

Public Document Pack



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

TUESDAY 22ND JULY 2025

AT 6.00 P.M.

PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE

MEMBERS: Councillors P. M. McDonald (Chairman), S. T. Nock (Vice-Chairman), A. Bailes, R. Bailes, A. M. Dale, R. J. Hunter, B. Kumar, S. A. Robinson, J. D. Stanley and H. D. N. Warren-Clarke and 1 vacant seat.

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence and Named Substitutes**
- 2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Arrangements**

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 Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 17th June 2025 (Pages 7 - 18)**

4. **Bromsgrove Town Centre Strategic Framework - Pre-Scrutiny** (Report to follow)

This report will follow in a supplementary papers pack to this agenda once it has been published by the consideration of Cabinet.

5. **Local Heritage Action List - Quarterly Update** (Pages 19 - 20)
6. **Bromsgrove Town Centre Recycling Bins** (Pages 21 - 26)
7. **Finance and Budget Working Group - Membership Report and Update** (Pages 27 - 36)
8. **Task Group Updates**
9. **Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Update**

The meeting of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting scheduled for 9th July 2025 has been cancelled and re-scheduled to 30th July 2025, therefore, an update will be deferred to the next meeting.

10. **Cabinet Work Programme** (Pages 37 - 46)
11. **Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme** (Pages 47 - 48)
12. **Overview and Scrutiny Action Sheet** (Pages 49 - 50)
13. **To consider any urgent business, details of which have been notified to the Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement 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.**
14. **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

15. **Levelling Up Fund Programme - Quarterly Update** (Pages 51 - 62)

J. Leach
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

14th July 2025

**If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact
Sarah Woodfield**

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GUIDANCE ON FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS

**If you have any questions regarding the agenda or attached papers,
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 and for any such items the live stream will be suspended and that part of the meeting will not be recorded.



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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

17TH JUNE 2025, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors P. M. McDonald (Chairman), S. T. Nock (Vice-Chairman), S. Ammar, S. J. Baxter, S. R. Colella (Substitute), D. J. A. Forsythe (Substitute), E. M. S. Gray, C.A. Hotham (Substitute), R. J. Hunter, B. Kumar, K.J. May, B. McEldowney, S. A. Robinson, J. D. Stanley, K. Taylor, S. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

Officers: Mr J. Leach, Mr B. Watson, Mr. G. Revans, Mr S. Parry, Mr M. Cox, Mrs. J. Bayley-Hill and Mrs S. Woodfield

Other parties: Professor D. Hall CBE and Ms S. Dickens

1/25

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

A nomination for the position of Chairman was received in respect of Councillor P.M. McDonald.

RESOLVED that Councillor P. M. McDonald be appointed as Chairman of the Board for the ensuing municipal year.

2/25

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

A nomination for the position of Vice Chairman was received in respect of Councillor S. T. Nock.

RESOLVED that Councillor S.T. Nock be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Board for the ensuing municipal year.

3/25

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor A. Bailes with Councillor C.A. Hotham in attendance as his named substitute, Councillor R. Bailes with Councillor S.R. Colella in attendance as her named substitute and A.M. Dale with Councillor D.J.A. Forsythe in attendance as her named substitute.

4/25

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor B. Kumar and Councillor S.T Nock both declared disclosable interests in Minute Item no. 6/25 – Local Government Reorganisation All Member Engagement Session Supported by Mutual Ventures – in their capacity as Parish Councillors. They remained present during the debate in respect of this item and voted thereon.

5/25

TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 15TH APRIL 2025

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 15th April 2025 were considered.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 15th April 2025 be agreed as a true and correct record.

6/25

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION ALL MEMBER ENGAGEMENT SESSION SUPPORTED BY MUTUAL VENTURES

The Chief Executive commenced the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) item by introducing Professor Donna Hall, CBE and Sally Dickens from Mutual Ventures (MV) who were supporting an appraisal of the options under consideration in Worcestershire for LGR. It was explained to the Board that the purpose of the briefing was to have an engagement session to ensure that all Members had an opportunity to input and provide their views. It was on this basis that all Members of Bromsgrove District Council had been invited to the session. All Members could also send their views using the response form provided by Mutual Ventures or by emailing their views in whatever format they chose.

A presentation was delivered in respect of this subject for Members' consideration (Appendix 1). The following key points were discussed for Members' consideration:

The options appraisal process was to assess the performance of two options for a unitary structure in Worcestershire:

- A unitary council for the whole county of Worcestershire.
- Two unitary councils in Worcestershire:
 - North Worcestershire: Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest.
 - South Worcestershire: Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Wychavon.

A stakeholder engagement process was being carried out to inform the appraisal process which included a public engagement exercise being undertaken online, until 29th June 2025 and local stakeholder engagement

sessions being held during June and July.

Key lines of enquiry would be discussed as part of the stakeholder engagement process to establish the performance of these options in comparison to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) criteria for LGR. The criteria had been detailed in correspondence to the Leader and Chief Executive in respect of LGR and included the following:

- The establishment of a single tier of local government.
- The right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks.
- Must prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens.
- Demonstrate how councils in the area had sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed by local views.
- Must support devolution arrangements.
- Should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment.

The approach to be utilised included considering:-

- What good looks like in ten years' time.
- To consider what needs to be kept/improved/created to achieve the above.
- Identifying local characteristics.
- Consideration of community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment.

Members were advised to consider structural reform from a public service perspective and to review changes to current arrangements. The Board also considered the demographic and economic comparisons within the Worcestershire area and in relation to Bromsgrove specifically.

The key lines of enquiry, which had been presented to Members, were subsequently discussed with the following points raised by the Board:

Health and Wellbeing

- Preventative measures should be a key consideration.
- Building and maintaining health and wellbeing was important.
- People were living longer. Patient to doctor ratios required improvements.

- Additional surgical facilities were required.
- Some people had lower expectations than in previous generations but were striving and aspiring to achieve better.
- There were difficulties predicting future efficiencies due to the need for more data. The Chief Executive explained that the data in the slide deck (by way of context) was to help fuel discussion, and it was Members' feedback from their experience and knowledge as democratically elected representatives of their communities, that was being sought from the session. This was to provide important qualitative information, alongside quantitative information that was also being gathered to help inform the options appraisal.

Education and Opportunity

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support, currently available through Worcestershire County Council (WCC), would continue to be needed in the District.
- There were good examples of effective partnership working with WCC to promote and enhance health and wellbeing within the community i.e. the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), which included organisations from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors.
- There were difficulties predicting future efficiencies due to a lack of funding from Central Government.

Social Cohesion

- Local identity was seen as important.

Transport and Connectivity

- Required better connectivity between the outer parishes and the town centre to support the elderly.
- There was a lack of connectivity to the town centre which had an impact on people's mental health.
- Examples of best practice suggested by Members were as follows; Tourist Information Centre (closed), Avoncroft Museum, The Transport Museum and Chapel Lane Caravan Motorhome Club Campsite.
- Members suggested that the Council should be building on the strong tourist opportunities available i.e. The National Exhibition Centre (NEC) and the proposed 8 Hills Regional Park.

