confirmed. It was agreed that the Review Group would elect a chairman at its first meeting. The terms of reference would also be agreed by the task group at its first meeting.

**RESOLVED** that Councillors S. Ammar, R. Bailes, B. Kumar, M. Marshall, B. McEldowney, and J. Robinson be appointed to the Impact of Heatwaves Short Sharp Review Group.

93/23

**FOOD BANK AND COMMUNITY SUPERMARKET PROVISION TASK GROUP - FINAL REPORT**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

94/23

**FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP - UPDATE**

The Chairman introduced the Finance and Budget Working Group update and in doing so noted that the last meeting of the Group took place on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024. It was reported that at the meeting Members were informed of a continued improvement in staff turnover rates, which stood at only 8.8 per cent. The Council was significantly under the national average rate of staff turnover (15.6 per cent). The Chairman reported that the Group was also updated on the outstanding statements of accounts which the Council had yet to submit to the external auditor. The other issues discussed at the meeting included the Dolphin Centre redevelopment and the key decision threshold.

With reference to the Council's refuse fleet refurbishment, it was noted that there had been a reappraisal of costs. The Interim Executive Director explained that the company hired to undertake the refurbishment had struggled to refurbish the vehicles in time and there was now a backlog of vehicles waiting to be refurbished. It was reported that it was more viable in this context to purchase new vehicles rather



than undertake refurbishment works. It was agreed that a briefing note on this subject would be submitted to the next Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the Finance and Budget Working Group Update be noted.

95/23

## **WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - UPDATE**

The Council's Representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), Councillor B. Kumar, updated the Board on the matters discussed by HOSC on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024. Members were provided with a written copy of the update provided by Councillor B. Kumar and the following points were highlighted for Members' consideration.

It was reported that over 5.5 million appointments had been delivered in General Practice across Herefordshire and Worcestershire in the last year of data. This was 19 per cent more appointments per year than before the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the Representative highlighted that no information was provided on how many of the appointments within last year were face-to-face and how many telephone consultations. It was noted that patient satisfaction rates with GP services in Worcestershire were low compared to neighbouring counties / metropolitan boroughs and were continuing to decline in Worcestershire.

It was highlighted that a particular issue in Worcestershire was people being unable to get GP appointments being referred to 111. It was noted that there was no data available on how many GP patients who called 111 landing in A&E. The Representative highlighted that the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Primary Care Access Recovery Plan had two main ambitions: to tackle the '8am rush' and to enable patients to know on the day they contact their practice how their request will be managed.

The Representative highlighted that another issue discussed at the meeting was that pharmacists were now allowed to issue prescriptions for health matters such as high blood pressure, contraceptive pill or shingles.

During discussion of the report, a question was raised as to why in Worcestershire 40 per cent of people who live in affluent areas find it difficult to access GP appointments as compared to 51 per cent of people in deprived areas. It was noted that the reasons behind these might be due to better digital accessibility in more affluent areas as well as variance between individual GP practices that might affect the outcome.

**RESOLVED** that the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Update be noted.

96/23

## **CABINET WORK PROGRAMME**

The Cabinet Work Programme was presented for Members' consideration.

**RESOLVED** that the Cabinet Work Programme be noted.

97/23

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The following items were agreed to be added to the Overview and Scrutiny Board work programme:

- Food Waste Recycling – progress update to be provided at a date to be determined in the new municipal year.
- District Heat Network Revisions – pre-scrutiny – This report would be scrutinised before presentation to Cabinet.

It was also requested that the work programme be updated with items as discussed earlier in the meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be updated as per the pre-amble above.

The meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

Chairman

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

22ND APRIL 2024, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors P. M. McDonald (Chairman), S. T. Nock (Vice-Chairman), A. Bailes, R. Bailes, A. M. Dale, E. M. S. Gray, R. J. Hunter, B. Kumar, S. A. Robinson and H. D. N. Rone-Clarke

Observers:

Councillor S. J. Baxter (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration)

Councillor K. Taylor (Cabinet Member for Planning, Licensing and WRS)

Councillor S. A. Webb (Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and Strategic Housing)

Councillor M. Marshall

Officers: Mr. G. Revans, Ms J. Willis, Mrs. C. Felton, Mr S. Parry, Mrs. J. Bayley-Hill, Mr M. Austin, Mr. M. Bough and Mr. M. Dunphy, and Mr. M. Sliwinski

98/23

#### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor J. D. Stanley.

99/23

#### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor A. Bailes declared an Other Disclosable Interest in relation to Agenda Item Number 15, Minute Number 112/23 – Parking Enforcement Consultancy, as he was a Manager of a Consultancy specialising in Transport Planning, Traffic Engineering, Sustainable Transport, Parking, and Transport Economics. Councillor A. Bailes confirmed that the Consultancy did not operate in Bromsgrove District.

Councillor A. Bailes remained in the meeting for consideration of this item and took part in the debate thereon.

There were no further Declarations of Interest.

100/23

#### GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS REVIEW - IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS UPDATE

The Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services introduced the report which provided details of the outcomes of the last meeting of the Constitution Review Working Group (CRWG) which took place on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024. It was reported that various changes to the Council's constitution were discussed at that meeting, details of which were included in the report. The Board was asked to determine whether to endorse the CRWG recommendations for onward consideration by Cabinet and full Council.

Following the presentation, Members asked a number of questions and the following was noted:

- Proposal to remove reference to the former Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) from the Joint Arrangements document – It was noted that reference to GBSLEP was being removed from the Council's constitution because the organisation was no longer in existence.
- Changing the location of Planning call in process in the Council's Constitution – The review of the Council's constitution found that guidance in respect of the call in process for planning applications was not placed in the most logical position. It was therefore proposed that it should be incorporated into the Planning Procedure Rules at Part 14 of the Constitution, as detailed in Appendix B to the report.
- Arrangements regarding Planning site visits – It was proposed by CRWG that temporary arrangements regarding site visits, introduced as a result of the covid-19 pandemic, be removed from the constitution. In response to a question about frequency of planning site visits, Members were advised to contact the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services separately about the subject.
- Clarification on the proposed changes to the Scrutiny Procedure Rules in respect of the types of items that would not be accepted for Overview and Scrutiny Board consideration and in respect of when a subject might not be debated by the Board – Members were of the view that the term 'significant' was imprecise when used in the last sentence of the first bullet point of paragraph 3.14 in the report. This stated: *"It is therefore proposed that the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules should be amended so as to clarify that a subject may not be considered at a meeting if it has previously been debated at a meeting of the Board held in the preceding 6 months, unless there has been a significant change in circumstances"*
- It was felt by Members that the closing clause of the above sentence should read: *"significant in the opinion of the Chairman, having discussed it with Officers"*. Officers undertook to incorporate this into the updated document to be presented to Cabinet.

- Reference was made to the Member Enquiries Guidance - 'Best Practice for Handling Members' Enquiries' - document proposed as an appendix to Part 22 of the Council's Constitution. It was felt that this document was much needed in terms of defining the level of service that Councillors could expect from Officers, and responsiveness to elected member enquiries.

Following the discussion, recommendations as printed in the report were proposed, seconded, and, being voted upon, agreed.

## **RECOMMENDED**

- 1) That the Joint Arrangements, at Part 7 of the constitution, be updated, as detailed in Appendix A;
- 2) That the Planning Procedure Rules, at Part 14 of the constitution, be updated, as detailed in Appendix B and the Planning Call In process be removed from the Officer Scheme of Delegations at Part 6 of the constitution;
- 3) That the Scrutiny Procedure Rules, at Part 12 of the constitution, be updated as detailed in Appendix C;
- 4) That the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee Procedure Rules, at Part 13 of the constitution, be updated as detailed in Appendix D;
- 5) That the amendments to the Member Officer Relations Protocol, at Part 22 of the constitution, whereby the Member Enquiries Guidance should be added as an appendix to that part of the constitution, be approved; and
- 6) That the Committee terms of reference for the Licensing (Miscellaneous) Sub-Committees A and B for the number of Councillors be amended as detailed in Appendix F.

101/23

## **WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - UPDATE**

The Council's Representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), Councillor B. Kumar, updated the Board on the matters discussed by HOSC at its meetings on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024. Members were provided with a written copy of the updates provided by Councillor B. Kumar. Some of the points highlighted for Members' consideration included:

- An inspection of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust (including Hill Crest Mental Health Ward) had taken place, and the Trust was given an overall rating of 'Requires Improvement' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Concerns

were raised in particular about staffing levels and patient experience at the Hill Crest Mental Health Ward in Redditch.

- Acute Dermatology Service Provision – It was reported that a series of resignations and retirements by Consultants and the Trust's difficulty in recruiting permanent staff, were having an adverse impact on dermatology services, including longer waiting times. However, the Trust had made interim arrangements and a contract with a private sector provider, HealthHarmonie, had eased the impact.
- Cancer detection in Worcestershire – Worcestershire was reported as having good rates of cancer detection at 60 per cent which compared favourably with the England average of 54.1 per cent. Various agencies were involved in optimising early cancer detection, for example the use of Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) in primary care to identify patients at risk of having colorectal cancer. It was noted that take up rates for cancer screening, including cancer screening programme for women, bowel cancer, breast screening rates were higher than the national average in Worcestershire.
- Routine Immunisation – It was reported that there was a high level of take up of the MMR vaccine in Worcestershire at 90 per cent compared to 83 per cent nationally.

Following the update, Members asked about an improvement plan for the Hill Crest Mental Health Ward in the context of long-term issues at that setting. Councillor B. Kumar explained that there were persistent issues with this Mental Health Ward which included a shortage of staff and contract arrangements in place whereby in the event of lack of beds at the facility patients were being transferred to a unit in Wales. Furthermore, the Ward was old and dilapidated.