Economic Growth

- Economic growth was key to address all the suggested key lines of enquiry.

- A cohesive approach to generate wealth was a priority.
- A unitary structure could assist to provide effective business support to startup businesses.
- Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) had one of the highest achieving business starts ups in the County with assistance from BetaDen; a locally funded organisation aiming to benefit businesses and entrepreneurs by providing resources, mentorship and access to a network of support.
- To start from the grass roots and upskill the younger generation was a key priority.
- BDC offered good public service engagement. Retaining the town centre's local community feel was important, which could diminish if the unitary structure was too large.
- To retain the town centres and areas local heritage should be a consideration.
- Encouraging people to live and work locally, rather than commute to work, was considered to be important.
- Working cohesively should assist the agricultural sector.
- Discouraging shop units which had a negative impact on the reputation of Bromsgrove Town Centre was considered important.

Safety and Security

- A unitary structure should assist with providing effective police engagement.
- The Police needed to provide effective face to face public engagement and a physical presence.

Environment

- Bromsgrove's agriculture and local environment were noted as important features of relevance to the character of the area. This was seen as important to retain and champion.

Members were also encouraged to consider and discuss community engagement with the following points provided by the Board:

- Being able to engage effectively with communities was seen as important.
- Public/stakeholder engagement should incorporate face to face opportunities where possible in addition to online to help gather evidence.
- Set boundaries needed to be balanced democratically for ease of

Member engagement.

- Parish Councils played a key role in public engagement in their own right. The Chief Executive reassured Members that Parish Councils would remain under a unitary council.
- Concerns were raised that having larger divisional boundaries could have a detrimental effect on public engagement.

The Chief Executive encouraged Members to complete and return the response forms which had been issued during the session and confirmed that the deadline for submission of completed forms was Tuesday 8th July 2025. Members were also informed that Group Leaders would have the opportunity to meet with Mutual Ventures for further discussions, so they could pass on views to their Group Leaders if they wished and if Members simply wanted to email in any feedback, then that was also welcomed.

The Chief Executive concluded the briefing by thanking Members for their participation in discussions and Mutual Ventures for their presentation and engagement session.

The Board were also reminded of the LGR timeline as follows:

- 28th November 2025 – Deadline for final proposals to MHCLG.
- First part of 2026 – Government public consultation on LGR.
- Summer 2026 – Government anticipated decision on the proposals.

RESOLVED that the Local Government Reorganisation All Member Engagement Session Supported by Mutual Ventures be noted.

7/25

CONTAMINATED LAND STRATEGY - PRE-SCRUTINY

A presentation was provided to Members by the Technical Services Manager of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS).

Key points raised during the presentation were as follows:

- The new inspection strategy aimed to replace the previous version and meet the requirements of the statutory guidance which was issued in 2012.
- The strategy outlined the process for the review of potential contaminated land sites within the District and the prioritisation methodology used.
- The report aimed to provide an overview of the framework that existed in respect of contaminated land.
- Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 placed a duty on Local Authorities to review and assess the significant possibility of harm to human health arising from contaminated land.

- Contaminated land legislation should only be used when there were no other alternative mechanisms available. However, the framework was predominately reviewed through the planning and development control process.
- The revised report reflected the gradual reduction and withdrawal of funding from Central Government.
- To date no sites had been declared as “Contaminated Land” by BDC. However, several sites of concern had been subject to detailed inspection.
- Planning policies encouraged the reuse of Brownfield land.

After consideration of the presentation, Members raised the following:

- The protocol to be followed if a member of the public had concerns that a plot of land was contaminated. Members were reminded that the strategy only reported on sites where contamination might be present and had the potential to pose a significant possibility of significant harm to human health. It was also explained that the Council focused on addressing sites where contamination might exist predominately through the planning and development control process. However, if a member of the public did have a concern, they could contact Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) to review.
- Members noted in the report that approximately 2,020 sites, which had been identified as potential sites of contaminated land within the District, largely related to historic land use, with some sites to potentially be identified as Brownfield sites. However, Members expressed the view that the District did not have a significant amount of Brownfield sites and requested clarification on this point. Members were informed that inspections involved reviewing land for suitable usage which could involve further scrutiny beneath the surface land layer.
- Members were reassured that the Council did not have any contaminated land sites. It was also explained that there was a specific criterion for land inspection including sites categorised in the order of priority.
- The Leader requested the outcome of two sites following any review undertaken. It was agreed that the appropriate information would be provided accordingly by the necessary Officers.
- It was queried how a member of the public would be informed if land they owned was contaminated land. The Board were informed that any remediation to address potential contaminated land should be revealed in the title deeds to a property. However, Members were reassured that in the event that any land, which posed a concern when being developed, would have remediation action carried out accordingly.
- Members enquired if there was a comprehensive list of potentially contaminated land sites available for public viewing. In response it was explained that some, but not all were listed in the strategy document, available to view online.

- The Board raised concerns and sought reassurance regarding the absence of external funding mechanisms and that this would not result in BDC failing to proactively undertake detailed inspections of Sites of Potential Concern. Members were reassured that potential sites of contamination had been prioritised, and risks had been mitigated where necessary.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that:

- 1) The Council adopt the revised strategy which should be published on the Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) website.

8/25

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT PLAN CONSULTATION (REPORT TO FOLLOW)

The Chairman confirmed that this agenda item had been **withdrawn** with the agreement of the Chairman and Vice Chairman, prior to the meeting. The decision had been taken as the item was no longer due to be considered at the forthcoming Cabinet meeting but would be debated by all Members at the Council meeting on 19th June 2025.

9/25

INSTALLATION OF EV CHARGERS

A presentation on the Installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers was provided to the Board by the Assistant Director Environmental Housing Property Services.

The purpose of the report was to outline the Implementation of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure across BDC's owned car parks and land. Key objectives of the project were to increase the availability of EV charging points in public spaces whilst supporting the Council's Carbon Reduction Strategy.

After consideration of the report, the Board provided the following points of discussion:

- Members queried if the Council were satisfied that when providing Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) across Council owned land, that disabled access would be a key priority. In response Members were informed that an appropriate update would be sought from the current contractor Zest Eco Limited and would be reported back to Members accordingly.
- A point was raised concerning the existing agreement in place with the contractor Equans regarding revenue share arrangements. Members sought clarification on how much revenue the Council could achieve. Members were advised that the relevant information would be sought from the contractor Equans and would be reported back to Members accordingly.
- The Board sought clarification as to whether the Council was required to pay for vandalism damages to EVCI's concerning an incident which involved wires cut on BDC owned land. It was

explained, as stated in the report, that the supplier was required to provide fully funded EVCI at no cost to the Council. The contract allowed for the supply, installation, maintenance and ongoing operational management of the EVCI across the various agreed sites.

- Members expressed their disappointment that the outer village areas had not been part of the EVCI criteria. The Board was informed that the key objectives were focused on Council owned car parks and land.

The Chairman concluded discussions on the topic and requested that the Board be provided with the specifics of the revenue share arrangement in place with the current contractor. In addition, the Chairman expressed disappointment that, unlike in other areas, the Council would not be in receipt of an immediate revenue income. In response it was explained that the arrangement was part of the contract Terms and Conditions agreement, however, it was agreed that the matter would be discussed with the contractor.

RESOLVED that the update on the Installation of EV Chargers be noted.

10/25

FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP - MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Members received a report requesting for the Chairman and Members to be appointed to the Finance and Budget Working Group for the 2025/26 municipal year.

It was noted that the Chairman of the Group had traditionally been the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board. Members agreed that this arrangement should continue for 2025/26. It was explained that as per the terms of reference, the Working Group would comprise seven members which would include the Chairman of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee, once appointed, and six Overview and Scrutiny Members. Priority would be given to appointing Overview and Scrutiny Board members to the group, in line with the terms of reference, but membership could be offered to other scrutiny pool members should there be any vacancies.

Members that expressed an interest in joining the group were Councillors S. Ammar, R.J. Hunter, S.T. Nock and P.M. McDonald. The Board noted that Councillor C.A. Hotham also expressed an interest, should there be a relevant vacancy available.

RESOLVED that

- a) Councillor P. McDonald be appointed as the Chairman of the Finance and Budget Working Group for the ensuing municipal year 2025/26.
- b) Councillors S. Ammar, R. J. Hunter, P. McDonald and S. T Nock be appointed as Members of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group for the municipal year 2025/26.

- c) Overview and Scrutiny Board Members not in attendance at this meeting of the Board to be contacted regarding their potential interest in being appointed as members of the Finance and Budget Working Group in 2025/26; and
- d) The Terms of Reference for the Finance and Budget Working be approved.

11/25

WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025-26

Councillor B. Kumar was nominated to become the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) for the municipal year 2025/26.

Members were informed that Councillor K. May had been appointed as by Worcestershire County Council as the Chairman of the HOSC for 2025/26. The Board was informed that the next meeting would be held in July 2025 with discussions to be reported back at the July Board meeting.

RESOLVED that Councillor B. Kumar be appointed as the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2025/26 municipal year.

12/25

TASK GROUP UPDATES

An update on the Housing Task Group was provided to the Board on behalf of the Chairman. It was explained that the group's recommendations were in the process of being finalised and delays to the group's draft report had been largely caused by the summer recess. However, the Chairman was satisfied to proceed, finalise and present findings in the Autumn, upon the end of recess.

RESOLVED that Housing Task Group update be noted as per the preamble above.

13/25

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Cabinet Work Programme was presented for Members' consideration. Members were informed of additional items to the Cabinet Work Programme that had been added since the last meeting, which were as follows:

- Bromsgrove Town Centre Strategic Framework which was going to Cabinet on 23rd July 2025. It was explained that this item had been added to Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 22nd July 2025.
- Windsor Street Site which was going to Cabinet on 23rd July 2025.

Members sought clarification as to why the Medium-Term Financial Plan Tranche 1 Budget Report 2026/27 had appeared twice on the Cabinet Work Programme. An explanation was provided to the Board by the Deputy Chief Executive, which highlighted that the budget would be reported in two tranches and there would be consultation on the first tranche prior to determination by Council.

RESOLVED that the content of the Cabinet Work Programme be noted as per the preamble above.

14/25

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme was considered by Members.

The following items were requested for addition to the Board's work programme as follows:

- The Windsor Street Site for pre-scrutiny prior to Cabinet on 23rd July 2025.
- An overview of the work of Citizens Advice to explain the uses of grant funding.
- Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) to be invited to attend a meeting to deliver a presentation on the services provided within the District.

It was agreed that the items would be added to the Board's work programme accordingly.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be noted as per the preamble above.

15/25

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTION SHEET

The Overview and Scrutiny Action Sheet was considered by the Board.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Board Action sheet be noted.

16/25

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 for consideration.

The meeting closed at 7.56 p.m.

Chairman

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Local Heritage List for Bromsgrove District – Overview and Scrutiny Board July 2025 update.

1. Following the adoption of the first tranche of the Local Heritage list in January 2025 the Conservation Team have sent out confirmation letters to owners, updated the Local Heritage List pages of the website and have provided updates to Development Management colleagues.
2. The draft Local heritage list for Wythall has been completed, and we will look to consult once the local plan consultation has finished.
3. Work on drafting the lists for Lickey and Blackwell and Bromsgrove continues, but has slowed due to a member of staff being off sick and subsequently leaving the Authority in addition to the departure of another colleague to take up a conservation post in another authority. Recruitment is underway to fill these positions It is still hoped that the delay will allow the Bromsgrove Society to make a contribution to the Bromsgrove List. Although if their resources do not permit this there will be full engagement with them when the consultation process takes place.
4. The Conservation Officer will be giving a brief talk and taking questions on the Local Heritage List at Lickey End at a meeting organised by Cllr Hunter later in July. As with the Barnt Green talk earlier in the year, nomination forms and other information on the Local List will be provided.

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Overview and Scrutiny 2025

22nd July

Recycling Bins (Bromsgrove High Street) a way forward

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Peter Whittaker
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Simon Parry, Assistant Director for Environmental and Housing Property Services
Report Author	Job Title: Environmental Services Manager, Doug Henderson Contact email: doug.henderson@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 07483 151469
Wards Affected	Bromsgrove central
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Councillor S. Robinson
Relevant Council Priority	Clean and green environment
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to note the report and to determine whether there are any recommendations that Members would like to make to the Cabinet based on the content of the report.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This report provides an update on recycling and waste collection arrangements in Bromsgrove town centre. The report has been drafted to address a request from the Overview and Scrutiny Board raised in February 2025 for a review of the implications of no longer recycling waste on Bromsgrove High Street.
- 2.2 In 2019 the place team carried out a full assessment of the recycling provision at the time. The provision then was made up of two banks of four recycling units (please see Figure 1)

Overview and Scrutiny 2025

22nd July

Fig1



2.3 The process involved the team removing the contents of all the bins and sifting and sorting items into those that could be successfully recycled and other articles. The image at Figure 2 highlights that only one fifth of the entire waste collected was actually recyclable.

Fig 2

- 2.4 Approximately three years ago the current bin system at Figure 3 was installed. There are five of this style of bin strategically positioned along the Bromsgrove town centre high street in order to provide visitors around the town with opportunities to segregate their waste in an appropriate way.