A reference was made to the Impact of Heatwaves Short Sharp Review currently taking place and the importance of the Council providing awareness, particularly the young and people with fair skin, about the dangers of direct exposure to strong sunlight.

**RESOLVED** that the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Update be noted.

102/23

## **IMPACT OF HEATWAVES SHORT SHARP REVIEW - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Councillor M. Marshall introduced the item, having been appointed Chairman of the Impact of Heatwaves Short Sharp Review at its first meeting. Councillor M. Marshall recapped on the background to the decision to launch this review. It was noted that full Council agreed on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024 to commission the Overview and Scrutiny Board to undertake a review of the impact of extreme heat events.



Councillor M. Marshall provided a detailed explanation of the aims of the Short Sharp Review as set out in the Terms of Reference. It was reported that the first meeting was held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024, which was attended by Public Health Officer from Worcestershire County Council and a representative from Applied Resilience, an organisation providing Emergency Planning service to the Council.

It was highlighted there was plenty of resources already available to the public regarding heatwave risk and protection. A number of public agencies were aware of this issue and had procedures in place. The key aims of this Review were to identify ways to improve coordination between agencies with regard to heatwave events planning and to ensure there were readily accessible resources available advising residents on how to prepare for heatwaves.

In response to a question, it was reported that the next meeting would be held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024. It was planned that meetings of the Short Sharp Review Group would take place once per month and it was hoped the investigation could be concluded by July 2024.

**RESOLVED** that the Terms of Reference for the Impact of Heatwaves Short Sharp Review be approved and that Councillor M. Marshall be confirmed as the Chairman of the Short Sharp Review.

103/23

## **REPROFILING OF CAPITAL FLEET REPLACEMENT BUDGET - DOMESTIC WASTE FLEET**

[At the discretion of the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Board, this item was moved forward to be considered as item 6 on the agenda].

The Environmental Services Manager provided a report on reprofiling of capital fleet replacement budget and in doing so noted that in 2021, as part of a review of Council finances, the decision was taken to extend the life of operational refuse fleet vehicles by an extra year, from 7 to 8 years, before replacement. At that time, it was also decided to start refurbishing Waste Collection Vehicles to extend their life by a further period in order to reduce capital expenditure on new vehicles and make savings that could be put towards the future purchase of more expensive energy efficient vehicles, as part of the Council's carbon reduction ambitions.

It was reported that as part of the decision in 2021, no appropriate allowance was made for the operational impact that refurbishment, which removed multiple vehicles from use for extended periods and required the use of hire vehicles to support service delivery. This had resulted in unbudgeted revenue pressure. In addition, the first few vehicles took around 12 months to be refurbished due to parts and supply issues that were affecting the sector in 2022-23. Subsequent vehicles had also overrun on planned refurbishment timescales, resulting in significant unbudgeted costs on hire vehicles.

The delays in refurbishment timescales and the need to prioritise work on the Waste Collection fleet (Domestic & Commercial) had impacted on the availability of other vehicles required for statutory services such as road sweepers, Place Team vans for litter picking and fly tip removal. There had also been impact on discretionary and chargeable services such as the District Public Toilet cleaner's vehicle, and WRS's dog warden van, impacting on income generation of these services.

It was reported that in light of the increased costs and operational challenges arising from extended operational lifespans of the vehicles, overruns on refurbishment periods, and staffing issues within the workshop, it was proposed to revert to a seven-year replacement cycle on the Council's Waste fleet, and to re-profile the Capital Fleet Replacement budgets to support the purchase of replacement vehicles.

It was proposed that revenue funding be increased to support the ongoing use of hire vehicles to safeguard operational service delivery of the waste service during 2024-25. Revenue pressures were anticipated at £88,000 in 2024-25, £342,000 in 2025-26, and £372,000 in 2026-27 before a reduction in revenue payments as a result of bringing the replacement costs forward would result in predicted revenue saving of £339,000 in 2028-29, £660,000 in 2029-30, and £644,000 in 2030-31. The next vehicle replacement cycle would then be due in the 2031-32 financial year, when alternative types of vehicles, including electric-powered refuse vehicles, might become a more viable option for the Council.

It was also proposed that as part of reprofiling of capital fleet there be a purchase of 10 new internal combustion (ICE) refuse collection vehicles (at £210,000 per vehicle) in the 2024-25 financial year with a further 10 vehicles over 2025-26 and 2026-27 financial years. It was noted that with no current timescale for the rationalisation/relocation of the Council Depot Spaces, it was unlikely the Council would be in a position to invest in alternative-fuel vehicles before 2030. It was planned that instead, in 2024-25 the diesel internal combustion engine (ICE) fleet vehicles would be used with 30 per cent use of HVO (Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil) to support the Council's carbon reduction objective.

Following the report presentation, a number of matters were discussed by Members as follows:

- Approaching other authorities about purchase of refuse vehicles – It was reported that the Council did approach other authorities regarding how they utilise refuse vehicle fleet. Based on those conversations, it was apparent that many authorities continued to use internal combustion (ICE) vehicles. It was noted that there was an additional complexity in the Council approaching other authorities about the purchase of refuse vehicles in that Bromsgrove was one of only two authorities in the country having diamond lift bins. This led to considerable difficulties as the authority would need to find vehicles on the second-hand market

with compatible lifting mechanism (diamond lift) and such vehicles were highly uncommon across the UK.

- Member consultation on investment in refuse vehicles in 2024-25 – Members requested that, given the scale of investment in new refuse vehicles, an update be provided to Overview and Scrutiny Board once the process of purchasing of the 10 refuse vehicles had progressed to procurement stage.
- Costs set out in the report were solely for Bromsgrove District Council. It was noted that a similar fleet replacement programme was in place for Redditch. Due to joint service arrangements with Redditch, the Redditch fleet was able to support Bromsgrove service, for example when Bromsgrove vehicles were being serviced or undergoing statutory inspections. Costs were clearly delineated between the two authorities.
- Number of refuse fleet in stock at Bromsgrove Council – It was noted that the combined collection fleet consisted of sixteen 26-ton vehicles, one 18-ton vehicle, and three smaller trucks operating from the Bromsgrove Depot. There were three additional vehicles on the Council's commercial waste service, with a different lifting mechanism.
- Possibility of employing apprentices at the Depot and to operate refuse vehicles – It was highlighted that currently the Council did not have sufficient staffing capacity to maintain the fleet, and needed to recourse to hiring agency staff to maintain service operation. The Council was looking at restructuring the workshop to engage fitters and fan mechanics (at slightly lower experience level) and put in place arrangements to upskill through a skill-based pay system. It was commented that once the Council was in a position of having sufficient staff to support the workshop fully, opportunities around apprentices would be explored.
- It was noted that the Council had apprentices in the past, with some of the mechanics currently employed by the Council coming through the apprentice route. An example was given of one of the apprentices working at the Redditch workshop who had recently been appointed as a senior mechanic.
- Apprentice programme – It was reported that the last apprentice programme run by the Council for HGV mechanics was undertaken approximately 6-7 years ago.
- Staffing – It was noted that HGV mechanics from Birmingham and other areas were being approached about joining Bromsgrove District Council.
- Additional revenue costs already incurred – It was reported that there had already been additional costs incurred as a result of the

need to hire waste vehicles in 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24. Additional revenue of £150,000 was proposed to be allocated in 2024-25 for hire costs. This was based on hope that the supply of new vehicles would take approximately 40 weeks. Additionally, it was hoped that garden waste fleet, which stops operating over winter, could be used to support the service to reduce costs.

- Building spare capacity into service delivery – It was noted that spare vehicle capacity was built into service plans as the Council was required to have an Operator’s Licence agreed with the Traffic Commissioner and the DVSA. As part of these rules, the Council had to undergo scheduled inspections that took place every 6-8 to ensure safety of vehicles. During inspections vehicles could be off the road for extended periods which required spare capacity to be built in to allow continuation of service.
- Waste fleet situation – It was highlighted that waste fleet was the area of the wider Environmental Services most at risk and therefore this area was being prioritised following review by the Environmental Services Manager. It was highlighted that domestic waste collection was a statutory service and delivery of consistent service in this area had to be prioritised over other services such as street cleansing.
- Street cleansing fleet – Concerns were expressed about the Council only having two street cleansing vehicles available and whether that was enough to cover Bromsgrove District.
- Accounting for inflation in the purchase of waste fleet vehicles – Inflation was accounted for in the costs of purchasing refuse vehicles with the cost for 2024-25 being £220,000 and in subsequent years this was uplifted by £5,000 per year. It was highlighted that this was an estimation at this moment.
- Modelling the number of waste fleet vehicles in need of replacement – It was reported that the entire fleet was in urgent need of replacement, with those vehicles that had been recently refurbished only having a couple of years of useful life left. The Environmental Service Manager commented that in his professional opinion obtaining new refuse vehicles was the only viable option to keep the waste disposal service in operation over the next couple of years.
- It was explained that Bromsgrove had different types of bins from Redditch. Bromsgrove had diamond lift bins. The reason for this was that in 2004 Bromsgrove received grant funding from central government to invest in new waste technology. Investment was made in a type of waste collection vehicle known as a side loader which allowed operation of reduced staff as the vehicle could pull alongside the bin by the curb edge, allowing the mechanism to reach out, grab the bin, and lift it in. The diamond mechanism helps

centre the bin on this automated mechanism. It was noted that difficulties were experienced with use of this type of vehicle and the Council had to revert back to conventional fleet service when those vehicles reached end of life.