Fig 3



- 2.5 Over the course of the last six months the place team have continued to undertake further audits of the recycle bins which has shown poor levels of adherence to the use of each bin. This has led to all the waste having to be disposed in general waste bins.
- 2.6 One factor exacerbating the situation is that many of the fast-food outlets in the area provide their food in card packaging and so when people are trying to do the right thing and dispose of, for example their pizza box in the recycling, the high levels of grease are then tainting the whole bin.

Overview and Scrutiny 2025

22nd July

- 2.7 Another issue identified is if any paper /card becomes contaminated with glass, whether that is dust particles, shards, or bigger pieces, it's also classed as tainted and cannot be recycled.
- 2.8 To optimise recycling in our town centre, the council needs to implement a comprehensive strategy focusing on clear communication, convenient and accessible collection points, and proper sorting to minimize contamination. This includes using easily identifiable and movable bins, providing clear signage, and educating the public on what can and cannot be recycled.
- 2.9 Best Practice for Town Centre Recycling follows a set of guidelines, some of which the Council has already started:
- **Clear Signage and Instructions:**
Use large, understandable signs indicating which materials are accepted in each bin and provide visual aids to help users easily identify recyclable items.
 - **Strategic Bin Placement:**
Position recycling bins in high-traffic areas, near existing waste bins, and easily accessible locations like entrances to shops and public spaces. Consider using a variety of bin sizes to accommodate different waste streams.
 - **Education and Awareness:**
Launch public awareness campaigns to educate residents, businesses, and visitors about proper recycling procedures, including what is accepted and how to prepare items for recycling (e.g., rinsing containers, flattening cardboard).
 - **Regular Maintenance and Cleaning:**
Ensure recycling bins are regularly emptied, cleaned, and maintained to prevent overflowing and contamination.
 - **Contamination Reduction:**
Address contamination issues by providing clear instructions and actively monitoring bins for non-recyclable items. If contamination is a persistent problem, consider more targeted education and enforcement.
 - **Partner with Local Businesses:**
Work with local businesses to promote recycling and provide them with resources and guidance on proper waste management practices.
 - **Utilise Technology:**
Explore the use of technology, such as smart bins that can track fill levels and optimize collection routes. (This is already in place in Worcester City.)

Overview and Scrutiny 2025

22nd July

- **Regularly Review and Improve:**
Continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the recycling programme and adjust based on feedback and performance data.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 As outlined throughout the opening section of the report, there are recycling arrangements in place in the town centre. However, these could be significantly enhanced.
- 3.2 As part of our on-street recycling trial, it is clear that a large proportion of the waste collected currently is either not actual recyclable material or is mixed with contaminated items such as food waste containers which are saturated in oil and other food matter, there is also a specific problem if paper and broken glass are mixed, the presence of glass in the paper then makes the recycling value of the paper negligible and not worth collecting.
- 3.3 The fundamental issues distilled down are around public/business education and cross contamination.
- 3.4 It may be that Overview and Scrutiny Members feel options available to enhance recycling in the town centre should be investigated further and reported to Cabinet for determination. Several options are already being reviewed.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Investment in new bins for installation on Bromsgrove High Street would have financial implications for the Council. The cost would vary depending on which options are identified as preferred receptacles in the future.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

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- 6.1 Small but effective changes to how waste is collected in the Bromsgrove town centre would not impact on Local Government Reorganisation other than positively for future reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 Waste collection and recycling is an important service for the Council in terms of helping to maintain a green environment.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 Any form of successful recycling will help with the climate change agenda.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 It is important to ensure that the Council continuously monitors waste collection and recycling rates to make sure that they are meeting the needs of residents and benefiting the local environment.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Not applicable

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Whittaker	10 th July 2025
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Simon Parry	10 th July 2025
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Eccles	10 th July 2025

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Legal Department	Nicola Cummings	14 th July 2025

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Finance and Budget Working Group

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor S. Baxter
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services
Report Author: Jane Oyenuga	Job Title: Trainee Democratic Services Officer Contact email: jane.oyenuga@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priorities	Sustainability
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to:-

- a) Agree the Membership of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group for the municipal year 2025/26; and

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group was set up by the Overview and Scrutiny Board a number of years ago to carry out detailed scrutiny of a number of Financial Reports (listed in the Terms of Reference) and to assist in scrutiny of the Council's budget setting.
- 2.2 Due to recent changes to the membership of the Board, following changes to the political balance at the Council, and following agreement at the previous meeting of the Board to consult with Board members who were not in attendance at the meeting, the purpose of this report is to formalise the membership of the Group for 2025-26..

Overview and Scrutiny Board 2025

22nd July

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Chairman

- 3.1 Historically the Chairman of the Working Group has been the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board. It was agreed at the previous Board meeting held on 17th June 2025 that Councillor P. McDonald be appointed as the Chairman of the Finance and Budget Working Group for the ensuing municipal year 2025/26.

Membership

- 3.2 It has been agreed within the terms of reference that the Working Group be composed of the Chairman of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee and 6 Members of the Board with a quorum of 3. Scrutiny Working Groups are not required to be politically balanced, although it would be good practice to have each political group represented.
- 3.3 Current, Members of the Board who have expressed an interest in joining the group to date are Councillors P.M. McDonald (Chairman), A. Bailes and S.T. Nock.
- 3.4 At the meeting of the Board held on 17th June 2025, Councillor Hunter, who is also a current Member of the Board, expressed an interest in being appointed to the working group. Councillor Hunter subsequently confirmed in writing that he no longer wanted to be appointed to serve on this group in 2025/26.
- 3.5 At that same meeting of the Board, Councillor S. Ammar confirmed that she would like to be appointed to the working group. At the time, Councillor Ammer was a member of the Board. However, following changes to the political balance agreed at the Council meeting held on 19th June, Councillor Ammar is no longer a member of the Board and therefore not automatically eligible to serve on the group.
- 3.6 At the Board meeting held on 17th June, Councillor C.A. Hotham, who was attending the meeting as a substitute, expressed an interest in

Overview and Scrutiny Board 2025

22nd July

serving as a Member of the Finance and Budget Working Group, should there be a relevant vacancy available.

- 3.7 Therefore, Members are asked to note that there are two members of the Overview and Scrutiny 'pool', Councillors Ammar and Hotham, who although not currently Members of the Board, have expressed an interest in being appointed as members of the Finance and Budget Working Group in 2025/26.
- 3.8 Members are asked to choose the membership of the Working Group (Cabinet members cannot be represented). It should be noted that the terms of reference for the group state that members must be members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, (with the exception of the Chairman of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee where s/he is not a member of the Board). However, the terms of reference for the working group also state *"should a vacant post remain after members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board had been approached, members of the Overview and Scrutiny "pool" (i.e. those who do not sit on the Scrutiny Board and are also not Cabinet Members) may be appointed to fill the vacancy."*
- 3.9 For any Member wishing to sit on the Working Group, meetings have been scheduled for this year as per below, although there may be a need for extra meetings when the need is identified, particularly during the budget setting period. Conversely, meetings may be cancelled if there is no business to be considered on a particular date.
 - 17th July 2025
 - 5th September 2025
 - 17th November 2025
 - 5th January 2026
 - 6th February 2026
 - 23rd March 2026
- 3.10 All meetings are due to start at 6.00pm and will be held remotely (on Microsoft Teams). Any meetings held on Friday will commence at 1.00pm.

Overview and Scrutiny Board 2025

22nd July

-
- 3.11 The Chairman of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee will be contacted about his/her membership of the Working Group in due course.

Terms of Reference

- 3.12 The terms of reference are reviewed at the beginning of each municipal year since the inception of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group. The Overview and Scrutiny Board approved the current terms of reference for the working group at the Board meeting held on 17th June.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications in respect of the recommendations this report. Although it should be noted that there are resource implications in respect of officer time in attending and preparing for the meetings.
- 4.2 Detailed scrutiny of the Council's budget forms an important part of the budget setting process at the Council and helps to enhance accountability and transparency.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications relating to this report, other than those in respect of the Overview and Scrutiny function as a whole. The Working Group is currently not constituted, but merely an arrangement set up by the Overview and Scrutiny Board to improve its work going forward in respect of scrutinising the budget and finances of the Council.

6. OTHER – IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

- 6.1 There are no implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priority

Overview and Scrutiny Board 2025

22nd July

- 6.2 The work of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group contributes towards ensuring that the Council continues to provide sustainable services to its residents.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 There are no climate change implications in respect of this report.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 There are no direct customer/equalities and diversity implications in respect of this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 No specific risks have been identified.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background Papers

‘Finance and Budget Working Group report to the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 17th June 2025’.

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Overview and Scrutiny Board 2025

17th June

Finance and Budget Working Group

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor S. Baxter
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services
Report Author: Jane Oyenuga	Job Title: Trainee Democratic Services Officer Contact email: jane.oyenuga@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priorities	Sustainability
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to:-

- a) Appoint a Chairman of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group for the municipal year 2025/26;
- b) Agree the Membership of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group for the municipal year 2025/26; and
- c) Confirm the Terms of Reference of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group.

2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group was set up by the Overview and Scrutiny Board a number of years ago to carry out detailed scrutiny of a number of Financial Reports (listed in the Terms of Reference) and to assist in scrutiny of the Council's budget setting.
- 2.2 The purpose of this report is to formalise the membership of the Group for 2025-26 and to confirm that the terms of reference (updated during the 2024-25 municipal year) remain relevant.

Overview and Scrutiny Board 2025

17th June

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Chairman

- 3.1 Historically the Chairman of the Working Group has been the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board. Members are asked to consider whether they are happy with this arrangement to continue for the forthcoming municipal year. If this is not the case, then consideration needs to be given as to who to appoint as Chairman of this group.

Membership

- 3.2 It has been agreed within the terms of reference that the Working Group be composed of the Chairman of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee and 6 Members of the Board with a quorum of 3. Working Groups are not required to be politically balanced, although it would be good practice to have each political group represented.
- 3.3 Members are asked to choose the membership of the Working Group (Cabinet members cannot be represented). It should be noted that the terms of reference for the group state that members must be members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, (with the exception of the Chairman of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee where s/he is not a member of the Board). For any Member wishing to sit on the Working Group, meetings have been scheduled for this year as per below, although there may be a need for extra meetings when the need is identified, particularly during the budget setting period. Conversely, meetings may be cancelled if there is no business to be considered on the particular date.
- 17th July 2025
 - 5th September 2025
 - 17th November 2025
 - 5th January 2026
 - 6th February 2026
 - 23rd March 2026

Overview and Scrutiny Board 2025

17th June

-
- 3.4 All meetings are due to start at 6.00pm and will be held remotely (on Microsoft Teams). Any meetings held on Friday will commence at 1.00pm.
- 3.5 The Chairman of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee will be contacted about his/her membership of the Working Group in due course.

Terms of Reference

- 3.6 The terms of reference are reviewed at the beginning of each municipal year since the inception of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group.
- 3.7 Members are asked to consider whether they feel that these continue to be relevant or whether there is a need for any amendments to be made. The terms of reference are not exhaustive and from time to time the Working Group have considered a number of items at the request of the Cabinet Member for Finance. It remains at the discretion of the Working Group as to whether they carry out these additional pieces of work.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications in respect of this report. Although it should be noted that there are resource implications in respect of officer time in attending and preparing for the meetings.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications relating to this report, other than those in respect of the Overview and Scrutiny function as a whole. The Working Group is currently not constituted, but merely an arrangement set up by the Overview and Scrutiny Board to improve its work going forward in respect of scrutinising the budget and finances of the Council.

6. OTHER – IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

Overview and Scrutiny Board 2025

17th June

- 6.1 There are no implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The work of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group contributes towards ensuring that the Council continues to provide sustainable services to its residents.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 There are no climate change implications in respect of this report.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 There are no direct customer/equalities and diversity implications in respect of this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 No specific risks have been identified.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group (updated September 2024).

CABINET LEADER'S WORK PROGRAMME

1 AUGUST 2025 TO 30 NOVEMBER 2025
(published as at 2nd July 2025)

This Work Programme gives details of items on which key decisions are likely to be taken in the coming four months by the Council's Cabinet

The Work Programme gives details of items on which key decisions are likely to be taken by the Council's Cabinet, or full Council, in the coming four months. **Key Decisions** are those executive decisions which are likely to:

- (i) result in the Council incurring expenditure, foregoing income or the making of savings in excess of £200,000 or which are otherwise significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- (ii) be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the district;

If you wish to make representations on the proposed decision you are encouraged to get in touch with the relevant report author as soon as possible before the proposed date of the decision. Contact details are provided, alternatively you may write to the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services, Parkside, Market Street, B61 8DA or e-mail: democratic@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

The Cabinet's meetings are normally held every four weeks at 6pm on Wednesday evenings at Parkside. They are open to the public, except when confidential information is being discussed. If you wish to attend for a particular matter, it is advisable to check with the Democratic Services Team on (01527 64252 ext 3031) to make sure it is going ahead as planned. If you have any queries Democratic Services Officers will be happy to advise you. The full Council meets in accordance with the Councils Calendar of Meetings. Meetings commence at 6pm.