- HVO fuel – It was reported that switching to part use of HVO fuel in ICE vehicles had no noticeable impact on fuel efficiency of fleet vehicles but resulted in a slight increase in moisture related issues when vehicles had been parked up for long periods.
- Commercial waste service – It was reported that the Council's commercial waste service, which operated across Worcestershire and parts of Warwickshire, achieved net profit of circa £180,000 in the last financial year.
- The Chairman questioned why the change to reprofiling of the Capital Fleet Budget towards the purchase of new waste fleet vehicles was not reported at the February 2024 meeting of full Council when the budget for 2024-25 was approved. The Chairman questioned why the proposal submitted to Members in February 2024 still included a plan to refurbish the fleet, and why this had changed radically as in this report in April 2024, which noted that refurbishment was not a viable option and waste vehicles had to be replaced. The Environmental Services Manager responded that the process of looking at options around the fleet started in December 2023. At the time concerns were raised by the Environmental Services Manager regarding the refurbishment of fleet vehicles as a viable option and that the waste collection service was at high risk of failure. The proposals with regarding to fleet budget were not able to being finalised before the budget setting in February 2023. However, these reprofiling proposals, including the need to provide £150,000 revenue budget for 2024-25, were presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Board at the earliest date possible after the full extent of risk became known to the Service.
- Risk of not meeting statutory obligations – The Environmental Services Manager reported that at this point the Council had not failed any of its statutory duties. The impact of the problems within the service had impacted on the timescales for removal of larger fly tips, which were taking around 6-7 days to remove but still within statutory timescales to provide cleansing duties. The concern was delivery of the Environmental Services fleet over the next two years and that if weaknesses within the fleet were not addressed the Council would breach its statutory duties.
- The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Community Safety (including Car Parking) addressed the Board and in doing so noted that elected members had been provided with the opportunity to attend a presentation on the fleet, delivered by the Interim Executive Director. The Portfolio Holder commented that at

the moment he thought the move to electric for larger fleet vehicles would be impractical due to issues with range and infrastructure.

- A Member proposed that the option of leasing the fleet vehicles with a maintenance agreement should be considered given the issues with recruitment of HGV mechanics and running maintenance costs. It was responded that due to the nature of the work delivering waste collection service there were a large number of minor accident damage. In addition, there were risks of failure to sensors and components within the lifting mechanism at any time. As such, the leasing options that were investigated by Officers were not thought to be viable due to restrictions on those leases. However, routine maintenance was outsourced as much as possible. If, at the procurement stage, there were viable lease options available, these would be considered.
- The Board considered whether it was necessary to set up a Task Group investigation due to the seriousness of the situation with regard to waste services fleet. It was noted that the Board previously agreed to being provided with a presentation on waste and recycling and implications of the Environment Act, including on a requirement to introduce food waste. This presentation would be provided at a July meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Board. It was felt by most Members that this presentation should be considered in the first instance and that no Task Group should be set up for the time being.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

104/23

## **AGILE WORKING - UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION**

An update in relation to Members' questions on the Council's Agile Working was provided. The responses were provided in the briefing note. The following additional queries were raised at the meeting:

- 1) Review of the title 'Agile working' as it might be misconstrued as in project management terms it was a way of implementing large projects. Officers undertook to review the title as the initiative was important for recruitment and retention.

It was asked whether space utilisation exercise was being undertaken on a regular basis to identify issues such as double-booking of hot desk spaces within Council Offices and/or under-utilisation of shared space. The Executive Director undertook to ascertain whether space utilisation checks were being carried out by the Agile Project Team in relation to the hot desking booking system.

The Interim Executive Director explained that the Agile Project Team had a Project Manager who reported to the Agile Board. The Board was chaired by the Council's Chief Executive. It was noted that the majority of office-based staff at the Council were signed up to agile working

arrangements. It was highlighted that some staff were required to be available on site during all contracted hours due to the nature of their jobs. This applied for example to refuse collectors or staff employed at the depot. In general, service requirements took priority over agile arrangements so, when necessary, working patterns were adjusted to suit service requirements. Members requested that they be provided with quantitative data on the take up (number and proportion of staff) of agile working across the Council.

- 2) Investigate the possibility of introducing a follow up to measure satisfaction with customers' interaction with services. For example, a form of trustpilot-style of providing feedback when customers interact with service areas.

A Member commented that the Council needed to be able to measure Members' satisfaction with responsiveness of service areas to elected member enquiries. A question was asked concerning why the Council used a survey company to create a pilot survey for customers. It was responded that surveys produced by the Council in house generally had low response rates; a survey company would offer expertise that was hoped would result in greater engagement with this pilot. Members requested that details with regard to the cost of engaging survey company be provided.

- 3) Progress on increasing responsiveness of officers to member enquiries and what progress had been made in looking at this issue so far by the project team.

It was noted that the 'Best Practice for Handling Member Enquiries' document, as presented under item 3 (Minute No. 100/23), was endorsed by the Board. This document provided details of the process which would be followed when Members raise complaints / compliments in relation to officer responsiveness.

In summary, the following information was requested by Members:

- Whether a space utilisation exercise was being carried out periodically to determine the effectiveness of hot desking;
- Number and proportion of overall Council staff that had taken up agile working;
- The cost of engaging a survey company to work on creating a pilot for capturing residents' feedback.

**RESOLVED** that the update be noted.

105/23

## **LOCAL HERITAGE LIST FOR BROMSGROVE DISTRICT - ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

The Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager provided a briefing update, which set out the progress to date in creating the Local Heritage



List (LHL) and showed the proposed action plan for completion of the LHL in 18 months.

It was reported that four the parishes – Alvechurch, Belbroughton, Beoley, and Dodford – had been surveyed and draft LHL's for these areas had now been compiled. 129 buildings and structures were being proposed for the LHL from these parishes. Draft lists for these parishes were ready to be consulted on in late spring 2024. Areas currently being surveyed included Bromsgrove Town, Lickey and Blackwell Parish, and Wythall Parish.

It was noted that at the previous meeting of Overview and Scrutiny a recommendation was (subsequently agreed by Cabinet) that the final Local Heritage List (LHL) for Bromsgrove District be completed within 18 months. This provided a target date for completion of LHL of September 2025. The works on compiling a list for parishes / areas would be carried out in alphabetical order. It was highlighted that Officers could not be certain how much work was required in each area until a survey for a given area was carried out. As the work progressed, Officers would be providing quarterly updates on progress to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

The Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager reported that during the process of creating LHL for their areas/wards, Ward Members would be contacted a minimum of three times: (1) when officers begin surveying; (2) on completion of the draft LHL for the Ward; (3) prior to adoption of the list for the area. It was highlighted that for parishes where survey work had been undertaken already, Ward Members would be contacted imminently to update on progress. This would also be the case for the three areas where survey work was being carried out at the moment.

Following the update, a Member thanked Officers for providing this briefing which set out a plan for completion of LHL and which included details of Member involvement in the process. A question was asked regarding whether submissions of proposals for inclusion on the LHL could still be made in respect of Lickey and Blackwell Parish. It was responded that the list creation was a continuous and iterative process and proposals for addition to the list could be submitted at any time.

In response to a question, it was noted that in areas which had parishes, Officers worked on the basis of parish boundaries rather than ward boundaries in respect of creating LHLs. A Member requested that it be highlighted and corrected in future documents that the correct name for Belbroughton Parish was Belbroughton and Fairfield Parish Council – the area covered by this Parish being the villages of Belbroughton and Fairfield (rather than only Belbroughton).

With respect to publicity for LHL consultations in each area, it was noted that Officers would be in contact with the Parish Councils. The LHL consultations would also be publicised at events in each local area.

Members were asked to liaise with Officers if they were aware of local events at which the Council could promote the LHL consultations.

Members requested that future briefings include a table setting out dates for completion of LHL at each area alongside a work programme outlining tasks to be undertaken in each area and progress in their completion. The Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager responded that detail would be added to the action plan table for the next update report.

**RESOLVED** that the update be noted.

106/23

## **DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT (DFG)**

The Strategic Housing Services Manager provided an overview of the Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG). It was noted that these were mandatory grants to support the provision of adaptations to promote independent living within the home, subject to the provisions of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

It was explained that the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) provided each local authority in England with a DFG allocation contained within the Better Care Fund paid to the County Council and passported to Local Housing Authorities (including Bromsgrove).

It was explained that the grant was means-tested and there was a robust process followed to arrive at grant allocation decisions, starting with a comprehensive assessment of the applicant's needs.

It was noted that it was considered good practice to offer a Home Improvement Agency (HIA) service to support an accepted applicant and their family through the complicated process of carrying out major building works. In Worcestershire a partnership of the 6 Local Housing Authorities and Worcestershire County Council commissioned a HIA referred as the Worcestershire Promoting Independent Living Service and this was provided by Millbrook Health Care under a contract until March 2025.

Performance data was provided on the use of DFG in 2022-23, including on the types of building jobs carried out to enable a home adaptation, expenditure on the home adaptations by type, breakdown of the types of recipients of DFG by tenure and breakdown by age. It was noted that over 50 per cent of DFGs were for bathroom and stairlift adaptations.

Following the presentation, Members asked questions regarding the DFG and the following responses were noted:

- Review of maximum amount of DFG grant amount that can be awarded – It was noted that the current maximum amount of DFG grant that can be awarded to an individual was £30,000 and currently there were no discussions nationally around increasing

that amount. However, the Council had the power to provide discretionary top-ups to DFG grants.