CABINET MEMBERSHIP

Councillor K J May	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling
Councillor S. Baxter	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
Councillor B. McEldowney	Cabinet Member for Leisure and Climate Change
Councillor K. Taylor	Cabinet Member for Planning, Licensing and Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Councillor S. Webb	Cabinet Member for Health and Well Being and Strategic Housing
Councillor P. Whittaker	Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Community Safety

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and information explaining why items have been postponed (where available)	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Expansion of Commercial Waste Collection Service Key: Yes (New !!)	Cabinet 10 Sep 2025	This report may contain exempt information which would need to be discussed by the Cabinet in private session.	Expansion of Commercial Waste Collection Service	Matthew Austin, Environmental Services Manager Tel: 01572 882537 Councillor P. Whittaker
Expansion of Septic Tank Emptying Service Key: No (New !!)	Cabinet 10 Sep 2025	This report may contain exempt information which would need to be considered by the Cabinet in private session.	Expansion of Septic Tank Emptying Service	Matthew Austin, Environmental Services Manager Tel: 01572 882537 Councillor P. Whittaker
Medium Term Financial Plan Scene Setting Report 2026/2027 Key: No	Cabinet 10 Sep 2025 Council 8 Oct 2025		Report of the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3224 Councillor S. J. Baxter

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and information explaining why items have been postponed (where available)	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Quarter 1 2025/26 Finance and Performance Monitoring Report Key: No	Cabinet 10 Sep 2025 Council 8 Oct 2025		Report of the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3224 Councillor S. J. Baxter
Homelessness Prevention Grant and Domestic Abuse Grant Key: No (New !!)	Cabinet 19 Nov 2025		Homelessness Prevention Grant and Domestic Abuse Grant	Amanda Delahunty, Strategic Housing Officer Tel: 01527 881269 Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and Strategic Housing
Medium Term Financial Plan Tranche 1 Budget Report 2026/2027 Key: Yes	Cabinet 19 Nov 2025		Report of the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3224 Councillor S. J. Baxter

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and information explaining why items have been postponed (where available)	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Quarter 2 2025/26 Finance and Performance Monitoring Report Key: No	Cabinet 19 Nov 2025 Council 3 Dec 2025		Report of the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3224 Councillor S. J. Baxter
Public Finance Management half Yearly Report 2024/2025 Key: No	Cabinet 19 Nov 2025 Council 3 Dec 2025		Report of the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3224 Councillor S. J. Baxter
Windsor Street Site Key: Yes	Cabinet 19 Nov 2025	This report may contain exempt information that would need to be considered in private session.	Report of the Assistant Director of Regeneration and Property	Rebecca McElliott, Regeneration Project Delivery Manager Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3333 Councillor K. J. May

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and information explaining why items have been postponed (where available)	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Council Tax Base Report 2026/27 Key: No	Cabinet 7 Jan 2026 Council 26 Jan 2026		Report of the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3224 Councillor S. J. Baxter
Council Tax - Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026/27 Key: No	Cabinet 7 Jan 2026 Council 21 Jan 2026		Report of the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3224 Councillor S. J. Baxter
Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27 Key: No	Cabinet 7 Jan 2026 Council 26 Jan 2026		Report of the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3224 Councillor S. J. Baxter

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and information explaining why items have been postponed (where available)	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy 2026/27 Key: No	Cabinet 7 Jan 2026 Council 21 Jan 2026		Report of the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3224 Councillor S. J. Baxter
Medium Term Financial Plan Tranche 1 Budget Report 2026/2027 Key: No	Cabinet 7 Jan 2026 Council 21 Jan 2026		Report of the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3224 Councillor S. J. Baxter
Non Domestic Rates - Discretionary Rates Relief Policy 2026/27 Key: No	Cabinet 7 Jan 2026 Council 21 Jan 2026		Report of the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3224 Councillor S. J. Baxter

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and information explaining why items have been postponed (where available)	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Medium Term Financial Plan Tranche 2 Budget Report 2026/2027 Key: No	Cabinet 11 Feb 2026 Council 18 Feb 2026		Report of the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3224 Councillor S. J. Baxter
2026/27 Council Tax Resolution Key: No	Cabinet 18 Feb 2026 Council 18 Feb 2026		Report of the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3224 Councillor S. J. Baxter
Quarter 3 2025/26 Finance and Performance Monitoring Report Key: No	Cabinet 25 Mar 2026 Council May 2026		Report of the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3224 Councillor S. J. Baxter

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Appendix – Explanation of Items on the Cabinet Forward Plan

Expansion of Commercial Waste Collection Service

To formalise a new Commercial food waste service to support existing commercial customers and safeguard our customer base, increasing the number of vehicles and staff to support both of these elements and also increase Council resilience.

Expansion of Septic Tank Emptying Service

As above.

Medium Term Financial Plan Scene Setting Report 2026/27

A preliminary document that outlines the assumptions, key factors and overall financial outlook for 2026/27.

Quarter 1 2025/26 Finance and Performance Monitoring Report

To provide a current financial position in relation to Revenue Budgets for the period April to June 2025 (2025-26). The report also provides a position on the organisational performance measures, as of Quarter 1 (up to end of June 2025).

Homelessness Prevention Grant and Domestic Abuse Grant

The purpose of the ringfenced Homelessness Prevention Grant and Domestic Abuse Grant fund is to give local authorities control and flexibility in managing homelessness pressures and supporting those who are at risk of homelessness.

Medium Term Financial Plan Tranche 1 Budget Report 2026/27

The Council proposes to set its budget in two Tranches for 2026/27 to 2028/29 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) process. This Tranche 1 report is the initial budget proposal to be considered for approval in Autumn 2025, after consultation.

Quarter 2 2025/26 Finance and Performance Monitoring Report

To provide a current financial position in relation to Revenue Budgets for the period July to September 2025 (2025-26). The report also provides a position on the organisational performance measures, as of Quarter 2 (up to end of September 2025).

Treasury Management half Yearly Report 2024/25

A half yearly update on the Council's Capital and Treasury Management Strategies, including all prudential indicators.

Windsor Street Site

To consider the future use of the Windsor Street and associated delivery options.

Council Tax Base Report 2026/27

To consider a report on the Council Tax Base for 2026-27.

Council Tax – Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026/27

Details the Council's policies regarding reduction or removal of the discount for unoccupied dwellings and, in the case of long-term empty homes, regarding policies on imposing a council tax premium.

Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27

The council is required by section 13A(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (LGFA '92) to make a council tax reduction (CTR) scheme specifying the reductions in council tax that will be provided to people who are in financial need, or to classes of people who are in general in financial need.

Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy 2026/27

The council has the power under section 13A(1)(C) of The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (LGFA '92) to reduce the amount of council tax that a person is liable to pay. The section 13A(1)(C) power may be exercised on a case-by-case basis or by determining a class of case in which the liability will be reduced.

Medium Term Financial Plan Tranche 1 Budget Report 2026/27

The Council proposes to set its budget in two Tranches for 2026/27 to 2028/29 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) process. This Tranche 1 report is the initial budget proposal to be considered for approval in Autumn 2025, prior to consultation.

Non Domestic Rates – Discretionary Rates Relief Policy 2026/27

Section 47 of The Local Government Finance Act 1988 [the act] provides Local Authorities with the power to award discretionary rate relief, to charitable and other non-profit making organisations that meet certain criteria. This policy also provided Council's framework for delivering discretionary relief – including retail relief and supporting small business relief.

Medium Term Financial Plan Tranche 2 Budget Report 2026/27

The Council proposes to set its budget in two Tranches for 2026/27 to 2028/29 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) process. This Tranche 2 report is the final budget proposal to be considered for approval in February 2026.