- Resistance of landlords to providing adaptations through DFG grant – It was noted that in cases where recipients of DFG grant were living in rented accommodation, the landlord could refuse an adaptation being installed in their property. The Council did not possess powers to force the landlord to have the adaptation installed. However, the Council would discuss the issue with a landlord, explaining why the adaptation was needed and what the benefits they could have from the work undertaken.
- It was highlighted that the Operational Therapists (OT) service used for the DFG provision was specifically used by the Council for provision of DFG service and not shared with NHS Acute Trusts.
- Median delivery times of delivering an adaptation – It was clarified that delivery time of adaptations for DFG recipients were calculated from the time of OT referral to the home improvement agency (HIA) to completion of the works.
- It was noted that there was a statutory requirement for the Council to assess and process DFG applications sent from HIA within 6 months. The Council was on average completing this stage in 11 days.
- It was noted that in the current tender with the HIA, there was a performance management framework which set delivery targets for DFG adaptation works. Foundations, the Government approved HIA, was helping the Council draft the specification for a new tender.
- The Deputy Leader addressed the Board and cited a case work with a resident where it took three years for an adaptation to be installed. The Deputy Leader raised that this was not due to the Council Officers but slow progress made by the current HIA provider, and it was hoped that in the new tender the right performance measures and targets would be included to ensure that HIAs met targets.
- DFG Capital Allocation – It was noted that a total of £745,068.99 Government's DFG allocation was allocated to recipients in 2022-23. Any unspent amount was carried forward to the next financial year.
- Land charge placed on the property in which adaptations were being done – It was noted that a charge for works from DFG was placed against a property. This meant that if the property where an adaptation had been installed was sold within 10 years, the costs of the works would be recovered from proceeds of the sale.

- A Member made a comment that data in the report was now over 12 months old. It was explained that data up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 would become available within the next 6-8 weeks.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

107/23

**FOODBANK & COMMUNITY SHOP PROVISION TASK GROUP - FINAL REPORT**

The Chairman of the Foodbank and Community Provision Task Group, Councillor E. M. S. Gray, presented the final report of the Task Group. In doing so, Councillor E. M. S. Gray provided details of the final recommendations of the Task Group, explaining rationale behind each recommendation in detail.

Following the opening remarks by the Chairman of the Task Group, Members discussed the following aspects of the work undertaken by the Task Group:

- Funding provision to foodbank organisations –It was noted that one of the areas considered by the Task Group was distribution of funding to foodbanks in the District. Following visits to the foodbanks, it was deemed imperative for Members to understand mechanisms through which funding was provided to foodbanks. Members also asked for updates on which foodbanks operating in the District were being funded by the Council and/or via the funding that was distributed by the Council.
- An explanation was provided that Bromsgrove District Council did not provide any funding to foodbanks from its General Fund (the Council's budget). The Council had awarded the Government's Household Support Fund (HSF) to local organisations. This money had been provided to the District Council from Worcestershire County Council in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding. The purpose of the Fund was to support vulnerable households through lead local authorities as part of the support linked to the increase in the cost of living. This fund specifically related to providing assistance to vulnerable households in most need of support to help with energy and water, food, wider essentials, advice services and housing costs.
- As part of HSF grant funding distribution, foodbanks were awarded some funding. The requirement to receive funding was that the foodbank had been in existence for a minimum of 12 months as of the start of each new phase of Household Support Fund (HSF). It was reported that in March 2024 the HSF had been extended for an extra six months, and five foodbanks in the District benefited from this round of HSF funding. Information with regard to which foodbanks had been awarded this funding were published on the Council's website.

- It was reported that several organisations listed in the report provided other support services alongside foodbank operation. These organisations could also bid and receive funding from the Council in respect of other areas of their operation. For instance, some organisations received Homelessness Prevention Grant Support, approved annually by Cabinet, in respect of housing support. This funding was subject to its own eligibility and monitoring processes as detailed in Cabinet reports.
- Residents in need of travel across local authority boundaries to access foodbank provision – It was highlighted that in the course of investigation, Task Group Members highlighted anecdotal evidence of residents in wards bordering other local authorities, such as in Rubery and Hagley, accessing foodbanks across district boundaries. This was attributed to lack of foodbank provision in the outlying wards in Bromsgrove. A question was asked with respect of whether this issue was also identified in the Belbroughton and Romsley ward. It was responded that the Task Group Members were not aware of evidence of this in respect of Belbroughton and Romsley.

With respect of recommendation 4 of the Task Group Final Report, there was a suggestion that the wording of that recommendation be changed to:

*“Where there is evidence that there is a need and no facility currently exists (such as Rubery), the Council will continue to support local communities to create food banks.”*

It was noted that this amendment was proposed as it was felt that the current recommendation 4 contained a financial implication for the Council and the amended wording would provide a clarification as to the role that the Council would be able to provide in respect of supporting creation of new foodbanks. This proposal was not seconded and not subject to the vote.

Most Members were of the opinion that recommendation 4 as currently printed in the Task Group Final Report should not be changed and remain as follows:

*“That the Council endeavour to investigate, under the auspices of existing arrangements available to the Council, such as the Bromsgrove Partnership, whether communities in areas of the district that do not currently have foodbanks require this provision, and that the Council make best effort to create a foodbank in Rubery where a need has already been identified.”*

Members of Overview and Scrutiny Board and the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing and Strategic Housing took the opportunity to thank the Task Group Members for their investigation and comprehensive final report.

On being put to the vote the Foodbank and Community Shop Provision Task Group report recommendations, as printed in the Final Report submitted, were agreed as a recommendation to Cabinet.

## **RECOMMENDED:**

- 1) That the Council update its website to include contact details of all foodbanks in the district which wish to be on the list. The Council will ensure that the webpage links to the foodbanks' websites and/or other contact details, such as telephone and social media, are up-to-date and that information on how to get in touch is easily accessible.
- 2) That all organisations providing foodbanks receive the appropriate and necessary support and resources from Bromsgrove District Council, which is proportionate and equivalent to their size and what they require. In the transition period, if the organisation is growing, appropriate support and funding needs to be allocated.
- 3) That the Council develop a consistent universal understanding / guidelines of what level of recording of users' personal information is required for the needs of the community engaged in the foodbank service without breaching the GDPR legislation. That the Council recognise there might be specific recording requirements as conditions attached to accessing specific funding streams.
- 4) That the Council endeavour to investigate, under the auspices of existing arrangements available to the Council, such as the Bromsgrove Partnership, whether communities in areas of the district that do not currently have foodbanks require this provision, and that the Council make best effort to create a foodbank in Rubery where a need has already been identified.
- 5) That the Council continues to develop opportunities to enable foodbank organisations to come together as part of a network to support each other and to promote the sustainability of the help being provided to the community across the district. That the Council makes clear that joining the network is a pre-requisite if applying for Council funding, should this become available in the future.

108/23

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24**

The Overview and Scrutiny Board Annual Report 2023-24 was submitted for Members' consideration. The Chairman reported that together with the Vice-Chairman of the Board he was due to meet with Officers to propose that the number of meetings of Overview and Scrutiny be increased in future municipal years. An outcome of this discussion would be reported to Members at the next meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Board.

A typographical error on page 9 of the Annual Report with respect to the membership of the Finance and Budget Working Group was reported. It was noted that the Member represented on the Finance and Budget Working Group was Councillor R. Bailes, not Councillor A. Bailes.

**RESOLVED** that subject to the amendment in the preamble above the Overview and Scrutiny Board Annual Report 2023-24 be noted.

109/23

## **CABINET WORK PROGRAMME**

The Cabinet Work Programme was presented for Members' consideration.

**RESOLVED** that the Cabinet Work Programme be noted.

110/23

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

It was requested that an item with respect to new build affordable housing be added to the Board's work programme for the next meeting. It was requested that this report cover the topics of the current number of affordable houses in the District, affordable housing targets and whether the Council was meeting its targets, as well as projections for future demand.

**RESOLVED** that the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be updated as per the pre-amble above.

111/23

## **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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of scheme 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:-

Item No    Paragraph

15            3

16            3, 4

17            3, 4

112/23

## **PARKING ENFORCEMENT CONSULTANCY**



The Interim Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services introduced this report and in doing so recapped that at the meeting of full Council on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024, the Parking Enforcement Service Level Agreement with Wychavon District Council was considered and Members agreed to undertake a strategic review of parking services. The review would include on and off street parking enforcement and would support preparation of a business case for the future of the service. At 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024 full Council, it was agreed that a one-off budget of £50,000 be included in the Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2024-25 to fund the proposed strategic review, including through engagement with consultants.

It was noted that the brief for the strategic review included three key deliverables:

- A review of existing parking requirements including supply and demand for now and in the future;
- A review of car park management arrangements with solutions identified to reduce the need for off street parking enforcement;
- Review of On-Street Enforcement will be carried out to address member and resident concerns around coverage of activities.

It was highlighted that through the strategic review the consultants would be engaging with Ward Members and Parish Councillors to identify local issues with regard to parking.

- Timeline for the consultants' work – It was anticipated at this point that the appointed consultants would begin work on the strategic review in mid-May with the work to take three months to complete. Final consultants' report was anticipated in September 2024 with regular meetings to ensure that the review remained on track.
- Number of car parks operated by Bromsgrove District Council – A Member commented that the Council operated 9 car parks and not 11 car parks, as stated under paragraph 2.1 of the report. The Member stated that this figure probably included Churchfield Car Park which was closed and one other should not be included. The Officer responded that part of the work was about understanding demand and currently 2 of the car parks, although closed currently, had uncertainty with regard whether they would be used in the future, hence the report stated a figure of 11 Council-operated car parks.
- Specialist parking consultants – The need to ensure that the Council employed specialist parking consultancy as part of this strategic review was highlighted by a Member. It was noted that understanding the specific parking issues and needs in areas outside of Bromsgrove Town Centre such as: occupancy and duration of use in car parks, the impacts of overspill into surrounding streets. It was highlighted by a Member that

involvement of the County Council in the strategic review was needed in order to ensure its success.