Council Tax Resolution 2026/27

To approve the calculated Council Tax base for 2026-27 and approve the Council Tax requirement (Council approval).

Quarter 3 2025/26 Finance and Performance Monitoring Report

To provide a current financial position in relation to Revenue Budget for the period October to December 2025 (2025-26). The report also provides a position on the organisational performance measures, as of Quarter 3 (up to end of December 2025).

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

2025-2026

ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Date of Meeting	Subject	Lead Officer / Member
9 th September 2025	<u>Substantive Items</u>	
	<u>Overview Items</u>	
	Planning Enforcement (Requested by the Chairman)	Mark Cox, Technical Services Manager (WRS)
	Council Tax Debt Recovery (Raised at O & S 11/2/25 Cllr E. Gray)	Dave Riley, Revenue Services Manager
	<u>Information Items</u>	
18 th November 2025	Local Heritage Action List (Quarterly Update)	Mike Dunphy, Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager
	Levelling Up Fund Programme (Quarterly Update)	Rachel Egan, Assistant Director Regeneration and Property Services
	<u>Substantive Items</u>	
	Windsor Street Site (Pre-Scrutiny) (Requested 17/6/25 by Cllr S. Robinson) (This report may include exempt information)	Rebecca McElliott, Regeneration, Project Delivery Manger
	Capacity of the Minor Works Team (Requested 2/7/25 by Cllr McDonald) (TBA)	Rachel Egan, Assistant Director Regeneration and Property Services
	<u>Overview Items</u>	
	BDHT (Services provided) (Requested 17/6/25 by Cllr S.T. Nock) (TBA)	Matthew Bough, Strategic Housing Services Manager
	Citizens Advice (Uses of grant funding) (Requested 17/6/25 by E.M.S. Gray)	Judith Willis, Assistant Director Community and Housing Services/Chris Roberts, Chief Officer, Citizens Advice Bureau

Agenda Item 11

Date of Meeting	Subject	Lead Officer / Member
6 th January 2026	<u>Substantive Items</u>	
	<u>Information items</u> Local Heritage Action List (Quarterly Update)	Mike Dunphy, Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager
	Levelling Up Fund Programme (Quarterly Update)	Rachel Egan, Assistant Director Regeneration and Property Services
10 th February 2026	<u>Substantive Items</u>	
	<u>Information Items</u>	
24 th March 2026	<u>Substantive Items</u> Update on Heatwaves Preparedness (Yearly Update) (Impact of Heatwaves Task Group Recommendation).	Guy Revans, Executive Director
	<u>Information Items</u> Levelling Up Fund Programme (Quarterly Update)	Rachel Egan, Assistant Director Regeneration and Property Services
	Local Heritage Action List (Quarterly Update)	Mike Dunphy, Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager
14 th April 2026 (meeting reserved for consideration of O&S Annual Report and Review of 2025-26)	<u>Substantive Items</u> Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2025-26	Chairman of the Board

ALL MEMBER BRIEFINGS

Date of Meeting	Subject	Lead Officer / Member
24 th July 2025	Anti-Social Behaviour (Tools and Powers)	Bev Houghton, Community Safety Manager

BDC Overview and Scrutiny Board - Action Sheet (2025/26)

17th June 2025 Meeting

Subject	Action Required	Action Taken	Officer(s) Responsible	Other Comments	Status
Local Government Re-Organisation (LGR)	To speak with Della McCartney, Partnerships Manager to discuss Mutual Venture's (MV) possible attendance to a Local Strategic Partnership meeting.	19/6/25 – Tel call to Della McCartney to provide MV contact details.	Sarah Woodfield, Democratic Services Officer		Completed: 29/6/25 email received to confirm Chair and Vice-Chair of the Bromsgrove Partnership Board have been included in one of the stakeholder groups.
Contaminated Land Strategy	To engage with Councillor K. May to provide a review of surveys carried out at Chadwick Lane and Beoley.	19/6/25 – Email to relevant officer for action. 8/7/25 Further request sent.	Mark Cox, WRS		Outstanding
Installation of EV Chargers	1. To enquire if Zest Eco Ltd can provide assurances that disabled access will be a priority for EVCI.	19/6/25 – Email to relevant officer for action.	Simon Parry, Assistant Director Environmental Housing and Property Services		Completed: 2/7/25 PAS document emailed to all Members.
	2. To provide profit share totals since installation from Equans.	19/6/25 – Email to relevant officer for action. 9/7/25 – Further request sent.			Outstanding
	3. To discuss Terms and Conditions arrangements with Zest regarding possible immediate revenue share arrangements.	19/6/25 – Email to relevant officer for action. 9/7/25 – Further request sent.			Outstanding
Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme	To add the following items to the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme:	23/6/25 – Added to the O & S Work Programme	Sarah Woodfield, Democratic Services Officer		

Subject	Action Required	Action Taken	Officer(s) Responsible	Other Comments	Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Windsor Street Site which going to Cabinet on 23 July 2025 (requested by Councillor S. Robinson). Citizens Advice to explain the uses of grant funding (requested by Councillor E. Gray). Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) to provide a presentation on the services they provide within the District (requested by Councillor S. Nock). 				Completed

Overview and Scrutiny Board

22nd July 2025

LEVELLING UP REPORT – BROMSGROVE TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Karen May
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Head of Service		Rachel Egan – Assistant Director Regeneration & Property
Report Author	Job Title: Assistant Director, Regeneration and Property email: Rachel.Egan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		No
Relevant Council Priorities		Development Communities and Housing
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 Appendix 1		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to note the work undertaken to date detailed within this report and to RESOLVE that:

- 1) the update on the progress of the Levelling Up Fund projects be noted.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a quarterly update on the progress of all regeneration schemes funded through the Levelling Up Fund (LUF).

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3. PROJECT UPDATES

Windsor Street Update

- 3.1 As of the 15th of June, Brownfield Solutions are continuing to undertake ground water monitoring on site. There are six wells in total, with monthly testing taking place. Following the initial six-month period (phase one), these results will be submitted to the Environment Agency. They will advise the Council if the presence of PFAS/PFOS chemicals (per and polyfluorinated alkyl substances) across the site within the soils and groundwater are at an acceptable level and the site can be redeveloped. If they are not, a further six-month remediation strategy will be undertaken through to January 2026.
- 3.2 The access road has been reinstated for the property to the north of the site and the Wendron Centre. No issues have been reported to date by either party.
- 3.3 The project is continuing to progress in line with timescales and remains to be on track to be delivered by January 2026. This is due to time saved during phase 2 of the project. In early 2026, the Council will have a clean site that is ready to be redeveloped.
- 3.4 Whilst the remediation strategy is executed during 2025, the project team will present options for the future use of the site to Cabinet in November 2025, with a view to progress the preferred option following a decision. Thomas Lister have provided a development appraisal that will form part of the options paper. The project manager has also met with Homes England to discuss potential funding opportunities. Construction would not be expected to start on site until early 2027.
- 3.5 The updated financial position can be found in Appendix 1 for the overall LUF programme.