- Understanding how traffic wardens are operating – The Interim Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services reported that there was regular monthly reporting by Wychavon District Council to catalogue what areas the parking wardens were visiting and at what frequency.
- A Member commented that he thought an on-the-ground survey of parking provision in Alvechurch needed to be undertaken as a priority before the summer holiday period. The Member cited serious parking issues in that ward including loss of 40 parking spaces over the next few months (which represented 50 per cent of parking provision). The Officer responded that over the next few weeks conversations would be held with consultants and Ward Members, including assessment of the severity of the individual cases/areas. Based on these conversations, decisions would be made as to how the review would be undertaken in each ward/area.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

(During the consideration of this item, Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to move to exclude the press and public prior to any debate of exempt matters on the grounds that information would be revealed which related to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))

113/23

**INTERIM UPDATE ON THE TRANSFER OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UNIT (EDU) FROM WYRE FOREST DC TO BROMSGROVE AND REDDITCH COUNCILS**

An update was provided on the progress in the transfer of economic development unit (EDU) from Wyre Forest DC to Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils, including on the recruitment to the key posts in respect of the proposed new Economic Development, Regeneration and Property Service.

**RESOLVED** that the update be noted.

(During the consideration of this item, Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to move to exclude the press and public prior to any debate of exempt matters on the grounds that information would be revealed which related to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and which related to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority

or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority).

114/23

**TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 11TH MARCH 2024**

The minutes of the meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024, including the record of the confidential matters discussed at the meeting, were considered.

There was a request for an amendment to the minutes record in respect of the inaccuracy in the confidential minutes record of the subject matter that was considered in exempt session (Minute Item 86/23 – To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024). It was resolved that the inaccuracy would be corrected.

**RESOLVED** that subject to the amendment in respect of the confidential minutes record, the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024 be agreed as a true and correct record.

(During the consideration of this item, Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to move to exclude the press and public prior to any debate of exempt matters on the grounds that information would be revealed which related to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and which related to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority).

The meeting closed at 9.38 p.m.

Chairman

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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**Cabinet**  
2024

17<sup>h</sup> July

### LEVELLING UP UPDATE ON WINDSOR STREET CONTRACT AND MARKET HALL DEVELOPMENT - BROMSGROVE TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Sue Baxter Councillor Karen May
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Head of Service		Sue Hanley Pete Carpenter
Report Author	Job Title: Chief Executive email: S.Hanley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Job Title: Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Resources email: Peter.Carpenter@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk	
Wards Affected		Central
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		No
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)		Run & grow a successful business Sustainability Communities which are safe, well-maintained & green
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(s) 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended in Appendices A to C and F		

#### 1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Cabinet is asked to note the challenges and work done to date detailed within this report and to RESOLVE to approve:**

- 1) **The appointment of City Demolition for the** demolition of existing buildings and associated site remediation, removal of existing redundant services and utilities.
- 2) **A 10 week extension** in the Market Hall Pre Construction Service Agreement (PCSA) in order to fully validate costs.

#### 2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The report sets out progress on the Levelling Up projects being delivered in the Town Centre. Levelling Up project reports have been



reviewed 5 times by either Cabinet or Overview and Scrutiny since the original design document was presented in early 2022 namely:

- Bromsgrove Town Centre Regeneration – Cabinet, 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024
- Bromsgrove 2040 Vision, Cabinet 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023
- Market Hall Proposal – Cabinet 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023
- Market Hall Scrutiny – Overview and Scrutiny, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023.
- Levelling Up Fund Update – Overview and Scrutiny, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

2.2 This report seeks to update Members on the various stages of the project and the position to date.

### 3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

#### **Scheme Affordability**

- 3.1 The Council applied for and was awarded £14.5m of Levelling up Funding. To maximise the outputs for the identified schemes the Council has set aside £1.6m of funding. This achieved an overall budget for the sum of £16.1m.
- 3.2 Members will be aware that the conditional timescales allotted to levelling up funding are challenging and as a result the Council applied for and was granted a six-month extension through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Project Adjustment Request (PAR) process for the Market Hall element of the scheme.
- 3.3 The project has been challenging and that there have been a number of external factors that have influenced the programme delivery timescales and the overall cost envelope for the project. It is not unusual for costs to fluctuate through the design and build process as unknown factors and market forces become more relevant. At present the combined projects are projected to be £1.769m overspent. A detailed breakdown can be found at **Appendix A to this report**. Notwithstanding it is expected that the cost and value engineering process will result in this figure reducing to circa £1m.
- 3.4 In order for the project to proceed the Council must look to finance this gap and members are advised that this can be achieved either through debt financing or by making an application for the funding available through the now defunct Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) which members will be aware

currently hold £2.45m that is yet to be devolved to the Council through the winding up process.

- 3.5 There is an application process for this funding, and this is based on evidence of the outputs linked to projects. These funds are now held by Birmingham City Council on behalf of the 8 former members of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP (GBSLEP). These funds were referenced in the Birmingham City Council Report to Cabinet dated 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 where there is under Roles and Responsibilities

“The EZ Programme Management team oversees the development and delivery of projects alongside supporting the Council’s role as Accountable Body with management of the programme’s financial model including projects spends and uplift in business rates income. In delivering the programme of works in-line with the current EZ Investment Plan, the team works with project managers and sponsors to take the projects through the approval process and into delivery. “  
To develop and implement the £20m Regional Investment Fund programme.

As required, oversee delivery of legacy funding programmes transferred from the GBSLEP, including investment decisions and change requests within its delegation.

### **Windsor Street Tender Process**

- 3.6 This project is for the acquisition, demolition, decontamination and remediation of this key abandoned/ brownfield site, which has been vacant for 5 years.
- 3.7 The site was procured by the Council from the Fire Service and the County Council in March 2022.
- 3.8 MDA have been appointed as the Project Managers for the demolition and clearance of the Windsor Street site.
- 3.9 Members will be aware that the Council submitted a Planning Application for the demolition of existing buildings and associated site remediation, removal of existing redundant services and utilities. This planning application was approved on the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024 – reference 24/00335/FUL.
- 3.10 A tender process was undertaken by MDA in the first quarter of 2024. Six contractors were approached to tender for the works following an

initial expression of interest via the Pagabo Framework. The Council received 4 completed tenders from tenderers.

- 3.11 The assessment of the responses to the quality questions together with the tender sum returns provided the best tender response from City Demolition with an overall score of 99%. For reference, the “second place” tender was £122k more expensive and had a slightly lower overall score of 95%.
- 3.12 It is therefore recommended that City Demolition are appointed.
- 3.13 Members are advised that works for the demolition of the site are expected to be completed before the end of this calendar year.
- 3.14 There have been queries from Worcestershire County Council with regard to the access to the Wendron Centre. In the land sale agreement, the driveway was written in to remain as a right of access for the County Council to enable access and egress for vehicles. This has been discussed with the County Council and as a result there will be an access road inside the site compound during the works to facilitate this.
- 3.15 It should be noted that the disconnection of the electricity supply to the site (cutting off the intruder alarm) has coincided with the warm and light evenings and as a result there has been a spike in vandalism at the Windsor Street site. The Police, the security company and minor works team have been required to attend site on a daily basis to attend calls identifying intruders and to reinstate the boarding to the building. This is currently incurring call out and boarding costs of £300-400 a day to mitigate these risks, which will fall away once demolition starts.
- 3.16 Members are advised that officers have made an application for Brownfields Clearance Finding to support the additional costs anticipated as a result of the interventions of the Environmental Agency– although following the receipt of the tenders these costs are now in line with budget. The outcome of this bid will be known at the end of the summer.

#### **Public Realm Works**

- 3.17 Worcestershire County Council are responsible for the design and delivery of the Public Realm element of the project given their statutory responsibilities. Examples of finish have been provided to Members. Final prices have now been agreed and linked to a Memorandum of

Understanding (MOU) that now exists between Bromsgrove District and Worcestershire Council Councils.

- 3.18 The Council entered into this MOU to ensure both parties are fully cognisant and sighted on the detail of the projects, the funding conditionality and timescales in respect of payments for the project. This is set out in **Appendix B** to this report.
- 3.19 Members are advised that the programme for construction started in April 2024. The application for one road closure in the Town Centre was approved and Members will be aware that this coupled with the current works being carried out on the A38 is having a significant impact on the flow of traffic through the Town Centre.

#### **Market Hall Scheme Update**

- 3.20 This project aims to regenerate a key brownfield site in Bromsgrove Town Centre by creating a vibrant new commercial and cultural hub on the former Market Hall site.
- 3.21 The Council appointed Kier in April 2024 to deliver the PCSA and submit a Cost Plan for the Council to review before entering into the main works contract. Following a review of the project and the existing design, Kier submitted their initial Cost Plan in May 2024 which **identified a potential large overspend.**
- 3.22 As a result officers have worked through a number of options for members consideration. These are set out in **Appendix C.**
- 3.23 Recognising the challenges it is recommended therefore that a 10-week extension be granted to the existing PCSA programme to allow Kier and the BDC client team, planning etc., to fully explore the impact of the potential Value Engineering (VE) savings.
- 3.24 In order to enable the challenging timescales to be met members are advised that Kier have presented the potential VE savings to the BDC project team and have started discussions with BDC planning. If the extension to the PCSA is instructed, further discussions will take place with the aim of agreeing what VE items will be accepted.
- 3.25 Following the 10-week extension to the PCSA, and an agreed VE position, it is proposed that Kier will submit their forecast final account

by the end of August 2024. The updated time-plan is set out in **Appendix D**.

- 3.26 If changes require an additional planning application, consultation will need to continue in parallel with the planning process with local traders and the Ward Councillor.

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

- 4.1 The financial implications are set out in 3.1 to 3.4 and in **Appendix A**.
- 4.2 The S151 Officer signs off an assurance statement to DLUHC on a quarterly basis updating on progress.
- 4.3 An updated position on movement on the Covenant issue is set out in **Appendix F**.

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

- 5.1 There are legal implications arising from the contracts between the council and various with third parties (consultants and contractors). They are specific to each contract and assessed by the council's legal team. In addition, external legal support has been secured on specialist aspects such as the novation of the architect to the contractor.

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

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

- 6.1 This project supports the following Strategic Purposes and Priorities:  
Strategic Purposes: Run & grow a successful business: Communities which are safe, well-maintained and green.
- 6.2 Priorities: Economic development and regeneration; a balanced housing market.
- 6.3 The regeneration project at the former market hall site provides work space and will enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre with the extra food and beverage offer and the community space.