Nailers Yard Site

- 3.6 Members will be aware that 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 (which has been renamed Nailers Yard). Progress photos are shown in Appendix 2.

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- 3.7 The steel structures for both buildings are now complete with the precast lift shaft and stairs installed on the commercial building. The next stage will see the installation of rooflight steelwork and complete purlins to the Pavilion building and the reinforcement and concrete to all floors and fire boxing of steelwork which commenced in late June. As discussed in the previous report to Overview and Scrutiny, there is a six-week delay to the programme due to unforeseen ground obstructions.
- 3.8 SCP Transport Planning are instructed to undertake the travel plan and welcome pack for the site. This is a planning condition that must be discharged prior to occupation. The project team are working through all planning conditions to ensure that they are discharged in a timely manner.
- 3.9 The public were asked to vote on the name of the development site in April 2025. There was a clear winner with almost 65% of the votes which was 'Nailers Yard'. The communications team are currently working on logo and branding designs which will be used in marketing material.
- 3.10 GJS Dillon were appointed to market the commercial building in December 2024. They are preparing marketing particulars and will advertise the space as well as handle lettings on behalf of the Council. There has already been some early interest in the office units and the food and beverage units. This is discussed in more detail in Appendix 1.
- 3.11 The project manager is preparing the full business case that will be submitted to Birmingham City Council to release Bromsgrove District Council's share of the former Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) funding. To submit the full business case, an updated Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) assessment of the project must be submitted. The Council have instructed Volterra LLP to support with this calculation as they were involved in the original Levelling Up Fund application.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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- 4.1 The Council has obtained a further extension from government for the LUF to end of March 2026.
- 4.2 The original budget for the programme was £16.103m which was made up of the Levelling Up Fund and Council contribution. This was allocated to the following projects within Bromsgrove:

Project	Funding allocated
Windsor Street	£3,471,000
Nailers Yard (former Market Hall)	£10,399,000
Public Realm	£2,233,000

- 4.3 The public realm project was completed in early 2025 with an underspend of £546,000. Nailers Yard and Windsor Street projects are ongoing.
- 4.4 Further to the LUF money (£14.5m) being awarded to Bromsgrove District Council, some additional funding has also been awarded to the projects in Bromsgrove. These sums total £1.08m and are as follows –

Funding source	£ total received
UK Share Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) - Nailers Yard	222,364
Brownfield Land Release Fund	722,748
UKSPF - Windsor Street	84,000
Levelling Up Fund	50,000
Total	1,079,112

- 4.5 Thus the overall funding secured of £16.103 million (£14.5m plus £1.6m) was increased by £1.08m to a total of £17.183 million.

The final cost of the Levelling Up Programme is currently estimated to be £18.65m. This is made up of the following amounts per project –

Project	Total (£)
Nailers Yard	13,476,590
Windsor Street	3,490,000
Public Realm	1,686,000

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The total amount of funding available to the projects, including the GBS LEP funding is £19.605m. This is made up of the following amounts:

Funding source	Total funding
Levelling Up Fund	£14.5m
Bromsgrove District Council	£1.6m
Additional funding sources (secured)	£1.08m
GBSLEP funding (not secured)	£2.425m

- 4.6 The project team are preparing an Expression of Interest to Birmingham City Council for the GBSLEP monies totalling £2.45m. The project manager is preparing the full business case for submission. This money will be spent on the Nailers Yard project. Birmingham City Council have confirmed that interest is not applied to the Regional Investment Fund (RIF) funding as this isn't a ring fenced 'pot' of funding which sits within its own bank account. The RIF programme is funded from the programme's cashflow generated by the business rate income on a year-by-year basis.
- 4.7 The Windsor Street project is continuing to progress in line with timescales and remains to be on track to be delivered by January 2026. The current spend to date on site purchase, clearance and remediation is £3.191m (which is within the budget envelope of £3.490m).
- 4.8 If the Windsor Street project does not require phase 2 remediation works, then there is a potential saving that could be reallocated to Nailers Yard. However, we will not know until August 2025 if phase 2 remediation work is required.
- 4.9 Options for the Windsor Street site will be presented to Overview and Scrutiny in September 2025 and Cabinet in November 2025 where Members will be asked to agree how the site will be delivered for housing. Each option will have different financial implications for the Council.
- 4.10 The Chief Finance Officer signs off an assurance statement that is sent to the Ministry for Housing, Local Government and Communities (MHCLG) on a quarterly basis updating on progress.

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- 4.12 The Levelling Up Fund programme is being actively monitored via the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG). Quarterly monitoring reports are submitted and reviewed. MHCLG have confirmed that the Council is progressing the projects and they do not have any concerns.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are legal implications arising from the contracts between the Council and various third parties (consultants and contractors). They are specific to each contract and assessed by the Council's legal team.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

- 6.1 There are no specific implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priorities

- 6.2 This project supports the following Council Priorities: Economic Development and Infrastructure.
- 6.3 The work on this project supports economic development and regeneration as well as a balanced housing market.
- 6.4 The regeneration project at Nailers Yard provides workspace 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

- 6.5 Through the redevelopment of the Nailers Yard site, energy efficiency measures and Low and Zero Carbon technologies will be introduced with a view to reduce operational energy consumption and the associated carbon emissions targets. These include introducing U values better than Building Regulations Part L, mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR), natural ventilation where possible, utilising

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building thermal mass, high efficiency air source heat pumps and low energy LED lighting. The Nailers Yard site commits to achieving a minimum Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM) 'very good' rating on this site.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.6 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 As part of the governance and reporting requirements, a risk register has been produced for each sub project. The key risks for each project are as follows:

Project	Risk	Comments
Nailers Yard	Culvert works	Potential impact on project budget and programme
Nailers Yard	Incoming electrics	Potential impact on project budget and programme
Nailers Yard	Commercial building layout	Potential impact on project budget and programme
Windsor Street	Remediation strategy	Environment Agency need to sign off prior to any development on site
Windsor Street	Redevelopment options	Bromsgrove District Council to agree future delivery option for site prior to any works

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

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Appendix 1 – Programme Financial Update - Contains exempt information

Appendix 2 – Nailers Yard site progress photos

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Karen May	4/7/2025
Lead Director / Head of Service	Rachel Egan AD Regeneration and Property	4/7/2025
Financial Services	Bob Watson	7/7/2025
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor – Governance	10/07/25
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Not Applicable	N/A
Climate Change Team	Matthew Eccles	23/07/25

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

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Appendix 2 – Site progress photos (Nailers Yard)



Nailers Yard – Commercial building (view from Waitrose car park)



Nailers Yard - Commercial building showing concrete floors installed and stairs



Nailers Yard – Pavilion building



Nailers Yard – Pavilion building