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

- 6.4 Through the redevelopment of the site, energy efficiency measures and Low and Zero Carbon technologies will be explored and may be

introduced with a view to reduce operational energy consumption and the associated carbon emissions targets. Specific solutions and targets will be explored as the designs are progressed as well as a commitment to achieving a minimum Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM) 'very good' rating on this site.

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

6.4 There are no specific equalities and climate change implications.

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

7.1 As part of the governance and reporting requirements a risk register has been produced for the sub projects. This committee was provided with Risk Updates for each of the projects in early May. These are set out in Appendix G

7.2 Risks have been mitigated significantly in terms of the Windsor Street and Public Realm elements:

- The Council are approving as part of this report a tender for the demolition and remediation of the Windsor Street site which is only slightly above budget following a protracted process of design requirements with the Environment Agency. Risks will be updated once the contract is signed.
- The Council have a defined MOU with the County Council which is an appendix to this report, significantly under budget, for the delivery of Public Realm improvements.

7.3 The key risks that still remain relate to the Market Hall process which is still in the final design phase with value engineering now taking place. There are a number of Risks, still be progressed through the final design and tender with Kier, are cost increases and the finalisation of the design for the buildings.

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

Appendix A – Detailed Financial Analysis as at July 2024 - **Exempt**  
Appendix B - Memorandum of Understanding between the County Council and Bromsgrove Council for the delivery of the Public Realm Works - **Exempt**  
Appendix C – Market Hall Options - **Exempt**  
Appendix D – Time Plan with 10 Week Delay

**Cabinet**  
2024

17<sup>h</sup> July

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Appendix E – Time Plan with Community Use moved to the main building

Appendix F – Covenant Update - **Exempt**

Appendix G – Risk Updates



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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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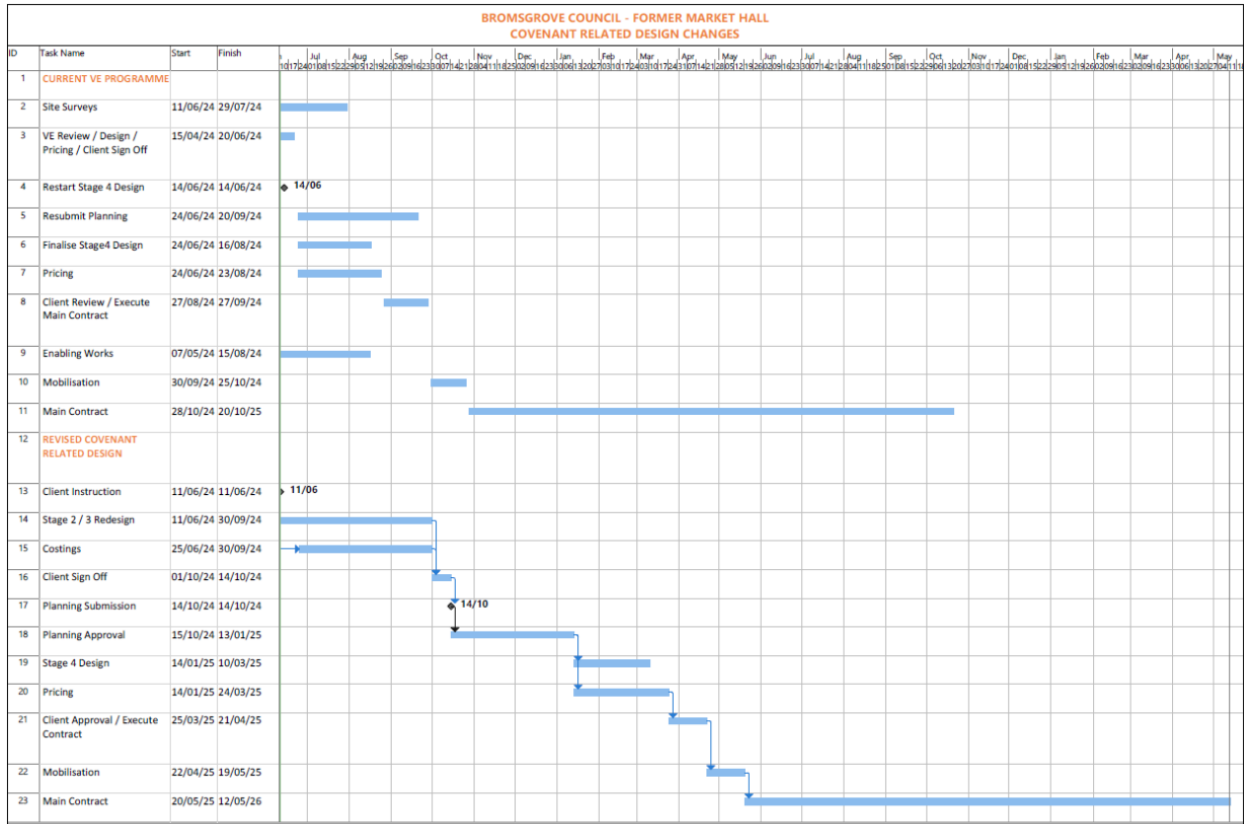


## Appendix D – Updated Time plan with 10 Week Extension

MILESTONE	ORIGINAL PCSA PROGRAMME		EXTENDED VALUE ENGINEERING PERIOD		COMMENTARY
	Start	Finish	Start	Finish	
Planning Conditions - Main Works - Prep Submission and Discharge	03-Apr-24	11-Jul-24	03-Apr-24	11-Jul-24	
<b>PCSA Period</b>					
Site Surveys - place orders, mobilise, undertake	15-Apr-24	31-May-24	15-Apr-24	31-May-24	
Design Period	25-Mar-24	10-May-24	18-Mar-24		
VE Review / Design / Pricing / Client Sign Off			15-Apr-24	21-Jun-24	
Restart Stage 4 Design			14-Jun-24		
Resubmit Planning			24-Jun-24	20-Sep-24	Schedule of Non-Material amendments being prepared and associated submission programme
Finalisation of Stage 4 Design	13-May-24	03-Jun-24	24-Jun-24	16-Aug-24	
Pricing	03-Apr-24	14-Jun-24	24-Jun-24	23-Aug-24	
Client Review / Execute Main Contract	14-Jun-24	19-Jul-24	27-Aug-24	27-Sep-24	
Enabling Works (Part of PCSA)	07-May-24	16-Aug-24	07-May-24	16-Aug-24	Site set up, drainage diversion, archaeology dig, surveys. Now due to start w/c 18/6.
<b>Main Contract</b>					
Mobilisation	22-Jul-24	16-Aug-24	30-Sep-24	25-Oct-24	
Construction Programme	19-Aug-24	08-Aug-25	28-Oct-24	20-Oct-25	

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## Appendix E – Updated Time plan if Community Use moved into Main Building



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# Appendix G – Risk Registers

## Public Realm Risk Register

LUF-Bromsgrove Public Realm - RISK REGISTER - N.B. A risk has not yet happened, an issue has happened  
 Guidance on risk assessment and RAG ratings can be found on the 'RAG Guidance' tab

Ref	Project/ Phase	Risk	Consequences	Probability	Impact	RAG	Date of potential Risk	Response Action (including date)		Cost of risk (post mitigation) % of TP	Review Date	Owner	Outcome	Date Closed
								Control in Place	Additional Action Planned					
1	Bromsgrove	Scope creep	Cost exceeding budget, or late delivery	High	Critical	18	As programme develops	Introduce strategy to fix concept design and ensure decision making doesn't impact programme.	If further changes/extras are required, additional funding will need to be provided, or the scope in other areas is reduced accordingly to suit budget.	0.00%		Project Manager/ Project Board		
2	Bromsgrove	Late delivery (due to optimistic delivery programme)	Loss of funding	Medium	Substantial	14	As programme develops	Regular monitoring of programme.	Potential for RBC to transfer funding ahead of completion.	0.00%		Project Manager		
3	Bromsgrove	Inflation - particularly material and fuel price increases	Cost exceeding budget	High	Critical	18	As programme develops	Consider early material orders if storage space available	Find additional funding or reduce scope of scheme accordingly	15.00%		Project Manager/ Project Board		
4	Bromsgrove	Existing highway drainage systems not adequate	Additional construction costs to replace drainage system	Medium	Substantial	14	During design	Obtain site records and undertake drainage surveys	Complete detailed design allowing for any constraints	1.00%		Designer		
5	Bromsgrove	Cost Plan/Target Price exceeds budget	Cost exceeding budget	Medium	Critical	16	On receipt of TPs	Estimate based on latest available rates (at time of producing estimate), allowance for inflation	Review once Concept Design is fixed	0.00%		Project Manager		
6	Bromsgrove	Unavailability of contractor resources (Ringway, Prysmian, Telent)	Programme delay	Low	Substantial	12	During mobilisation	Resource availability to be monitored	Regular meetings with delivery team	0.00%		Project Manager/ Contractor		
7	Bromsgrove	Materials not available for site start date	Programme delay	Medium	Substantial	14	During mobilisation	Use readily available products where possible, allow for sufficient mobilisation in programme	Consider early order for materials if storage space is available, procurement to commence 20 weeks in advance of start date.	0.00%		Contractor		
8	Bromsgrove	Impact on traffic flow during works	Public backlash, disruption to businesses, construction starting date delayed due to the ASS BREP project taking place in the same time	High	Critical	18	During construction	No works during key events, christmas embargo? Undertake PIE Early liaison with Streetworks and ASS BREP PM team	Consider off-peak working restrictions. Early meeting with Streetworks to discuss best diversion route whilst taking into account ASS BREP project	0.00%		Project Manager/ Designer		
9	Bromsgrove	Reduced footfall during construction	Public backlash, disruption to businesses	Low	Substantial	12	During construction	Do work in small areas, undertake PIE	Additional signage- business open as usual	0.00%		Project Manager/ Designer		
10	Bromsgrove	Restricted business access (delivery and customer) throughout construction	Disruption to businesses	Medium	Substantial	14	During construction	Undertake PIE (face-to-face with businesses), establish business delivery arrangements and opening hours	Provide temporary loading area. Works directly outside store entrances when closed	0.00%		Contractor		
11	Bromsgrove	Impact on events	Public and business backlash	Low	Critical	14	During construction	Establish key events. No works during key events, christmas embargo?	Identify events as constraints during which contractor can't work	0.00%		Project Manager/ Designer		
12	Bromsgrove	Uncharted services and connections	Utility strike, delay, cost	Medium	Substantial	14	During construction	Stats records to be obtained and refreshed as required	GPRS survey, targeted trial holes	1.00%		Designer/ Contractor		
13	Bromsgrove	Existing cellars and building facades in poor condition	Collapse of cellars or building facades	Low	Critical	14	During construction	Undertake cellar and building facades surveys	Undertake mitigation if required following surveys	1.00%		Designer/ Contractor		
14	Bromsgrove	Unforeseen or inadequate ground conditions	Extra over excavation, cost, delay	Low	Substantial	12	During construction	targeted trial pits to be dug in scope	Allow for dealing with soft spots	3.00%		Designer		
15	Bromsgrove	Finding archaeological remains	Additional construction costs to excavate archaeology	Low	Critical	14	During construction	Review targeted trial holes	Limit depth of excavation in design	1.00%		Project Manager/ Designer		
16	Bromsgrove	Weather risk	Increased costs and delays	Medium	Substantial	14	During construction	Programme works in warmer seasons if possible, unless very abnormal conditions the financial risk sits with the contractor	Check long range forecasts	0.50%		Contractor		
17	Bromsgrove	Construction costs more than Target	Increased costs	Medium	Substantial	14	During construction	Accurate take-off of quantities, efficient working methods	Target Price contract limits overall risk	5.00%		Project Manager/ Designer/ Contractor		
18	Bromsgrove	Works on private land	Objections/conflict whilst on site. Planning enforcement	Low	Substantial	12	During and post-construction	Assumed all works on existing public highway, will verify land ownership.	If any 3rd party land is required, ensure any private landowner gives consent and accepts maintenance liability	1.00%		Project Manager/ Project Board		
19	Bromsgrove	Impact on local residents, during works (noise)	Public backlash	Low	Substantial	12	During and post-construction	Undertake PIE	Minimise overnight working, letter drop	0.00%		Project Manager/ Designer		
20	Bromsgrove	Opposition to scheme from local businesses	On site confrontations	Low	Substantial	12	During and post-construction	Ensure adequate loading facilities in design. Undertake PIE	Temporary loading facility to be provided during works. Comms Plan to be in place during construction to inform businesses of progress of works	0.00%		Project Manager/ Contractor		

LUF-Bromsgrove Public Realm - RISK REGISTER - *N.B. A risk has not yet happened, an issue has happened*

Guidance on risk assessment and RAG ratings can be found on the 'RAG Guidance' tab

Ref	Project/Phase	Risk	Consequences	Probability	Impact	RAG	Date of potential Risk	Response Action (including date)		Cost of risk (post mitigation) % of TP	Review Date	Owner	Outcome	Date Closed
								Control in Place	Additional Action Planned					
21	Bromsgrove	Damage to local ecology	Loss of ecology/protected species	Low	Substantial	12	During and post-construction	Liaise with County Ecologist during design particularly with respect to lighting. Retain all existing trees wherever possible	Lighting design to include mitigation measures where necessary	1.00%		Project Manager/Designer		
22	Bromsgrove	Road Safety Audit - issues arising that may require changes	Programme delay	Medium	Substantial	14	During and post-construction	Undertake Principal Designer reviews before submission for RSA	Action audits promptly	0.50%		Project Manager/Designer		
23	Bromsgrove	Sightlines from existing CCTV cameras obscured	Ensure new trees/street furniture do not obscure sightlines	Medium	Substantial	14	post-construction	Identify camera positions	Position trees and street furniture accordingly	0.00%		Project Manager/Contractor		
24	Bromsgrove	Utility maintenance works - digging up public realm after upgraded	Reputational damage and potential reinstatement costs	Medium	Substantial	14	post-construction	Attend NRSWA coordination meetings	Issue Section 58 notifications	0.00%		Project Manager		
										<b>30%</b>				

In order to monitor the impact of actions against critical risk, each update should be saved as a new version. This allows us to baseline against the original rag rating

Risk allowance within budget	Inflation	15%
	Pain/gain	5%
	Unforeseens	10%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30%</b>

## Windsor Street Risks

### Client Related

ID	Date Raised/Instigated by	Risk Description	Owner	Probability	Impact	Ranking April 2024	Mitigation Actions / Response	Strategy C/E/R/P
A								
A1	13-Feb-24	Design. Ensure client needs are met	BSL	1	6	6	Design well integrated/ Establish clear brief	E
A7	13-Feb-24	Adverse public opinion	NWD	1	4	4	Prepare information for Public consultation	R
A8	13-Feb-24	Large client changes	NWD	1	4	4	Establish sign off and approval process.	E
A9	13-Feb-24	Legal constraints on land	NWD	1	6	6	Early agreement of legals	E
A11	13-Feb-24	Delay in final brief	NWD	1	2	2		
A14	13-Feb-24	Possibility of losing funding streams	NWD	1	10	10		



## Statutory Risks

ID	Date Raised/Instigated by	Risk Description	Owner	Probability	Impact	Ranking April 2024	Mitigation Actions / Response	Strategy C/E/R/P
<b>B</b>	<b>Statutory</b>							
B1	13-Feb-24	Ecological, implications of Bat survey	MDA	1	2	2	Consultant Appointed, daytime survey complete; nocturnal survey booked in	E
B2	13-Feb-24	Contaminated Land	BSL	6	6	36	Site Investigation and Remediation Strategy completed; further investigation required during works	E
B3	13-Feb-24	Building Regulation approval/timing	ONE	1	2	2	Notice approval only; can be contractor lead	E
B4	13-Feb-24	Planning Permission	ONE	2	6	12	4 Weeks decision period; plans and statements submission	E
B5	13-Feb-24	Existing Rights of Way/ Easements	NWD	1	4	4	Day Centre right of way- included for in land transfer	E
B6	13-Feb-24	Archaeology, possible finds	CONTR	1	4	4		P
B7	13-Feb-24	Asbestos. Material requires removal.	CONTR	6	6	36	Asbestos survey completed identifying large areas of asbestos; risk of more during demolition	R
B9	13-Feb-24	Existing services require disconnection	NWD	6	2	12	Gas and water disconnected; power quotation instructed to disconnect 2nr supplies	E
B10	13-Feb-24	Existing services diversion	NWD	2	4	8		R
B11	13-Feb-24	Poor performance of utility suppliers	NWD	2	6	12	agree programme and maintain communication	R
B12	13-Feb-24	T.P.O's	NWD	1	2	2	No trees affected by proposal	E

## Project Risks

ID	Date Raised/Instigated by	Risk Description	Owner	Probability	Impact	Ranking April 2024	Mitigation Actions / Response	Strategy C/E/R/P
<b>C</b>	<b>Project</b>							
C1	13-Feb-24	Poor ground conditions	BSL	1	2	2	No new buildings in this phase	R
C2	13-Feb-24	Health and safety performance	CONTR	1	8	8	Monitoring process, by team	E
C3	13-Feb-24	Poor quality of works	CONTR	1	2	2	Establish responsibility and monitor	E
C4	13-Feb-24	Impact of mine workings	BSL	1	6	6	S I report did not indicate any issues likely	E
C5	13-Feb-24	Unforeseen services exposed	CONTR	1	6	6	Carry out survey prior to removal of soils	E
C6	13-Feb-24	Vandalism	CONTR	2	4	8	Supervise	R
C7	13-Feb-24	Security	CONTR	2	4	8	On site security established	R
C8	13-Feb-24	Working adjacent to occupied buildings	CONTR	2	4	8	Constraints to be clearly identified	R

## Procurement Risks

ID	Date Raised/Instigated by	Risk Description	Owner	Probability	Impact	Ranking April 2024	Mitigation Actions / Response	Strategy C/E/R/P
<b>D</b>	<b>Procurement</b>							
D1	13-Feb-24	Insolvency of contractor	MDA	3	8	24	Establish review and screening process/PCG and Bond to sought from Contractor	R
D2	13-Feb-24	Market conditions change	CONTR	3	6	18	Must be monitored and firm costs achieved as soon as possible.	P
D3	13-Feb-24	Poor documentation	MDA	2	8	16	Establish adequate design and programme	E
D4	13-Feb-24	Construction risks are with Client	MDA	2	6	12	Must be monitored and firm costs achieved as soon as possible.	R
D6	13-Feb-24	Insolvency of subcontractor	CONTR	4	8	32	Control through Supply chain and selection	R

# Market Hall Risks

Reference	Date Raised	Type	Title	Description	Consequence	Pre-mitigate	Pre-mitigated	L. Pre-mitig	Mitigation Strategy	Risk Owne	Post Mitiga	Post Mitige	Post Mitigated	Status
RR-050	30/09/23	Commercial	<b>Cost exceeds available budget</b>	RIBA 3 project cost estimate is circa. £500,000 over the confirmed budget of £11,078,000.	Available budget will not meet cost estimate, the current scheme will be unaffordable and further VE will need to be completed	4	4	16	Several applications to DLUHC have been made for additional funding. As of January 2024 these have been unsuccessful. Current strategy within BDC is to utilise contingency identified in RIBA 3 Construction Cost Plan. A 7.5% (£814,607) contingency is held against employer change and design development.		3	4	12	Open
RR-010	01/12/22	ISSUE: Stakeholders	<b>Operator plan and model</b>	Operation strategy for the Pavilion building remains unclear, it is currently assumed that the Pavilion will be operated by the BDC. The Commercial building will be built to BCO standards and we assume it will be operated by a private estate management company which is yet to be appointed.	Lack of a clear design and fit out brief for the Pavilion building. Potential abortive/ additional costs once an operator is appointed by council and/or unsuitable final product which is underused or not fit for purpose.	4	4	16	It is currently assumed that the Pavilion will be operated by the BDC and Commercial building (inc. public realm) will be operated by a private estate management company. Cabinet report of February 24 expected to clarify operating arrangements	N/WedR	4	3	12	Open
RR-001	07/02/23	Construction	<b>Archaeological discoveries delay programme</b>	The site is within a high risk archaeology area which requires a Desk Based Assessment at planning and a programme of trial trench investigations before works can commence. If significant discoveries are found during these investigations a detailed programme of investigations will be required including further	A detailed programme of investigations will delay start on site by approximately three - six months	4	4	16	Desk Based Archaeological survey completed prior to planning. Invasive investigations will be completed in Spring through the PCSA contract. WSI to be agreed by LPA early ASAP after agreement of PCSA contract.	Arcadis	4	3	12	Open
RR-049	03/09/23	Commercial	<b>Unanticipated cost increases through PCSA and Second Stage tender</b>	Risk of cost increases above RIBA Stage three formal cost plan following detailed design and engagement with main contractor during PCSA.	Cost increases above available budget. Additional funding will need to be sought or scope reduced further than currently identified VE measures, delaying the programme.			12	Arcadis cost managers working closely with One Creative to minimise scope creep from Value Engineered scheme submitted for planning. Further Value Engineering may be required during PCSA if budget does not increase.	Arcadis	3	3	9	Open
RR-023	04/09/23	Construction	<b>Providing access to the site off existing highways during construction</b>	Access arrangements for construction traffic may cause disruption to neighbours. Current approach utilising George Street and Hanover street have been approved, subject to CEMP, by WCC	Disruption caused to neighbouring landowners including Waitrose, cost of compensation to neighbouring landowner, delay in construction programme	4	3	12	WCC highways have provided recommendation to approve conditional on receiving CEMP following determination	Arcadis	3	3	9	Open
RR-006	01/12/22	Planning	Construction site constraints: Culvert location	Tightly constrained site with public highway and development surrounding the red line.	Difficulty identifying location of site compound, unloading deliveries on site and ensuring sufficient working room	4	3	12	First stage tender documents included agreed access constraints for the appointed contractor. Bidders to respond to quality question in relation to access/ set up. FEB24 Update: Responses have shown several solutions including off site office accommodation and phasing proposals	Arcadis	3	3	9	Open

RR-008	26/01/23	Stakeholders	Under use of the Pavilion building	Programme of events not fully developed for the pavillion building and asset is underutilised	Reputational and financial risk of the council	3	4	12	BDC leisure and events team attending monthly project team meetings. NWedR and TC manager developing operation strategy for Pavillion	NWedR	3	3	9	Open
RR-032	01/12/22	Construction	Supply chain delays	Materials delayed arriving to site due to supply chain issues. (CLT particularly)	Additional cost and time delays	3	3	9	Early engagement with supply chain via main contractor. Limited suppliers for Copper Alloy cladding flagged in tender responses	Arcadis	3	3	9	Open
RR-034	01/12/22	Design	S.278 Highways works	Incorporation of highways works up to back of kerb.	Objection froms highways statutory authorities	3	3	9	Escalated engagement within Worcestershire County Council and focused attention during PCSA	Arcadis	3	3	9	Open
RR-014	13/01/23	Construction	Foundations of George House left in situ following demolition	Foundations of George House are in situ, additional cost will be incurred remediating to allow for construction of the Pavilion.	Additional cost and programme delay while remediation works take place	4	3	12	Provisional allowance included in RIBA 3 cost plan. Detailed financial and programme impact to be assessed during PCSA.	Arcadis	3	3	9	Open
RR-020	01/12/22	Construction	Sub-contractor insolvency	Sub-contractor become insolvent due to challenging economic conditions	Cost and time delays caused by sourcing new sub-contractors	3	4	12	Assessing sub-contractor financials through contractor. Ensuring main contractor is paying sub-contractors promptly, to be assessed through quality criteria and incentivised through contract.	Arcadis	3	3	9	Open
RR-040	01/12/22	Construction	Oversailing rights and cranes on site	Oversailing rights may be required over neighbouring properties, depending on type of crane used	Neighbouring properties rights are infringed	2	4	8	To be negotiated in PCSA agreement, tenderers have suggested utilising luffing jib crane to minimise oversailing.	Arcadis	2	4	8	Open
RR-004	01/12/22	Financial	Fees and surveys cost inflation	Fees and surveys rise to above available budget	Changes in specification may be required reducing burden on professional fees or additional funding will need to be sought	3	4	12	Continue to monitor fees and surveys expenditure and minimise unnecessary spend	Arcadis	3	2	6	Open
RR-011	01/12/22	Statutory bodies	Securing incoming supplies from statutory authorities	There is insufficient capacity in water, power and gas networks to supply the development	Delays to construction and additional cost to facilitate utilities upgrades	4	3	12	Early engagement with all statutory utilities will be conducted by appointed PCSA contractor	Arcadis	3	2	6	Open
RR-002	26/01/23	Financial	Tenants not identified for office building	Tenants cannot be found for commercial building	Financial and reputation impact for the council	3	3	9	NWEDR engaging with potential tenants and scoping requirements	NWedR	3	2	6	Open
RR-007	01/12/22	Financial	Market viability of current configuration	Currently minimal evidence base for configuration. No operators or partners identified	If building is unoccupied BDC will be responsible for upkeep costs, potential funding clawback and reputational damage	3	3	9	NWedR are leading production of an Operational strategy. Bruton Knowles have completed a viability appraisal of the current scheme. Draft reports are positive with a residual land value of £3.868m	Arcadis	3	2	6	Open
RR-017	01/12/22	Construction	Health and safety on site	Health and safety incidents on site	Harm to site operatives, liability of client to ensure H&S on site.	4	3	12	H&S strategy to be developed by Principal Designer and Main contractor and agreed by project team	Arcadis/ Main contractor	3	2	6	Open
RR-018	01/12/22	Construction	Health and safety of public	Incidents involving members of the public adjacent to site	Harm or injury to members of public, liability of client and contractors	4	3	12	H&S strategy to be developed by Principal Designer and Main contractor and agreed by project team	Arcadis/ Main contractor	3	2	6	Open

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RR-048	19/08/23	Legal	Covenants on title	Pavilion building area is subject to a covenant preventing the sale of alcohol. Of the two key beneficiaries, one has agreed to extinguish the covenant. The second has appointed solicitors and is attempting to claim compensation.	Cost of possible compensation payment to Beneficiaries, uncertainty of ability to serve alcohol at Pavilion events.	3	3	9	BDC legal and property teams are making enquires and liaising with solicitors appointed by the impacted party.	BDC	3	2	6	Open
RR-038	01/12/22	Design	Integration of High Street South Works	Co-ordination of High street south works led by WCC, also using LUF funding	Poor quality appearance of incogruent finishes or specifications	3	2	6	Other option is reconfiguration of the design so that Pavillion becomes Office Accommodation and Community Events transfer to the Market Hall building.	Arcadis	2	2	4	Open
RR-031	01/12/22	Construction	Delays associated with diversion of footpath	Delays and additional costs of diverting existing footpath St John street	Public safety compromised while following diversion. Cost associated with diversion measures	4	3	12	Early engagement with WCC highways, WCC rep to be added to Project Team meeting. Feb 24: Review of detailed plans shows that works are less intensive and further from site than originally thought. Current site access plans would route most traffic away from works area.	Arcadis / Main contractor	2	2	4	Open
RR-025	01/12/22	Design	Flood risk	Site is within flood zones, extent clear	Design vulnerable to flooding / Planning risk	3	3	9	Contractor to ensure appropriate signage and barriers are place during construction. To be detailed in CEMP approved with WCC highways		2	2	4	Open
RR-015	01/12/22	Planning	Stakeholder engagement	Very limited stakeholder engagement conducted through RIBA 2 and LUF bid	Scheme may be rejected at planning committee or receive political opposition if no substantive engagement takes place before planning application	3	3	9	Further investigation of flood risk through flood risk assessment. If in a high flood zone, mitigations included within design and NW/WM EA consulted through planning application. Recommendation to approve received from planning committee. Stakeholder engagement and consultation programme took place during February-March 2023 and October 2023 in advance of planning application with mostly positive outcomes. Monthly meetings held with BDC Planning.	One Creative	2	2	4	Open
RR-027	01/12/22	Design	User/ stakeholder changes	Changes requested by users and stakeholders beyond the project brief	Programme delays/ cost overruns	3	2	6	Clear governance process, close coordinated cost and design management. Early stakeholder engagement, coordinated by Project Team meeting	Arcadis	2	2	4	Open
RR-028	01/12/22	Design	Secure by design - ASB and public safety	Design is not safe and secure in terms of encouraging ASB and hostile vehicles/ terrorism	Potential for future security incidents and ASB in operation	3	2	6	Risk assessment to be conducted with agreed RIBA III designs. Community safety team now included in Project Team	One Creative	2	2	4	Open
RR-026	01/12/22	Design	General undetected below ground obstructions and contamination	Any issues arising from SI, potential for remaining foundations from previous uses (before Birdbox)	Additional cost or delay caused by remediation and/or higher quality pilling	2	2	4	Invasive site investigation has been completed and shows no signs of significant contamination	Arcadis	2	2	4	Open

